

HANS
RICHTER

NEW EDITION

CHRISTOPHER FIFIELD

HANS
RICHTER

HANS
RICHTER

CHRISTOPHER FIFIELD

THE BOYDELL PRESS

© Christopher Fifield, 1993, 2016

All Rights Reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system, published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast, transmitted, recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means, without the prior permission of the copyright owner

The right of Christopher Fifield to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

First published 1993 as *True Artist and True Friend: A Biography of Hans Richter*
Oxford University Press

This edition 2016
The Boydell Press, Woodbridge

ISBN 978 1 78327 021 7

The Boydell Press is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mt Hope Avenue, Rochester, NY 14620-2731, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A catalogue record for this book is available
from the British Library

The publisher has no responsibility for the continued existence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate

This publication is printed on acid-free paper

Typeset by BBR, Sheffield

To my family:
Judy, Dominic, Zabian, Freddie, Elizabeth, Andrew, Steph
Anna, Robin, Sophie and Elodie

CONTENTS

<i>List of Plates</i>		ix
<i>List of Figures</i>		xi
<i>Foreword by Sir Georg Solti</i>		xiii
<i>Preface to the New Edition</i>		xv
<i>Chronology</i>		xix
Chapter 1	1843–1865: Childhood and Years of Study	1
Chapter 2	1866–1867: Tribschen	10
Chapter 3	1868–1869: Munich	25
Chapter 4	1870–1871: Brussels; Tribschen	39
Chapter 5	1871–1874: Budapest	51
Chapter 6	1874–1875: Budapest and Bayreuth	63
Chapter 7	1875: Vienna	82
Chapter 8	1876: Bayreuth	102
Chapter 9	1877: London	116
Chapter 10	1878–1879: Vienna	128
Chapter 11	1879–1880: Friends and Enemies	137
Chapter 12	1880–1881: London and Vienna	152
Chapter 13	1881–1882: Richter and d’Albert	163
Chapter 14	1882: Richter and d’Albert	173
Chapter 15	1882–1883: The Master’s Death	183
Chapter 16	1884: More Opera in London	200
Chapter 17	1885–1886: Vienna, London and Birmingham	211
Chapter 18	1887–1888: Return to Bayreuth	231
Chapter 19	1889–1900: Vienna	245
Chapter 20	1897–1900: Richter and Mahler	264
Chapter 21	1889–1890: England	275
Chapter 22	1891–1895: England	282
Chapter 23	1895–1900: England	291
Chapter 24	1890–1899: Bayreuth	306
Chapter 25	1894–1899: Richter’s Diary	318
Chapter 26	1899–1900: Hallé Orchestra	327
Chapter 27	1900–1902: England	341
Chapter 28	1903–1904: England	353
Chapter 29	1904–1906: England	371
Chapter 30	1906–1908: England	384

Chapter 31	1908–1909: England	398
Chapter 32	1909–1911: England	414
Chapter 33	1911–1914: Retirement	427
Chapter 34	1914–1916: The Last Years	441
Chapter 35	Finale	452

HANS RICHTER'S CONDUCTING BOOKS

<i>Preface</i>		471
Book 1	1865–March 1884	474
Book 2	March 1884–March 1895	531
Book 3	March 1895–April 1899	607
Book 4	April 1899–1901	641
Book 5	1902–January 1907	672
Book 6	January 1907–1912	712
Appendix 1	Works conducted by Hans Richter	747
Appendix 2	Cities and towns where Richter conducted	754
<i>Select Bibliography</i>		755
<i>Index</i>		759

PLATES

between pages 300 and 301

- 1a. Hans Richter's mother Josefine.
- 1b. The boy Hans with his father Anton Richter.
- 1c. Hans as an Imperial Chapel chorister.
- 1d. Hans, second from right, as a teenager.
- 2a. Hans Richter in 1868 after his appointment as Music Director in Munich following Hans von Bülow's departure.
- 2b. Hans Richter with his fiancée Marie von Sztányi, Budapest 1874.
- 3a. Richter (centre) with members of the 'Nibelungen Chancellery' at Bayreuth in 1872: left to right Hermann Zumppe, Demetrius Lalas, architectural assistant Karl Runckwitz and Anton Seidl.
- 3b. Hans Richter's children: left to right Hans, Mathilde, Ludovika, Marie, Richardis and Edgar in about 1884.
- 4a. Hans Richter with the score of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, London 16 June 1898. The photograph is dedicated to Pedro Tillett, nephew of the conductor's agent Narciso Vertigliano.
- 4b. Richter outside Birmingham Town Hall during the Triennial Music Festival in October 1909, photographed by his future son-in-law Sydney Loeb. The musical quotation is the bassoon part taken from the introduction to the Prisoners' Chorus from Beethoven's *Fidelio*.
- 5a. Richter at The Firs, Bowdon, in 1908, photographed by Sydney Loeb.
- 5b. Richter and Marie on board ship crossing the Channel.
- 6a. Richter with George Bernard Shaw and his wife Charlotte at Bayreuth in 1908.
- 6b. Richter with (left to right) Eva, Isolde and Siegfried Wagner, Daniela and Blandine von Bülow, Bayreuth 1890.
- 7a. Richter holidaying at Baracs, Hungary.

- 7b. Richter with Marie and his granddaughter Eleonore in the garden of Zur Tabulatur in Bayreuth in 1914.
- 8a. The familiar sight of Richter with shopping bag during his retirement in Bayreuth. The musical quotation from *Die Meistersinger* was the family whistle.
- 8b. Richter in his Bayreuth study on his seventieth birthday, 4 April 1913.

FIGURES

1. Dedication to Camillo Sitte from Hans (Johann) Richter quoting the opening of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, Vienna 1864. 21
2. Richter, under the watchful eye of Wagner and the applauding Liszt, conducting in Budapest in 1871. *Borsszem Jankó* (Johnny Peppercorn) was a satirical magazine of the day and was clearly commenting on the young man's concert programmes. 55
3. *Der Floh*, 9 May 1875. 87
4. *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, 26 August 1876. 108
5. Hans Richter returning to Vienna with the financial rewards of his first visit to Covent Garden. Cartoon by Hans Schliessmann. 203
6. Brahms, Johann Strauss and Richter playing cards. Silhouette by Otto Böhler. 221
7. *Oesterreichisches Journal*, 1 February 1890. 247
8. Richter conducts the Viennese premiere of Bruckner's seventh symphony, 21 March 1886. Silhouette by Otto Böhler. 257
9. Hans Richter conducts Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* at the Court Opera in Vienna. 271
10. Richter at Bayreuth in 1889. The notice in his hat reads: 'Please do not ask me for dress rehearsal tickets as I do not have any'. 311
11. Hans Richter's autograph at the 1896 Bayreuth Festival, the year in which the *Ring* was staged for the first time since its premiere in 1876. Above his signature are the opening bars of *Das Rheingold*, below are the closing bars of *Götterdämmerung*. 316
12. Hans Richter conducting at the Vienna Court Opera. 359
13. Richter conducting the *Dream of Gerontius* at the Elgar Festival, Covent Garden 1904. 365
14. A postcard from Richter to the Hallé Orchestra's principal horn Franz Paersch dated 27 February 1904, inviting him and the principal bassoon Otto Schieder to a cold supper at Bowdon. The musical quotation is Siegfried's horn call. 379

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 15. | Richter conducting the first <i>Ring</i> in English, <i>Daily Graphic</i> , 28 January 1908. | 396 |
| 16. | Frank L. Emanuel's drawing in the <i>Manchester Guardian</i> of Richter at rehearsal with the Hallé Orchestra in 1904. | 412 |
| 17. | <i>Punch</i> , 25 March 1903. | 461 |

FOREWORD

by Sir Georg Solti

A few years ago in Chicago, I acquired a treasure, the notebooks of the legendary conductor Hans Richter, who did so much to promote the music of Wagner, Brahms, Bruckner and Elgar. I have always felt an affinity with Richter for there are similarities in our lives. He was a fellow Hungarian, whose early conducting engagements were at the Budapest Opera House and in Munich. For twenty-five years he conducted in Vienna but for over thirty he regularly worked in London, and ended his days in Manchester as Hallé's successor. His appearance in London must have been like a sudden burst of light on the English music scene. According to George Bernard Shaw, who was not always generous with praise, Richter produced noble results. He was also a frequent conductor at my old opera house, Covent Garden, where he gave the first performances of Wagner's *Ring* in English.

When Christopher Fifield asked me to write the foreword to his biography of Richter, I turned once again to my treasure, the conducting notebooks. To protect them they are as I received them, wrapped in tissue paper in a transparent perspex box lined with silver paper. There are six books covering his entire career, three bound in leather and three backed with linen on boards, now covered with beige wrapping paper for protection. The earliest book has a blue-edged label with the printed address of a Budapest stationer stuck on the front, on which is stencilled the dates 1865–1884 with the words 'Dirigier Buch' written in Indian ink in the middle. The ink, however, has faded little and in a firm hand Richter has written details of his first concert in his home town of Raab. For the next forty-seven years he kept a methodical record in the six notebooks of every performance he gave. He obviously loved numbers and marked every tenth performance starting again at every thousandth. The final entry was made in August 1912, a few months before I was born.

As his career progressed, the performances became so frequent that the record is astonishing to read. On 2 December 1892 he conducted Mascagni's opera *L'Amico Fritz* at the Vienna Court Opera. Two days later he spent Sunday morning conducting Mozart's Mass in F major at the Court Chapel followed by the midday concert with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra consisting of Mendelssohn's Overture *Ruy Blas*, the first Viennese performance of Bruch's new Third Violin Concerto, and Schubert's *Great Symphony* in C major. That week he conducted *Don Giovanni*, *Lohengrin* and *Fidelio* and on the 14th travelled

to Budapest for a concert in aid of the Widows and Orphans' Fund. On the following day he was back in Vienna for *Tristan und Isolde* and three days later, on another Sunday (18th), he directed a mass by Michael Haydn at the chapel in the morning followed by another lunchtime Philharmonic concert, this time the first performance of Bruckner's massive Eighth Symphony in the Musikverein.

When, I wonder, did he have the time to study his scores? His schedule in England was equally arduous. Between the beginning of May and the end of July 1904 he conducted thirty performances of opera (twenty-six at Covent Garden, four at Bayreuth). They were *Tristan und Isolde*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Lohengrin*, *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Tannhäuser*. Amongst them was the inaugural concert of the newly-formed London Symphony Orchestra with a vast programme, the *Meistersinger* overture, Bach's Suite in D major, the overture to the *Magic Flute*, Elgar's *Enigma* Variations, Liszt's First *Hungarian* Rhapsody, and Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. The last week of the period was spent in Bayreuth where he conducted Wagner's *Ring* on four consecutive nights.

My view of Richter is essentially one-dimensional because my only direct point of reference is the notebooks but how I admire the vitality of this man. He must have had phenomenal energy, both physical and mental, for he travelled a great deal and gave these enormously demanding programmes which he had to prepare and study. Apart from the programmes he was also an educator and promoter of new music. He moulded public taste in England, taking the Hallé on tour from Manchester to all the major provincial music centres, Leeds, Birmingham and Newcastle, as well as to smaller places such as Rotherham, Middlesbrough, Blackpool, Hanley and Burnley where he gave a performance of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony. His programmes included the standard works of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann as well as those of his contemporaries Brahms, Bruckner, Wagner and Liszt. He also performed the new music of Bruch, César Franck, Saint-Saëns, Strauss, Dvořák, Sibelius, Humperdinck, Grieg and the British composers Stanford, Parry and Coleridge-Taylor and he did more than any other to support and promote the emerging Elgar. They became close friends and Richter conducted the first performances of the *Enigma* Variations, *The Dream of Gerontius* and the First Symphony, which the composer dedicated to him. In that hectic spring of 1904 he also organised an Elgar Festival in London, at which all the composer's major works were heard – yet another similarity in our lives, a mutual love of the music of Elgar.

Christopher Fifield has devoted years to researching Richter's remarkable life. Not only does his book, which I welcome, give a detailed account of the man and the musician, it also provides an insight into the musical life of two vital centres, London and Vienna, from the years leading up to the turn of the century until the first World War, the period which laid the foundations for music-making in Europe as we know it today.

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

During my studies as a music student at Manchester University and the (then) Royal Manchester College of Music in the 1960s, I often encountered the name of Hans Richter. The first occasion was during the preparations for a performance of Bach's Third *Brandenburg* Concerto which I conducted. The score and parts came from the vaults of the college's orchestral library and each copy bore Hans Richter's signature in the top right-hand corner. I also went regularly to rehearsals and concerts given by Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra, which Richter had taken over five years after the founder-conductor's death in 1895. Fifty years ago, there were still teachers and players in Manchester who had tales to tell of the formidable Richter, many of them having been pupils of Hallé orchestra members, who in turn had played under the great conductor during the first decade of the twentieth century.

Hans Richter (1843–1916) was one of the first career conductors to gain international fame. Prior to this, conductors were usually composers, such as Berlioz and Wagner, or performing composers such as Hans von Bülow and Liszt. Richter was hardly a composer; on 13 January 1871 he completed an arrangement of Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* for piano duet and solo violin but he also wrote three works of his own, a short two-part piece for four horns (*Im Walde* and *Nachtruhe*), a Romance for horn and piano (*Am See*) and a Concert Overture in F minor, written in 1878. He was a fine pianist and organist and was reputedly able to play all orchestral instruments except the harp. He could sing to a standard that kept the curtain up at an early performance of Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* in Munich, when he stepped in for the indisposed Kothner. It was, however, as a horn player that he started his professional life as a musician in a Viennese theatre from the autumn of 1862 until the spring of 1866.

After a few low-profile attempts from 1865, his conducting work began in earnest in Munich in 1868 and ended in Bayreuth forty-four years later in 1912. Most of it was focused on four major musical centres of the nineteenth century, Vienna, London, Bayreuth and Manchester, his influence in each place lasting long after he had departed. Hans Richter's name can be found in biographies and textbooks on music relating to the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. He played a huge part in the lives of Wagner, Brahms, Bruckner, Dvořák, Elgar, Stanford, Parry, Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, Bartók and Glazunov. Not only was he personally acquainted with all of them, he also gave first performances of some of their works. He also appears in biographies of singers and instrumentalists, often brought by him before the

public at an early stage in their careers. It is time, however, to look at Hans Richter in his own right, to explore his personality and to detail his life and work. A primary source for this information comes from the man himself. He meticulously listed, in six books entitled *Dirigierbücher* (conducting books), each and every one of the 4,351 public performances he gave in his professional life between 1868 and 1912. All entries give the venue, programme, soloists and (in the case of operas) the number of total performances he had reached with each particular performance. That he had the time to list them in such detail and in such a neat and legible manner reveals the nature of Richter's character; he was equally meticulous and systematic at his rehearsals and in his performances. I am indebted to the late Sir Georg Solti (a compatriot of Richter and whose repertoire he also shared to a large degree) and to Lady Valerie Solti for access to these books, of which he became the owner. They are reproduced in full as an appendix in this revised edition, twenty-three years after my biography was originally published in 1993.

Whereas the six *Dirigierbücher* have proved to be a vital and invaluable source as a reference to establish Richter's whereabouts at any given time, the absence of many diaries from his effects has proved a handicap, all the more so because it is known that he kept a detailed journal throughout his life. He had six children and one of them, Edgar, had custody of the diaries until at least 1960. They are mentioned in a letter to his sister Mathilde in London from America, where he had emigrated after the Second World War, after which no trace of them remains. They certainly survived the war (unlike much other material) and, like the *Dirigierbücher*, may well have been sold. However, some extracts have fortuitously survived. During the 1930s, Edgar copied all information from the diaries relevant to Richter's activities in England at the request of Mathilde, who had stayed behind in 1911 when her father retired to Germany. These were the years 1877–1900. Unfortunately Edgar did not continue into the Hallé years in Manchester (which would also have included the founding of the London Symphony Orchestra, the first *Ring* in English in 1908 and Richter's annual appearances from 1903 at Covent Garden), presumably because Mathilde was in her father's company for that period. Similarly, in 1938 Edgar, by then forced to abandon his career as an operatic tenor, was on the staff at Bayreuth and copied all information relevant to Wagner (the years 1866–1883) for Otto Strobel's use. Strobel was curator and archivist at the Wagner Museum at Wahnfried in Bayreuth and considered writing a biography of Richter. Mathilde and Edgar were particularly keen to see one of their father in print and whereas Edgar approached Strobel, Mathilde made various approaches in England to writers on music and critics such as Herbert Thompson, H. C. Colles and Neville Cardus but for many reasons the idea was not taken up.

Unfortunate is the absence of any aural or visual record of Richter. Although he retired in 1912 he never made a recording for posterity. Those of Richter's scores which have survived are now in the Hallé Archive established in 2002 and are mainly untouched by his hand (all the Elgar full scores carry the composer's

deeply felt dedications), for he usually did no more than proofread printing errors or highlight metronome markings in blue pencil. There are additional clarinet parts written in his score of Beethoven's Second Symphony to reinforce the woodwind line at moments where the composer rested that instrument, but little else. According to biographies of the cellist Pablo Casals, whom Richter befriended and did much for from 1904, he bought scores and orchestral parts from the conductor's widow at the end of the First World War when he was setting up his own orchestra in Barcelona.

The methods of a researcher need not be complicated. Richter's obituary notice referred to Sydney Loeb as his son-in-law, so at the beginning of the 1990s it took no more than consulting the L-R London telephone directory to set me on my way. The recipient of that phone call, Caroline Loeb, immediately referred me to her aunt Sylvia, the first of the Richter granddaughters I was to meet. Sylvia Loeb (who died in 2009) entered into the spirit of the project with boundless energy and generous co-operation by granting me access to letters written by her grandfather and subsequently returned by the recipients to her family after his death, as well as newspaper cuttings, scores, programmes and photographs. Her Chelsea flat was a veritable Aladdin's cave of material. Richter's grandson, David Loeb (who died in 2014), generously loaned me many photographs in his possession including several taken by his father Sydney. Sylvia also put me in touch with her cousin, Eleonore Schacht-Richter (who died in 2005). She lived in Würzburg, Germany (in another Aladdin's cave of material) and without her this book would also have been impossible to write. Her tireless enthusiasm, her depth of knowledge and profound love for her grandfather inspired me; to her and other relatives (Wolfram Dehmel of Hassfurt, Peter Dehmel of Regensburg and Rainer Schacht of Würzburg) I express my sincere gratitude.

Richter's letters are written in a beautifully legible hand. I have translated many of them from the original German as well as reviews, passages from books and many articles, whereas Richter's letters written in English have been left in his own inimitable style and spelling without correction. The material owned by the English branch of the family has now been placed in the Hallé Archive by Caroline and Jessica Loeb as the Richter-Loeb collection and includes letters from Wagner and Elgar as well as scores, photographs and programmes. It also has his rehearsal chair bearing the plaque 'This conductor's chair, which was invariably used in concerts and opera in England by Dr Hans Richter, was presented to Robin H Legge on Dr Richter's retirement, April 1911'.¹

I am indebted to Manfred Eger, curator of the Wagner Archive in Bayreuth, for allowing me access to material held there. Similar thanks go to the

1 Robin H Legge (1862-1933) was music critic of *The Times* (1891-1906) then of the *Daily Telegraph* (1906-1931). That Richter had no further use for the chair after his last concert in England is understandable but why he should give it to a music critic is not. Presumably it was returned to Richter's daughter Mathilde after Legge's death.

Nationalbibliothek, Stadt und Landesbibliothek, Hof- und Staatsarchiv and Theatermuseum in Vienna, as well as the Wiener Hofkapelle, Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Dr Clemens Hellsberg) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (Dr Otto Biba). In England I am similarly indebted to the British Library Manuscripts Division, the Royal College of Music, the Henry Watson Music Library in Manchester and the Brotherton Library in Leeds, the Royal Northern College of Music and the Hallé Archive (Archivist Eleanor Roberts). In America I owe thanks to Columbia University Library, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Harvard College Library and the Boston Symphony Orchestra; in Germany to the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek and the Stadtsbibliothek in Munich; to Dr Jan Kralik, who guided me to the Prague Music Archive and their holdings of the Richter–Dvořák correspondence; to Maria Eckhardt, Director of the Ferenc Liszt Memorial Museum in Budapest. I thank them sincerely for their invaluable help and gratefully acknowledge the British Academy, the Worshipful Company of Musicians and University College London for financial help when the biography was first written.

Among many who assisted me are the late Robert Elliot (who, when I first wrote this book in 1993, owned Richter's house in Bowdon, Cheshire and allowed me to sleep in the conductor's former bedroom), Marjorie Cox, Grant Longman of the Bushey Museum Trust, Dr Francis Jackson, Jerrold Northrop Moore, the late Dr Gareth Lewis, Christopher Dymont, David Robinson, Chris de Souza, the late Reg Cane, Stewart Spencer, Jeremy Dibble, Kate and Laura Russell, the late Wilfred Stiff, Andrea Vogel, Philip Wulfs, the late Paul Richard, Feri Gyenes, Paul Cummings, the late Michael Kennedy and Winifred Christie, who at the age of ninety-five shared her memories of a bygone age and allowed me access to letters written to her grandmother Marie Joshua from, among others, Eugen d'Albert.

My thanks go to my former wife Judy and to my friend from those now far-off university days, Harry Watkins, for their patient reading of the manuscript and invaluable suggestions. Finally, I have nothing but admiration for and gratitude to my wife Anna for putting up with the exhilarating highs and frustrating lows of my work as a music historian.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1843 Born in Raab (Győr), Austro-Hungary, on 4 April 1843.
- 1854 Enters the Piaristengymnasium in Vienna and became a choirboy in the Imperial Chapel.
- 1859 Enters the Vienna Conservatoire.
- 1862 Horn player at the Kärntnertheater Theatre, Vienna.
- 1866 In response to a request from Wagner for a copyist, Richter is sent by Heinrich Esser to Tribtschen, Lucerne.
- 1868 Chorus master for the premiere of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in Munich. Appointed successor to Hans von Bülow as Court Music Director by King Ludwig.
- 1869 Withdraws from the premiere of *Das Rheingold* and is sacked by the king.
- 1870 Conducts the Brussels premiere of *Lohengrin*.
- 1871 Appointed Music Director in Budapest.
- 1872 Foundation stone-laying ceremony at Bayreuth.
- 1875 Marries Marie von Sztányi. Appointed conductor at the Court Opera in Vienna and of the Philharmonic Orchestra.
- 1876 Conducts the premiere of the complete *Ring* at the first Bayreuth Festival.
- 1877 First London appearance at the Wagner Festival. Conducts first performance of Brahms' Second Symphony. Vize-Hofkapellmeister at the court of Emperor Franz Josef.
- 1879 Returns to London to establish the annual Richter Concerts.
- 1880 Conducts first performance of Brahms' *Tragic Overture*. Dvořák dedicates his Sixth Symphony to Richter. Honorary member of the International Mozart Foundation, Salzburg.
- 1881 Conducts the first performance of Bruckner's Fourth Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. Richter's 1000th public appearance takes place on 9 January.
- 1882 Conducts the first performance in England of *Die Meistersinger* and *Tristan und Isolde* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, London.
- 1883 Death of Wagner. Richter conducts first performance of Brahms' Third Symphony.
- 1884 Appointed conductor of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna. Conducts first performance of Stanford's opera *Savonarola* at Covent Garden.

- 1885 Appointed conductor of the Birmingham Triennial Music Festival. Conducts first performance of Bruckner's *Te Deum*. Honorary Mus. Doc. from Oxford University.
- 1886 Conducts the first Viennese performance of Bruckner's Seventh Symphony.
- 1887 First appearance at the Lower Rhine Music Festival. In June conducts first performances of three new British symphonies, Parry's Second, Cowen's Fifth and Stanford's Third.
- 1888 Returns to Bayreuth and conducts *Die Meistersinger*. Richter's 2000th public appearance takes place on 23 December.
- 1891 Honorary member of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde.
- 1892 Conducts the first performance of Bruckner's Eighth Symphony.
- 1893 Accepts but then declines the Music Directorship of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Promoted to Imperial Hofkapellmeister.
- 1895 Death of Hallé; Richter immediately offered Hallé's post in Manchester but declines until he is able to retire from Vienna on full pension in 1900. Richter's 3000th public appearance takes place on 17 November.
- 1896 Conducts the first production of the *Ring* at Bayreuth since its premiere there in 1876. Death of Bruckner.
- 1897 Death of Brahms. Mahler appointed Director of the Vienna Opera.
- 1898 Richter resigns as conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic concerts.
- 1899 Conducts the first performance of Elgar's *Enigma* Variations.
- 1900 Leaves Vienna and accepts the Hallé's offer. Conducts the first performance of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* at the Birmingham Triennial Festival.
- 1903 First appearance at Covent Garden in the German Opera season.
- 1904 Conducts Elgar Festival in London. London Symphony Orchestra formed, Richter conducts inaugural concert. Honorary member (4th class) of the Royal Victorian Order.
- 1906 Richter's 4000th public appearance takes place on 14 May.
- 1907 Honorary Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.
- 1908 At Covent Garden, Richter conducts the first *Ring* cycle in English. Conducts the first performance of Elgar's First Symphony, which the composer dedicates to him.
- 1909 Resigns conductorship of the Birmingham Triennial Festival.
- 1911 Resigns from the Hallé Orchestra and retires from the concert platform. Moves to Bayreuth.
- 1912 Final (4,351st) public appearance conducting *Die Meistersinger* at the Bayreuth Festival on 19 August.
- 1916 Dies in Bayreuth on 5 December, aged seventy-three.

CHAPTER 1

1843–1865

CHILDHOOD AND YEARS OF STUDY

Seventy-five miles south-east of Vienna, and about halfway to Budapest, lies the town of Győr. In Roman days the town was named Arabona; more recently, when part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and as a town with a modest manufacturing industry centred chiefly on tobacco and cutlery, it was called Raab. It lies where the rivers Rába and Rábca flow into the Little Danube. Here, by the Bishop's Palace, with its fifteenth-century Dóczy Chapel, stands the Cathedral, founded in the twelfth century and rebuilt between 1639 and 1645. Its Héderváry Chapel has stained-glass windows and contains a fifteenth-century silver bust of St Ladislaus. It was in Raab, on 4 April 1843, that Hans Richter was born. His family came from former Austria-Silesia, in the area of Freudenthal, the earliest recorded ancestors being Georg and Anna Richter, parents of Melzer (Melchior) Richter (1656–1720). Melzer's son Melchior (1692–1742) was, like his father, a farmer, but his grandson Josephus Richter (1726–1787) was first a labourer then a tailor in Breitenau and Markersdorf. Josephus' son, Anton Franciscus Richter (1762–1819, grandfather of Hans) became a schoolmaster in Probstdorf, in the district of Vienna and from his first marriage with Theresia Knöbel he had a son Anton born in 1802.

Anton spent the last twenty-two years of his life in Raab but for ten years from 1822 he sang bass in the service of Count Nikolaus Esterházy, whose family in Eisenstadt was famous for its patronage of Haydn. Anton Richter was a gifted organist, singer, string player and composer and on 22 June 1832, from among eleven short-listed candidates, he was appointed Succentor or Subcantor (effectively the choirmaster) at Raab Cathedral but was soon elevated to the top musical post of Kapellmeister. He threw himself whole-heartedly into his duties, composing prolifically, and there are 118 extant compositions (64 sacred, 54 secular) in the archive of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of the

Friends of Music) in Vienna and thirty in Győr Cathedral. He was also very conscientious in recording, over a twenty-year period from the start of his appointment in 1832, details of the musical life of the cathedral and its choir, all of which give an invaluable insight into the workings of such institutions. There are lists of personnel, new compositions, works performed, instruments donated or purchased and maintenance records of the cathedral organ as well as his own comments on the well-being and the problems of his musicians and musical standards for which he was held responsible. He even produced a handbook for his musicians after he sensed a feeling of insecurity and lack of discipline among those performing liturgical music. He was supported by such acquaintances as Franz Liszt and Otto Nicolai, who came on occasional visits and was also fortunate in having for ten years (1838–48) a music-loving bishop in Johann Sztankovits, later godfather to Hans. In 1846, with his bishop's moral and material support, Richter founded a male-voice choir in Raab and the following year created the town's first music school. The school celebrated its eightieth anniversary in 1927 by erecting a plaque on its wall in double memory of its founder and his famous son and to this day a triennial Anton Richter competition is held for students of woodwind instruments. In August 1846 Bishop Sztankovits was host to Nicolai. 'Throughout my stay, Cathedral Kapellmeister Richter of Raab behaved in a very friendly and respectful manner towards me. Everything went as well as I could wish for; they were three very pleasant days!'¹

Anton Richter also taught singing and on 2 February 1842, at the age of forty, he married one of his students. She was Josefine Czasensky, born in Tabor, Bohemia in 1822, twenty years old when she married and twenty years younger than her husband. Anton and Josefine had four children. Besides Hans (the eldest, born 1843) there were three other children, two of whom (Joseph, born 1845 and Antonia, born 1847) died in infancy and another (Marie, born 1844), who died when she was fourteen. Josefine's grandfather Ignaz Steyer had been a musician at Raab Cathedral and her father Albert a horn player and conductor with a military band.

The birth of Hans Richter was greeted with joy by his parents. Anton wrote to his brother-in-law Johann Schöpfleuthner on 5 April 1843 to report the good news of the previous day:

At last dear God has presented us with the long-awaited, dear, good boy; yesterday in the evening of the 4th at five minutes to ten he gave his first cry, but was immediately quiet and has remained *bis dato* really peaceful and sleeps most of the time. Permit me to describe the hitherto unknown joy of fatherhood, you already know it after all. The birth itself was happy, though for me shattering! Mother and child are well. Today at three this afternoon is the baptism and, according to our and the Bishop's wishes, he will be named

1 *Otto Nicolai's Tagebücher*, ed. B. Schröder (Leipzig, 1892).

Johann Baptist Isidor. ... The little chap is really sweet, and his mother is pleased that he has a little dimple on his chin, just like me.²

Hansi, as the young baby was called by his doting father, had a ‘genuine Richter nature’ and when his equable mood was disturbed the result was ‘a short cadenza from his alto voice.’³ He soon showed musical promise and, from the age of four, received piano lessons from his mother. He had perfect pitch and proved a useful assistant to the local organ tuner, who often took him with him to act as a human tuning fork. The child naturally tried to take up the organ but his feet did not reach the pedals until the age of ten and even then they had to be especially built up for him. He also sang unofficially (either soprano or alto) in the cathedral choir, and in 1850, at the age of seven, played the all-important timpani part in Haydn’s C major *Paukenmesse* (so called because of the prominence given to that instrument in the *Agnus Dei*). With an innate sense of rhythm and his assured and confident style, he made a great success of the occasion and years later would observe that ‘the melody is the flesh but the rhythm is the bones’.⁴ He repeated his role as orchestral timpanist on 15 August 1851 in one of his father’s masses but his final childhood appearance was as pianist in Hummel’s Piano Quintet in E flat in one of his mother’s concerts on 14 June 1853; he was ten years of age.

Josefine Richter began her career as an opera singer and from Anton’s records it appears that in April 1852 both he and his wife were offered contracts at the opera house in Hamburg, where the Raab conductor Josef Wurda was employed at the time. Although Anton travelled there to discuss terms, he could not agree a salary with the opera house and the idea was abandoned. Two years later, on 2 January 1854 at the age of fifty-two, he suffered a stroke and died; apparently he had been greatly exercised by the deliberate out-of-tune singing of one of his mischievous choristers. In the few years they had together Anton had encouraged his son’s obvious musical gifts, as he recalled in 1899:

All my family, including my grandfather, were musicians, except one, who was an organ builder. [My father] had a good library, which included Berlioz’s treatise on instrumentation. [He] composed a Requiem Mass without violins in the accompaniment. A Nonet by him, for strings and four wind instruments, was performed before the Queen of England at one of her private concerts.⁵

The settled tranquillity of family life was shattered by Anton’s death. Josefine was now compelled to pursue her career as an opera singer and did so with success, with guest appearances in Budapest, Braunschweig and Hanover. She then took a two-year contract as a member of the ensemble in Leipzig, where

2 Otto Strobel, ‘Hans Richter’ (Bayreuth, unpublished).

3 Ibid.

4 *Musical Times*, July 1899, 442.

5 Ibid., 441.

she also took singing lessons with Friedrich Schmitt, who strengthened her voice to a more dramatic sound. She was soon able to present herself not only as a coloratura soprano but also for such roles as *Fidelio*, *Donna Anna*, *Elisabeth*, *Valentine* and *Agathe*. She extended her guest appearances to Munich, Berlin, Karlsruhe, Augsburg, Basle, Zurich, Amsterdam and even Moscow, where, in March 1864, she scored a particular triumph. Her greatest success, however, had taken place seven years earlier, on 28 August 1857, when she sang *Venus* in the first Vienna performance of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* at the Josefstadt Theatre. In view of the nature of the role and the fact that she, the widow of a cathedral Kapellmeister, was singing in the city where her son was, at that time, a member of the Court Chapel choir, Josefine thought it prudent to protect him from scandal by using another name, Lieven. In 1865, having decided to give up her operatic career, she moved to Vienna and devoted herself entirely to teaching singing.

On 4 March 1867 she married Anton von Innffeld and, apart from a short time spent in Munich from December 1868 as teacher of singing at the new Royal Music School (founded with the strong encouragement of Wagner), she settled in the Austrian capital for the rest of her life. Her stay in Munich was not without curious incident. In a letter to Richard Pohl, Hans von Bülow wrote 'Yesterday a new production of *Fidelio* with Frau Richter (I conducted from memory)'.⁶ This letter appears in the collected edition of von Bülow's letters edited by his second wife Marie, who wrote as a footnote 'Mother of the conductor Hans Richter'.⁷ It would seem that Josefine was attempting a comeback to the stage at the age of forty-six, for she did indeed appear as Leonore under the name of Frau Innffeld-Richter on 20 December 1868 at the Imperial Theatre with Heinrich Vogl as Florestan and Max Schlosser as Jacquino. She was evidently not a success; a review in the Munich *Unterhaltungs-Blatt* had nothing kind to say, describing her inadequate vocal powers, ham acting and lukewarm interpretation.⁸ In a letter to Wagner of 11 August 1869 as the *Rheingold* affair was brewing (see Chapter 3), Richter complained of Intendant Baron Perfall's treatment of his mother. Whether this had anything to do with any consequences of this unsuccessful attempt at resuming her singing career (for she made no further appearances as Leonore), or whether Perfall dismissed her from her teaching post in Munich out of spite at her son's behaviour during the *Rheingold* affair, can only be the subject of speculation. When Hans conducted *Fidelio* on 4 February 1869 (to positive critical acclaim from the same paper which had so recently damned Josefine),⁹ it was unfortunately not an occasion when a mother could be heard singing under the baton of her own son. In 1887 Josefine produced and

6 Hans von Bülow to Richard Pohl, 21 Dec. 1868.

7 ed. Marie von Bülow, *Hans von Bülow. Briefe und Schriften* (Leipzig 1900).

8 *Unterhaltungs-Blatt der neuesten Nachrichten*, 24 Dec. 1868.

9 *Ibid.*, 7 Feb. 1869.

published a teaching method of singing based on her own experience.¹⁰ She died five years later in 1892. Unlike Hans' father, his mother had lived long enough to witness her son's rise to fame and to enjoy many hours of his music-making with both orchestra and opera in Vienna, the city she eventually made her home.

For Josefine Richter to pursue her stage career as an opera singer it was necessary to make arrangements for the two surviving children. In the case of Hans she was able to enter him in the Piaristengymnasium, a boarding school in Josefstadt, Vienna, where he stayed for four years and studied religion, Latin, Greek, German, history, geography, mathematics and natural history. At the same time she also entered the boy for the choir of the Imperial Chapel. She and her husband had done so the previous summer but at that time he had been rejected for singing out of tune and for being physically too weak. The entrance examination took place at the Löwenburgische Konvikt (or theological seminary) on 9 August 1854 and thirty-two children competed for only two places. One of the alto competitors was rumoured to be guaranteed a place by Emperor Franz Josef's mother, Archduchess Sophie, who regularly visited the coffee house in Ischl owned by the child's father. When young Hans' turn came, he was undaunted by such favouritism and when asked by Hofkapellmeister Ignaz Assmayer to sing the arpeggio of a certain key, having first been given the key-note, he responded indignantly, 'Well if you do that, it's easy!' He also soon realised that the piano on which he was being tested was identical in pitch to the family piano back home in Raab and with this perfect pitch and his other musical gifts, including sight-reading part of a mass, he was accepted and enrolled at the seminary, or in today's terms, he became a member of the Vienna Boys' Choir. Here, in addition to the subjects taught at school, he studied French, Italian, handwriting, drawing and dancing.

Hans possessed a good alto voice and was thoroughly schooled in classical church music as well as receiving a good all-round education. He was soon asked to take the alto solos in addition to singing in the choir. The only other child accepted from the group examined that summer's day in 1854 was Josef Sucher, who, as a treble soloist, joined Hans and remained a friend until his death in 1908. Sucher later became a fine conductor of opera in Berlin and married the soprano Rosa Sucher (née Hasselbeck). When Hans' voice broke in the summer of 1858 his career with the boys' choir was ended but he was awarded an annual sum of 150 gulden for the next three years to enable him to fulfil his most ardent wish, namely the advanced study of music at the Vienna Conservatoire. By leaving the Court Choir or Hofkapelle he was not, however, bidding it a final farewell, for he was to return as its conductor in 1877, twenty-three years after he had first joined as a child.

He could have remained at the gymnasium, even if his career with the boys' choir was at an end but 'I said to myself, I do not wish to become a doctor,

¹⁰ Josefine Richter von Innfeld, *Neues System: Methodische Entwicklung des Sprachorganismus für den Kunstgesang* (Vienna, 1887).

nor a lawyer, nor a philosopher, so what is the point of continuing studies at school?'¹¹ Instead he enrolled at the conservatoire in Vienna, known then as the Konservatorium der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde. The records show his years of study as 1859 to 1865, though he actually entered the school in the autumn of 1858 and left in 1862, continuing with horn lessons as an external member of the school. His primary study was horn under Wilhelm Kleinecke (a member of the Court Orchestra), and his subsidiary subjects were violin under Carl Heissler (a member of the Court Chapel Orchestra), piano with Professor Ramesch, orchestral studies with Josef Hellmesberger (the director of the conservatoire) and theory and composition with the eminent Simon Sechter (teacher of Schubert and Bruckner). Richter distinguished himself each year from 1860 to 1865 as Kleinecke's best pupil. On one occasion during his studies with Sechter (by now an old man of more than seventy) Richter took with him a score of Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, borrowed from his mother, for the theorist's opinion. After a few days his teacher returned it with the comment, 'Yes, well I'm afraid that's how many compose these days'.¹²

The timetable was a full one. Horn lessons were for two hours on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons; on Mondays and Wednesdays these were followed by an hour-long violin lesson. He saw Sechter and Ramesch for three hours on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays and Hellmesberger for two hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He also studied viola, trumpet and timpani, using every available chance to play chamber music with his fellow students. He found the time to play the piano for his mother at a concert given in response to public demand in the Richters' home town of Raab on 16 September 1859. The programme was shared with the band of Archduke Max's 8th regiment of lancers (uhlans). Together mother and son performed operatic arias from *Fidelio* and *Robert le Diable*, a song by Heinrich Proch 'in Austrian dialect' entitled 'Morgenfensterl' and one in Hungarian written for the soprano Anna de la Grange by its composer Béni Egressi. Though already enrolled as a student at the conservatoire in Vienna, Richter was still described in the programme as a pupil of the Imperial Chapel. He also gained experience and supplemented his meagre income as an extra player in the various opera orchestras in the capital, such as the Kärntnerter or Burg theatres. He played timpani for three months under Franz von Suppé at the Theater an der Wien and viola for a year under Jacques Offenbach at the Quay Theatre. He immersed himself in the performing life of the city and participated fully in musical activities at the conservatoire. He gained both repertoire and playing experience and diligently prepared himself for his chosen professional career as a conductor, for this was (and had been for some years by now) the goal upon which he had set his sights. Fellow-student Franz Fridberg, in an article in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, recorded a memory of Richter in his conservatoire days:

11 Franz Josef Grobauer, *Die Nachtigallen aus der Wiener Burgkapelle* (Horn, 1954).

12 Carl Gianicelli, *Bayreuther Blätter*, vol. 40, 1917, p. 76.

If there was no trombonist, Richter would lay down his horn and seize the trombone; next time it would be the oboe, the bassoon or the trumpet and then he would pop up among the violins. I once saw him manipulating the contra-bass and on the kettledrums he was unsurpassed. When we – the Conservatory orchestra – under Hellmesberger’s leadership once performed a mass in the church of the Invalides, Richter sang. How he did sing! At times he helped out the basses in difficult passages, at others the tenors, and I believe he even sang with the sopranos. I got to know him on that day, moreover, as an excellent organist. It aroused uncommon merriment among us fellow performers when he stood there and with a self-important look, emitted, over the whole orchestra and chorus, his *Crucifixus* into the body of the church.¹³

Having graduated with flying colours from the conservatoire, Richter auditioned on 4 August 1862 as a horn player for Director Matteo Salvi of the Kärntnertor Theatre (later the Hofoperntheater or Court Opera Theatre) and was accepted; his contract began on 1 September that year. A few weeks prior to this first permanent professional post, he had passed an unofficial examination as a Kapellmeister given him by Heinrich Esser (first Kapellmeister at the Kärntnertor Theatre, who watched and guided the early stages of Richter’s career) and Franz Lachner. Richter was new to Lachner, who was based in Munich as Music Director at the Opera, but the visiting conductor gave the student a glowing recommendation, describing him as ‘an able pianist, a skilful score-reader and above all a basically sound and educated musician. With his significant talents he will soon master the routine necessary for a conductor’.¹⁴ Esser fully endorsed his colleague’s opinion ‘with complete conviction’.¹⁵

Hans Richter remained a member of the Kärntnertor Theatre until 31 March 1866 during which period he observed Wagner on more than one occasion. As he himself described it, ‘I had seen him conducting and had worshipped him at a distance; but I had never spoken to him, though I had always longed to do so.’¹⁶ Heinrich Esser himself was a thorough workman-like professional and ‘while never a true-blue Wagnerian’,¹⁷ conducted *Lohengrin* in May 1861 especially for the composer, who, due to his exile from Germany in 1849, had not yet heard the work. *Der fliegende Holländer* followed and Wagner was so encouraged that he tried to cast *Tristan und Isolde* and have it staged in the capital, but to no avail. It was considered unplayable in 1863 after two years’ effort and seventy-seven rehearsals it was left to the tireless von Bülow in Munich to conduct its premiere two years later in 1865. Wagner was also in Vienna for Christmas 1862 and the New Year of 1863, when he conducted three concerts of orchestral and vocal extracts from his operas at the Theater an der Wien. Later, in December 1863,

13 T. R. Croger, *Notes on Conductors and Conducting* (London, 1899).

14 Strobel, *Hans Richter*.

15 Ibid.

16 *Windsor Magazine*, Sep. 1896.

17 Ernest Newman, *The Life of Richard Wagner*, vol. 3 (London, 1947).

he was back in the city and participating in a concert given by Tausig. Wagner's contribution was again some of his own pieces but he also gave a startling (and in his view authentic) interpretation of Weber's overture to *Der Freischütz*, though not without a considerable struggle to get the orchestra out of its bad habits.

There is little information about Richter's four-year career as a horn player in Vienna. Hardly any letters survive from those years; the one or two that do were birthday greetings to his mother.

Much loved Mother,

I fulfil my sacred duty by wishing for your honoured birthday every conceivable good, which you deserve in the greatest amount. May God keep you healthy and happy both for my well-being and for the happiness of your other relatives; you can be assured that I shall do my utmost to ensure your happiness. Meyerbeer's *Dinorah* was performed by us on the 11th. It was very well received but that was largely thanks to Murska, Beck and Eppich from Graz who is a splendid tenor, an excellent actor despite his small voice. After March the Italian opera company is coming; I'm really fearful of this foreign opera trash.

You need not worry at all about my health, thank God I am quite well for beer is the best medicine. Also I already have 50, yes *fifty*, Gulden deposited in the bank and set aside for clothes; if only my blessed grandmother had known that her spendthrift Hans would one day learn to save! When are you coming to Vienna? I don't have any more to write about, hence I remain your grateful son,

Johann Richter¹⁸

There are the signs of later prejudices and attitudes in this letter including a preference for the German rather than the Italian operatic style, an awareness of the need to harness his finances and a hedonistic disposition, which at this age favoured beer, though later a good wine. The young man was becoming impatient to obtain his first conducting post, especially with such glowing testimonials from Esser and the even more influential Lachner. He had already made his professional debut as a conductor when, on 19 September 1865, he returned to Raab. This initial entry in the first of his six conducting books records this event and a second in Pressburg during the winter season.

After several attempts at conducting at the Vienna Conservatoire (and also in some churches), I conducted my first public concert in my home town of Raab. It was organised by the Raab Music Society. Concert on 19th September 1865. Auber, the overture to *La Muette de Portici*, W. A. Mozart, *Jupiter* Symphony (C major).

In the course of the winter '65-'66 I also conducted in a Charity Concert in the Pressburg Theatre, the overture to *La Muette de Portici* and, for Frau Millerschek and Herr Calori, a *pas de deux* from *Monte-Christo*. My activities as

18 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, Vienna, 14 Mar. 1865.

an ‘employed’ conductor began at the Court and National Theatre in Munich as Royal Bavarian Court Music Director.¹⁹

Many years later, in April 1898, a postcard was sent to him signed ‘Batka’ from Pressburg. This was Johann Nepomuk Batka, a long-standing friend since about 1871, from whom Richter had sought further details of this second Pressburg concert.²⁰ The postcard is glued to the inside cover of the first volume of the conducting books. To the side Richter has annotated the words: ‘According to Batka’. The card’s message in Batka’s hand reads:

Your first concert was here at the Association with Miss Tellheim, Messrs Walter, Zamara, Zellner, Risegari on 9 April 1866. Old Wawra wrote in the *Pressburger Zeitung* on 11.4.1866, ‘Mr R[ichter] also rendered a performance of the duet from Gounod’s *Faust*, in which he played the piano accompaniment from memory and proved his true dedication during the evening. Mr R[ichter] is almost appointed a Kapellmeister in Augsburg, where he must go in September’. But Man proposes, God disposes!²¹

Batka’s final comment here was made with the benefit of hindsight, for he knew what actually happened to Richter in the year 1866, the most significant year of his life. The outbreak of the Austro-Prussian war on 14 June put paid to any further ideas of going to Augsburg. It was, however, not the war but a letter written to Kapellmeister Heinrich Esser in Vienna on 16 August 1866 that changed and determined the course of Hans Richter’s life. The source of that letter was Tribschen on Lake Lucerne in Switzerland and its author was the man whom the student Richter had admired from afar and so longed to meet, Richard Wagner.

19 Hans Richter, *Dirigierbücher* (henceforth Conducting Books) 1.

20 Johann Nepomuk Batka (1845–1917), Pressburg (today Bratislava) City Archivist and music critic.

21 Laut Karte von Batka: L[ieber] H[ans] Pressburg 1898.2.4. Freitag, ‘Dein erstes Konzert war hier im Vereine mit Fr[äulein] Tellheim, Hr Walter, Zamara, Zellner, Risegari am 9 April 1866. Der alte Wawra schrieb unter dem 11.4.1866 in der *Pressb.Ztg.*, “Herr R[ichter] ermöglichte auch die Aufführung der Duette aus Gounod’s *Faust* in dem er die Klavierbegleitung aus dem Gedächtnisse spielte und sich in diesen Abend wirkliche Aufopferung bewies. Herr R. ist bereits als Kapellmeister nach Augsburg designirt, wohin er im September (sic!!!) abgehen muß!’ Aber der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt! (Hans Richter, Conducting Book 1).

CHAPTER 2

1866–1867

TRIBSCHEN

During the summer of 1866, having completed Act I of *Die Meistersinger*, Richard Wagner wrote to his publisher Schott to complain about the dirty, ink-stained condition in which the manuscript of the orchestral Prelude was returned to him by the engravers. On completion, the full score of the opera was destined to be donated to his patron King Ludwig of Bavaria, and so Wagner decided he needed a copyist to make a fair copy of what he had written and to keep pace with him as he composed and scored the remaining two acts. Schott could not help, but Wagner sent a letter on 16 August 1866 to Hofkapellmeister Heinrich Esser in Vienna which produced a different result. He specifically asked for:

a very intelligent copyist with a perfectly complete understanding of music. If you are able to recommend an individual from among the many younger or older needy musicians of Vienna, you would do me a favour by letting me know; I would then take this adjutant, initially for half a year, with full board and expenses paid, so that under my supervision ... he could make an exact copy. Accordingly I would be glad to know his terms: this engagement would begin in October.¹

Esser recommended Hans Richter, but, as he told Schott, he ‘hoped in so doing for no retribution from heaven and prayed for forgiveness from God for sending such a young and unblemished soul to Wagner.’² Towards the end of October, Wagner wrote a letter to King Ludwig in which he informed him of the impending arrival from Vienna of

1 Richard Wagner to Heinrich Esser, 16 Aug. 1866.

2 Heinrich Esser to Anton Schott in Manfred Eger, *Hans Richter, Des Meisters lieber Gesell* (Bayreuth, 1988).

an able musician I have engaged as my secretary, because I need a very gifted, thorough person with enough understanding of a score to enable him to copy it correctly and at once. I have seen at first hand how disgracefully my original manuscript was treated by engravers and copyists, and as I now view my own handwriting with quite different eyes than before, because it all now belongs to my gracious king, I take the minutest precautions that it shall reach him in the purest state.³

Richter's journey from Vienna to Tribschen is well documented in a letter he wrote to his mother:

The happiest of men writes to you. I have arrived safely in Lucerne. *Vienna*: Although I left Vienna in relatively good spirits, I later fell into a more depressed mood. All at once, I thought to myself, I had to leave my dear ones and bitter regret overcame me when I thought how often I had hurt you; I was very sad. *Salzburg*: In the evening I dashed to the theatre to visit a colleague from Vienna and I found him.⁴ On another day he took me to Mozart's birthplace (house and memorial), to Haydn's little room etc. *Munich*: ... I visited Lachner. He was extremely friendly and was very pleased when I told him about you; he sends greetings. Schmitt was very friendly but he gets as angry as I do. In my room he paced up and down and took great pleasure (and in this I heartily joined him) in raging against present day singers (except for Fstellhuber) and the blockheads who resist his methods. He has high regard for you. 'Yes, your Mama', he says, 'she slaved night and day, until she had the matter in hand, but the others are lazy.' I was also with Mallinger; she was overjoyed to find an acquaintance from Vienna.

On my journey to *Augsburg* I met with a Mr Schöner, a salesman, who was a very nice man. We spoke about the theatre, and I told him I am your son, but only after he had praised you heartily. 'Yes, since [Josefine] Richter we've had no such comparable singer'. He was quite astonished, but very pleased, and told me he had danced with you at the *Die Harmlosen* association. The Hofmanns expected me. I didn't see the old lady as she was ill, but father and daughter fetched me. The daughter took me to the grave of my dear Marie.⁵ This stop was the saddest for me; first because of the memory of Marie and also because I was really feverish with excitement and tension. The next day I set off for *Lindau* in the company of a very charming young travelling salesman, who was very musical. We parted in Lindau; he remained and I went across the Bodensee to *Romanshorn*. Magnificent! Wonderful! Then off to *Zurich*. There I sought out my friend, the tenor Reinhold. He and the bass Roth were extremely friendly towards me. The orchestra there thinks highly of you. I had no time for our Zurich acquaintances as Reinhold would not let me go. The present Kapellmeister was in Breslau when you were there. On Sunday I conducted a ballet rehearsal of *Faust* for him; in the evening

3 Richard Wagner to King Ludwig of Bavaria, 25 Oct. 1866.

4 The violinist Julius Blau.

5 Hans' sister who had died in Augsburg in 1858.

Reinhold sang Faust very well. Tell Aicher or Kleinecke, they will also be pleased. The next day Reinhold and Roth accompanied me to *Lucerne*.

On Tuesday at 11 o'clock I introduced myself to Wagner.⁶ I had not expected that he would be so exceptionally friendly. He still remembered me half and half.⁷ At six in the evening I moved in. A few minutes later Wagner came to me. He spoke with me for a long time and in a very friendly manner. He is pleased to have a musician around him, and sees it as a sign of respect for him that I have taken this somewhat adventurous engagement here on Lake Lucerne. He has already promised to help my progress in the future. I live on the second floor; a charming room with a view over the lake and the Rigi mountains. Our house is half an hour from Lucerne and lies twenty to thirty paces from the lake. It is occupied by Wagner, the Bülow family, me and the servants. I have already had a very nice boating trip. The surroundings are indescribably beautiful, the roses are still in flower, and this pure air! Today I'll make another short trip and tomorrow (Thursday) I shall start work. I already have the score.

I shall not starve for I am allowed as much as I wish to eat and drink. Wagner's housekeeper, who has provided me with everything, seems to be a very good woman.⁸ I have everything I need here in the house. You do not need to send me money, you can keep it till I return to Vienna. Do not forget to send me your new address, but write it clearly. Mine is c/o Richard Wagner in Lucerne, Landhaus Tribschen [*sic*]. Just write Hans Richter, not Kapellmeister or anything. I will have much to do, so I shan't be able to write often, therefore do not worry; I am healthy, the cough has almost gone. Greetings and kisses to everyone. I remain your grateful son

Hans⁹

Richter's diary gave a slightly fuller account of his arrival at Wagner's home that Tuesday morning, 30 October 1866.

At first they did not want to let me in as he never receives visitors, but as I was explaining the purpose of my visit he came out of his room. ... The occupants of Tribschen are Wagner, Baroness Bülow with the children Lulu, Boni and Loldi;¹⁰ the housekeeper Vreneli, her niece Marie who is the children's governess and Agnes who takes care of them; Marie the cook, Steffen the servant, Jost the houseboy and 'ego'. Furthermore there are two peacocks, two cats, one horse, the dogs Russ and Koss and a number of mice.¹¹ These then are the staff and the livestock.

The children were very young. Lulu, aged six and Boni, aged three, were the children of Cosima's marriage with Hans von Bülow. Loldi (Wagner's child

6 30 Oct. 1866.

7 Probably from one of Wagner's visits to Vienna in 1862 or 1863.

8 Vreneli or Verena Weidmann, later Frau Stocker.

9 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 31 Oct. 1866.

10 Daniela, Blandine and Isolde respectively.

11 The dogs Russ and Koss were a Newfoundland and fox terrier respectively.

though never acknowledged as such by her mother) was just eighteen months old. The relationship between Hans Richter and these three children, and later with Eva and Siegfried (born in 1867 and 1869 respectively), was always extremely close throughout his life. They became the siblings he had lost in his own childhood. The relationship with Cosima, however, was not so easy. She was naturally protective towards Wagner and probably considered Richter as a threat. She was still commuting between her husband in Munich and Wagner in Tribschen and would do so until the final break with Bülow in July 1868. At the time of Richter's arrival she knew she was vulnerable, living as she was with a public, controversial figure many years her senior; in 1866 Wagner was fifty-three years old and Cosima twenty-nine. Like Wagner, Cosima also wrote to King Ludwig of Bavaria to report Richter's arrival and it is clear that she did not relish the prospect of an addition to the household:

I find it almost disagreeable that Tribschen awaits a guest, in fact a young musician who has the task of copying our friend's score, so that the manuscript, dedicated to your noble self, will not be ruined by the printers. It is absolutely necessary because the *Meistersinger* Prelude has already been in the greatest danger; I hope also that the new arrival will be unassuming and quiet.¹²

A few days after Richter was installed at Tribschen, Cosima seemed happier and more reassured. 'The apprentice Hans Richter, or Jean Paul as we call him, behaves quite well. He turned down the offer of a Music Directorship in order to come here and "learn something". He is modest and diligent.'¹³ Richter's rejection of such a high post (the one he nearly took in Augsburg earlier in the year) is untrue. The newspaper quoted on Batka's 1898 postcard referred only to 'a Kapellmeister's post' and his inexperience would have precluded him from being offered anything else. By the beginning of December Hans was playing *Lohengrin* to Cosima each day but it was not until Christmas Eve, some two months after his arrival, that he was permitted to join the couple socially. Thereafter he was taken fully into the family circle. From October until Christmas he worked hard at the score and was occasionally asked to play to the couple. 'Last Wednesday [14 November 1866]', he wrote to his mother, 'we had our first tea and music evening. I had to play the tenor aria [Prize aria] from *Meistersinger* on the horn; this gave much pleasure.'¹⁴ Wagner's own daily regimen of hard work was a source of inspiration to his young apprentice and it seems that master and pupil became genuinely close. The older man was determined that his amanuensis should never return to his seat in the orchestra as a horn player and often promised to help him further his career as a conductor when he left his service. On Christmas Day he told his mother:

12 Cosima Wagner to King Ludwig, 25 Oct. 1866.

13 Cosima Wagner to King Ludwig, 4 Nov. 1866.

14 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 18 Nov. 1866.

For Christmas I received from Wagner an exquisite silk shawl (or whatever it is you call the thing that you tie around your neck), a fur cap and, from Baroness Bülow, a beautiful leather briefcase. I am so happy to be in the proximity of such a man! I have successfully finished the first act of the opera. Wagner was very pleased.¹⁵

Hans enlisted his mother's help in obtaining for Cosima a collection of butterflies as a gift for Wagner. A great conspiracy of secrecy was necessary to prevent the composer from spoiling the surprise which he received on 7 February 1867, his name-day. 'The butterflies arrived healthy and happy, if dead', Hans thanked his mother. 'The Baroness and Wagner were very pleased and wish, by May or June, to have received another such collection to give it a symmetry. ... The Baroness is so kind and teaches me French.'¹⁶ The French lessons persisted throughout 1867 and Hans was able to practise the language by conversing with the servants, some of whom spoke only French.

Hans Richter's life at Tribschen is also detailed in a small collection of letters he wrote to his friend Camillo Sitte. The two men, born a fortnight apart, had known one another since the 1850s when they were both pupils at the Piaristengymnasium in Vienna, and they were to remain life-long friends. During their further years of study in the Austrian capital (where Sitte became an architect), the two young men became the leading lights of a group of artistic intellectuals who were distinctly bohemian in both outlook and manner. The group bore the name *Zwack* which colloquially means to tease or pester, behaviour which came easily to them. Their colleagues were the scholar of German Ludwig Blume, whose sister married Camillo Sitte, the philologists Adolf Lichtenfeld and Karl Lindemayr, the musicians Johann Faistenberger (later a famous singing teacher in Vienna and timpanist in the Philharmonic Orchestra), Leopold Landskron (subsequently an eminent piano teacher at the Vienna Conservatoire and joint editor of a musical journal) and the opera conductor Josef Sucher. On account of Sitte's chosen profession, Richter informed him of a visit on New Year's Day 1867 to Zurich in Wagner's company to see Gottfried Semper, a long-time friend of the composer and then Professor of Architecture at the Zurich Polytechnic, who had a model of a new Festival theatre ready for inspection. Because King Ludwig thought this building was destined for his capital, Richter called it 'the Munich' theatre and his complicated layman's description would nowadays be summarised as a false proscenium arch.

The main building is an amphitheatre, the auditorium naturally the same only without boxes and galleries. The first row of seats is level with the stage, the orchestra is also semi-circular and invisible to the public because it lies deeper and the audience seats rise higher and higher such that their view goes over the orchestra. This would not be possible if the stage were not constructed in

15 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 25 Dec. 1866.

16 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 8 Feb. 1867.

the way that it is. This is not immediately adjacent to the two side walls which border the auditorium and form the front of the stage, but instead there is a second wall situated some one and a half paces behind these other two walls and decorated exactly like them except that it is somewhat smaller in scale, so that the stage is very much like a picture in a frame. This also prevents that unattractive habit that many singers have of stepping outside the set. On both sides of the main building is provision for a concert hall, rehearsal hall and dance hall. My description is really quite confusing because I don't understand the technical terms, but as I cannot do better you'll have to put up with it!¹⁷

Among the party visiting Semper in Zurich was Hans von Bülow who had arrived from Basle. Richter's diary refers to a performance at Tribschen on 30 December 1866 by Bülow of the Piano Sonata in F minor by Schumann. He told his mother that he no longer wished to hear any other pianist play (he was yet to hear Liszt) and he told Sitte, 'Friend, that is the greatest. That feeling, TECHNIQUE, memory, interpretation!'¹⁸ Wagner also made his young secretary study writings on music and orchestration, though Richter felt that his knowledge of Berlioz's treatise on the subject, which his father had owned, was sufficient. He was also encouraged to use Wagner's library to the full and by the New Year of 1867 he was deep into Goethe's Italian journeys. On 7 February he took part in a concert of chamber music in Lucerne, organised by Music Director Arnold, in which Hans played horn in Beethoven's Horn Sonata Op. 17 and viola in Mozart's Trio in E flat for piano, viola and clarinet. When he gave Wagner a private performance of the Beethoven work two days later, Hans reported to his mother that the composer was 'very pleased. I am very happy. On this occasion he promised me that I will be given a post for the production of the new opera [*Meistersinger*] in which I can display my abilities. Bülow will conduct it. I know of no other worthy artist for it. I have so much to learn! Thank God I am at the source of musical perfection!'¹⁹ When the Horn Sonata was repeated in Basle on 26 March things did not go so well, as he told Camillo:

They still have the higher pitch. At the rehearsal with Bülow's own piano we were perfectly in tune, so everything went splendidly, but his concert piano, because of the Basle orchestra, is still tuned in the old way and no one thought of that. The Horn Sonata was therefore a mess. Fortunately I had a make-shift crook with me and in the Brahms Trio for piano, violin and horn [Op. 40] I made amends for what might have been worse. This quite infamous stroke of fate strengthens my resolve even more to give up the horn completely, even though I'm thought of very much as a first horn. You'll know I'm right not to give in; on the other hand I can't take it amiss when they seek to persuade me. On the contrary I must take it as proof of their confidence in me as an artist.²⁰

17 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, Jan. 1867.

18 Ibid.

19 Hans Richter to Josefina Richter, 9 Feb. 1867.

20 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, Jan. 1867. The pitch was a quarter-tone higher.

In April, Cosima was away from Tribschen for a week and as a result Hans appears to have become closer to Wagner; an entry in his diary for Sunday 21 April speaks of a jolly evening meal together in which the composer opened up and reminisced about his life. Wagner spoke of the year 1834 in which, at the age of twenty-one, he conducted his first opera, Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, how he had prepared it and the difficulties he had encountered with conducting Donna Anna's recitative, presumably 'Crudele? Ah, no, mio bene' preceding 'Non mi dir' in the second act. He went on to speak of how he had met his first wife, Minna Planer, in the summer of that year in Lauchstädt and of her singing the role of the amorous fairy in *Lumpaci Vagabundus*.²¹ The spring of 1867 was a difficult time for Wagner. Cosima was in the throes of leaving von Bülow, with whom Wagner still had strong musical connections, and in Richter, a young man barely older than he was at the age about which he was reminiscing, he found an easy and receptive listener. Wagner, on the other hand, was not so easy to talk to. His new secretary was often obliged to accompany him on his afternoon walk during which there were usually long periods of silence. One day Richter was unable to prevent himself from asking the composer which opera he preferred, *Tannhäuser* or *Tristan*. In kindly fashion, Wagner told him not to ask such a stupid question. From then on Richter spoke only when he was spoken to on these walks but he also took Wagner's trust in him to heart and his life-long reverence begins to show. 'I'm not here surreptitiously to get myself a good job', he told his mother, 'but to learn and thank God I am able to. Nowhere else could I have learnt but here under the eyes of this genius. What I have learnt here will prepare my way throughout the world.'²² This last sentence was prophetic and recurs during various press interviews he gave throughout his life. In another letter he wrote: 'I'm fine. Really! I'm happy in the knowledge that I am loved by the greatest man of all time. My grateful respect has no bounds.'²³

Wagner invited Hans to travel with him in May to Schloss Berg on Lake Starnberg, where the composer was to be a guest of King Ludwig for two months. The plan fell through, however, as Ludwig's engagement to Archduchess Sophie Charlotte foundered at this time (it would be broken off in October 1867) and the king felt in no mood for entertainment. On the other hand he was eager for *Die Meistersinger*. Wagner completed the orchestral sketches on 5 March and two weeks later, on 22 March, began orchestrating the second act. The opera was scheduled for performance as part of the king's engagement celebrations in the autumn, but Ludwig's domestic upheavals forced its postponement until the following year, no doubt to Richter's relief. The two men did, however, undertake another trip together instead but it was to Munich, where Wagner supervised the final rehearsals of *Lohengrin* in June with Bülow as stage director and conductor.

21 A burlesque by Johann Nestroy (1801–62) with music by Adolf Müller (1801–85).

22 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 29 March 1867.

23 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, undated.

Letters to both his mother and Camillo Sitte described the musical problems and opera house politicking that surrounded the staging, not only of *Lohengrin* but of any Wagner opera. Wherever he went, Wagner aroused controversy. Whether his opinions were expressed in pamphlets or verbally, he invariably created factions which either earnestly supported him or vilified him; extreme, polarised positions were taken on his behalf or against him and moderation never prevailed. The *Lohengrin* demanded by Ludwig had to be a ‘model’ performance. It had been two years since the premiere of *Tristan und Isolde* in Munich and the monarch was becoming very anxious to have more of Wagner’s music performed for him. It soon became apparent, however, that the composer and his patron were on a collision course, particularly with regard to the casting of the opera. Wagner’s choice of tenors was limited. Albert Niemann refused to sing the role uncut and Ludwig Schnorr von Carolsfeld (the first Tristan) was dead. Wagner had to persuade the king to accept the sixty-year-old Josef Tichatschek from Dresden. The final rehearsal was postponed once because the Telramund (Franz Betz) was hoarse and then a second time because, due to the death of an Austrian princess, the court was in mourning for a week. Wagner had rapidly lost interest by now; he was embarrassed by Tichatschek’s tremulous voice (remarkable though it was for his age) and full of foreboding that Ludwig, peering through his opera glasses, would see little that would pass for youthfulness in the Knight of the Grail. Wagner had desperately tried to soften the blow by warning the king that Tichatschek’s singing was ‘like a painting by Dürer but that his outward appearance was more like a picture by Holbein’.²⁴ Sure enough the king, who had already overruled Wagner by casting Mathilde Mallinger as Elsa, objected to Tichatschek and to Frau Bertram-Meyer as Ortrud. The performance took place on 16 June with a new Lohengrin and Ortrud (Heinrich Vogl and his future wife Therese Thoma) but Wagner had returned to Lucerne a day earlier, leaving the luckless von Bülow to placate the discarded singers and quickly coach the replacements.

Richter told his mother that ‘the rehearsals for *Lohengrin* were for me of infinitely great value’.²⁵ Judging by a report in the newspaper *Die Signale* it is clear why the apprentice conductor would benefit so much by being allowed to observe Hans von Bülow at work. Bülow had been virtually responsible for laying the foundations for a schedule of operatic rehearsals that has endured to this day: coaching of individual singers and ensembles around the piano, preparing the orchestra with sectional rehearsals, piano-accompanied production rehearsals, a Sitzprobe (with singers and orchestra where no staging takes place but the singers are able to concentrate solely on the music) and stage rehearsals with orchestra, leading to a final rehearsal and the performances. Von Bülow perfected his system with *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Signale* described the ‘usual priming-needle rehearsals’ for the Munich *Lohengrin*:

24 Richard Wagner to King Ludwig, 12 June 1867.

25 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, June 1867.

Last week there were a million little rehearsals: a) for first and second violins, violas etc. alone, b) for winds and horns alone, c) for trumpets, trombones and percussion alone; d) for the off-stage band. Then there was a four-hour ensemble rehearsal for the strings, and now for each act there is a three-hour full orchestral rehearsal in the presence (though not with the participation) of the singers. All the stage rehearsals are for the present with piano, next week everything will be together. This new system, which is actually only tiring for the conductor, should prove very effective; Herr von Bülow spends ten hours a day in the theatre and probably also spends the night there, so that by early morning he is always first on the field of battle!²⁶

Hans told a friend, the opera singer Alexander Reinhold, that ‘the rehearsals for *Lohengrin* are fully underway and I am present all the time. ... Bülow is the Master of all conductors. Now that’s what I call studying!’²⁷ He told Camillo Sitte that he had

got to know the opera really well. Bülow prepares it wonderfully. Although the orchestra is nothing like as good as the Vienna orchestra, it does achieve excellent results. Once again it was proved to me that a good conductor is able to accomplish splendid things from even ordinary musicians. There was one rehearsal which I found especially interesting, the piano rehearsal which Wagner took with Fräulein Mallinger (Elsa), Frau Bertram-Meyer (Ortrud) and Tichatschek (*Lohengrin*). You should have seen the Master! He takes all the production rehearsals. The scenery was magnificent and, together with the costumes, true to the period in which the action is set. After much great preparation the final dress rehearsal took place, for which more than a hundred tickets had been issued. The king was present from beginning to end, and it all went splendidly. Unfortunately the old master Tichatschek did not sing at the performance. He possesses a fault which he will never correct in this life (he has his 60th year under his belt). His acting was too wooden. This might have accounted for the lack of consideration shown him if only his substitute had been a phenomenal actor but he too (Herr Vogel) is quite an insignificant singer with no poetic interpretation for the role. It was the greatest disappointment as far as the opera was concerned that Herr Tichatschek was not permitted to sing. Vocally he outshines all our young tenors; he has a noble sound and what was remarkable, he improved towards the end of the opera, which stood him in good stead for the Narration of the Grail by *Lohengrin* in Act III. Then there was his wonderful declamation, his diction, everything rhythmically short, so that one did not have to haul the words from his mouth with a tow rope as with most singers. ... Frau Bertram-Mayer did not sing either but I feel less sorry for her. She acted very well in fact but her voice has an ordinary sound in the middle range. ... Betz from Berlin is an eminent singer and actor. The orchestra was very good but the chorus was best. Yes, you may be surprised. Compared with Vienna, the chorus numbers are weaker but

26 *Die Signale*, 6 June 1867.

27 Hans Richter to Alexander Reinhold, 29 May 1867.

the members went for their task with an enthusiasm unique for such people. One can, with hindsight, call this a model performance.²⁸

The reasons for Wagner's dissatisfaction with Mathilde Mallinger were clarified by Hans for his mother: 'She sings in tune and in time, but without warmth, and she does not grasp the musical expressiveness of this opera at all. Yes, there's a difference between Italian ear-tootling and the music of German opera. With the former an effective final cadenza is the main thing but the latter has an integrated development without the slightest neglect of any secondary figuration.'²⁹ Once again his bias towards German music and his lukewarm opinion of Italian music became apparent. Earlier in the year he had advised his mother on the repertoire her pupils should be studying. 'Just Mozart, Weber, Beethoven, Schubert Lieder, Mendelssohn, Wagner and in God's name also Meyerbeer and Gounod's *Faust*. Only no Verdi; one cannot learn anything from him. By studying just a little representative amount of music, I can see what these modern Italians are scribbling down as music. My hate and disdain for them are mounting to a frenzy!'³⁰ In later life these opinions of French and Italian music were transposed.

Richter's mother married her second husband, Anton von Innffeld, on 4 March 1867. Hans was absolutely delighted for Josefine, whose happiness and well-being concerned him constantly, but he was also genuinely fond of his stepfather. As he told the newly-weds in his letter of congratulation:

I'm not going to rack my brains for specially chosen words. To you, my dear mother, and to you, my father-friend, I cry a hearty 'Good luck!' You know best of all what you, dear Anton, have found in my mother and I thank heaven that Fate has placed her in the hands of the honourable gentleman that you are, a man who commands my fullest respect and love.³¹

He bombarded them with requests to send him this and that – winter coats, summer jackets, even the crook for the F horn that rescued him in the Brahms trio in Zurich, but never money. He lived on savings to supplement his board and lodging with Wagner and his needs were few. Wagner gave him one hundred francs for his name-day (24 June). 'That was noble', Richter told his mother. 'He said it was recompense for the journey [to Munich] but he had already paid me that as well as giving me twenty florins spending money in Munich.'³²

In this same letter Richter reveals that Wagner had promised him the job of training the chorus for *Die Meistersinger*. It was the first major step along his professional path. In spite of his resolve never to present himself to the music profession as a horn player, he did not give up playing altogether. One of the

28 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, 28 June 1867.

29 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, June 1867.

30 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, 19 Jan. 1867.

31 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, Mar. 1867.

32 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, undated, c. July 1867.

visits he paid during his stay in Munich (on 24 May 1867) was to Franz Strauss, first horn in the opera orchestra under von Bülow and father of the composer Richard, then just three years old. The paths of Richter and Strauss senior would cross again before long in connection with the premiere of *Die Meistersinger*.

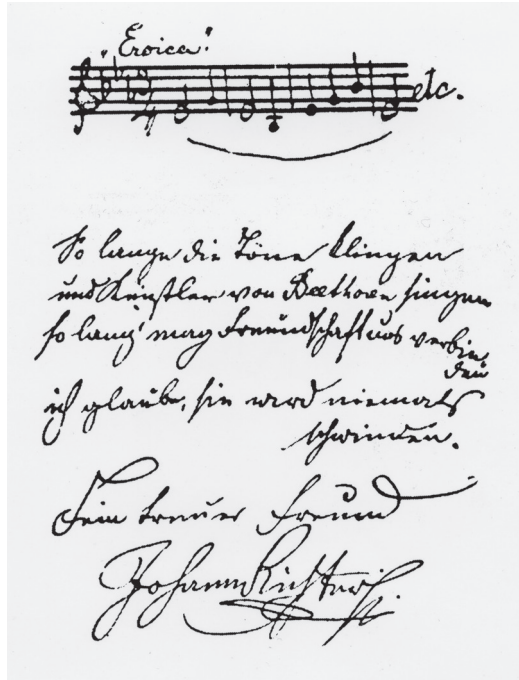
After working all day at copying, Richter would often row out to a small island on the lake. It would not be unusual for him to take his horn with him and, in the solitude of his surroundings, play phrases from *Die Meistersinger* amongst his repertoire. Many years later in 1885, after the degree ceremony at Oxford at which he received an honorary doctorate in music, he was approached by an academic. During the course of the conversation it emerged that this professor was holidaying in Lucerne at the time of Richter's apprenticeship with Wagner. He asked Richter if he knew the identity of a mysterious horn player whose music used to waft across the lake at dusk. Richter confessed that it was he, adding that the professor could consider himself the first member of the public to hear music from what was then the unperformed opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* by Richard Wagner.

On one occasion the composer himself used his secretary's expertise as a horn player during the course of the composition of the opera's second-act finale. Asked by Wagner if a passage in the brawl scene was playable, Richter replied in the affirmative but added that the result would be strange and somewhat nasal.³³ His answer could not have delighted Wagner more, for this was just the desired effect sought by the composer, though in the finished score he strengthens the first horn by also giving the frenetic semiquaver passage to principal oboe, clarinet and bassoon all of which, as reed instruments, provide an added edge to reinforce this nasal quality. Asked by Wagner to demonstrate on the horn, Richter had to play the passage again and again at an increasingly faster tempo until the composer was satisfied.

Quite what Richter made of Wagner's private life, which he witnessed more or less at first hand, is difficult to tell. On 17 February 1867, Wagner's daughter Eva was born (his second child by Cosima) but Richter calls her Bülow's fourth daughter in his diary. He notes too that the child was born at nine in the morning and that Bülow arrived at two in the afternoon. Two days later, on the 19th, the child's baptism took place at three in the afternoon. Hans was a witness and also deputised for the absent godfather Emil Merian. Five days later Bülow left, followed on 2 March by his acknowledged children, Daniela and Blandine, with their governess Agnes. There was much journeying between Tribschen and Munich throughout the year, much of it done by Cosima to maintain the charade of her marriage. Someone who finally had to be brought into the affair was Cosima's father, Franz Liszt. Wagner dreaded the inevitable meeting with his former close friend for he knew that he would have to give a complete account of himself. Liszt arrived in Munich on 21 September 1867 and on 1 October

33 Twenty-one and a half bars before the beginning of Scene vii, where the first horn takes up the music of Beckmesser's Serenade.

Figure 1. Dedication to Camillo Sitte from Hans (Johann) Richter quoting the opening of Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony, Vienna 1864.



Wagner sent Richter with an introduction to meet him. This came about in a way typical of Wagner's impetuous nature. On 29 September, as Hans recounted to Camillo Sitte:

We were seated at the piano, Wagner and I, playing a duet version of Bach's preludes and fugues from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*. My friend! That wasn't the old pedant, the father of fugue and counterpoint! No, that was the prototype of Beethoven's C minor symphony, the work of the greatest composer, the founder of German music. It sounded quite different from what I was used to hearing. Oh, this Wagner! It is impossible to describe what demonic power lies in these pieces when they are interpreted by my noble master. When we got to the C sharp minor Fantasy I could restrain myself no longer, the tears poured from my eyes. Wagner too was quite moved by the power of Bach's sounds. Time and again he called out 'he is the greatest master'. Then he said I should hear them played by Liszt. Hardly had he said this when he explained to me that on Tuesday I should make preparations to travel to Munich. And that's how it happened.³⁴

Hans heard Liszt play at Bülow's house on the following day, Wednesday 2 October, and told his mother:

34 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, Nov. 1867.

It is indescribable how this master has these sounds within his power. ... On Wednesday 9th Liszt came from Basle on a visit. How uplifting it was for me to be in the company of the two greatest living composers. Liszt played a lot from Wagner's new opera. This continued late into the night. On Thursday morning he travelled back to Munich.³⁵

It is worth returning to the letter to Sitte for more detail about these few but nevertheless extraordinary days:

Wagner had given me a written introduction to Liszt. He doesn't look at all clerical; he wore quite an ordinary black suit and his manner was kindness itself. In the evening at Bülow's, I was lucky to take part in hearing the master of all masters. My friend! After I'd heard Bülow and Tausig I couldn't imagine anything more perfect than their playing but when one hears Liszt play, one realises that he is the creator of pianists and everyone else is his pupil. He played me four preludes and fugues by Bach, among them the afore-mentioned C sharp minor Fantasy, then to end his own Prelude and Fugue on the name Bach. That evening was a musical landmark on the path of my artistic career. I was just in time, for the next day he left for Stuttgart. I awaited him the next morning at the station where we chatted for a long while. I received several cigars from him (he's a heavy smoker and as a matter of fact uses an excellent brand), one of which he wanted me to keep and smoke in your presence as a 'Cigar of Harmony'. I'm afraid, however, that it's gone up in smoke as has my hope to be with you soon. I remained in Munich for a week. On Wednesday 9 October Liszt came to us at Lucerne. What a reunion between both these intimate friends and masters! In the evening, after we had all eaten together, Liszt played the first act of *Meistersinger* from the proof copy, and the second and third acts from Wagner's sketches of the work. His ear hears everything with incredible accuracy but to follow with one's eye how he finds his way around the smeared and unclearly written sketches is an impossibility, even for me who until now fancied my ability as a sight reader. My friend, if I didn't know that Mother Nature had given me a drop of talent and that I take my art as seriously as both these masters, my courage would disappear when I am with them. For me, however, the association with such men is only uplifting and stimulating in the awareness of my serious endeavours. On Thursday morning Liszt travelled back to Munich. My friend, I can tell you that I am proud that Liszt kissed me more than a dozen times. It's his habit to salute people to whom he is well-disposed like that. I'll see him again next summer for he promised that he would come to Germany each summer for a longer period to visit his friends.³⁶

The impressionable young man was so elated at being in the presence of the two men during those heady days that he appeared to be totally unaware of Wagner's discomfort during the first six hours of Liszt's visit on 9 October, when the two were closeted together to discuss the Wagner-von Bülow-Cosima

35 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, Oct. 1867.

36 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, Nov. 1867.

triangle. The evening's music-making that followed dispelled any difficulties, however, and Wagner was able to record in his annals that the meeting was 'dreaded but agreeable.'³⁷ Liszt was no less affected by the strain of the occasion, although he considered the visit to be the best course of action. Nevertheless he also felt as if he had visited Napoleon on St Helena and in a letter to the Princess Wittgenstein described Wagner's appearance as 'very changed. He has become gaunt and his countenance lined. But his genius has not become weaker. *Die Meistersinger* left me astonished by its essence, boldness, strength, fervour and its inexhaustible riches. No man but he could have written such a masterpiece.'³⁸

Two weeks after Liszt's departure from Tribtschen, Wagner completed the instrumentation of *Die Meistersinger*. It happened on 24 October and Richter's diary entry is simple: 'On the stroke of eight the end of *Meistersinger*.' The actual hour of completion is at variance with Carl Gianicelli's fuller account in his obituary notice of Richter:

As work on the instrumentation of the third act neared its conclusion, Wagner reckoned [on 21 October] that he would be finished within three days and indicated six o'clock as the precise hour on the third day at which the completion of the work would take place. The day came and to Richter's astonishment the Master called him in the early afternoon, at which time he would normally be working, for a walk. Richter assumed that the Master had forgotten that he wanted to complete *Meistersinger* on that day but refrained from reminding him. After they had returned home shortly before six, Wagner summoned Richter to his workroom – the first time this had ever happened. There lay the final sheets of the *Meistersinger* score, complete but for the last C in the double basses. The Master, in his pleasure at completing the great work, had worked hurriedly and as the church clocks of Lucerne struck six he took his quill and wrote in the last note of the score. He then rang for the servant, who brought a half-bottle of champagne, and Richard Wagner and Hans Richter toasted 'to *Die Meistersinger*'. The accuracy of this story is easily verified; in the handwriting of the *Meistersinger* score it is clear that the last C has been added later.³⁹

Sir Adrian Boult, in a letter to Richter's son-in-law Sydney Loeb, wrote: 'I wonder if I have told you before of an interesting point Richter told his friend [Ernst] Schiever, the violinist in Liverpool, who told my mother, that he was usually an hour longer each day over the job than Wagner over the actual scoring.'⁴⁰ Richter's work as copyist of the full orchestral score, subsequently sent to Schott for printing, was completed on 2 November 1867. At the end he signed it 'H. Richter scrp.', an abbreviation of *scripsit* or 'he wrote it'. Two days later Wagner left for a well-earned rest in Paris and, on his return, presented

37 Ernest Newman, *The Life of Richard Wagner*, vol. 4.

38 C. F. Glasenapp, *Das Leben Richard Wagners*, trans. W. A. Ellis, vol. 4 (London, 1903).

39 Carl Gianicelli, *Bayreuther Blätter*, vol. 40, 1917, pp. 73–86.

40 Sir Adrian Boult to Sydney Loeb, 20 June 1951.

his scribe with a beautiful travelling case. Hans now found himself with little to do but he had not long to wait before his next task. On 1 December he left Tribtschen after thirteen months and travelled to Munich. Two months earlier, during his visit to the city to meet Liszt, steps had been taken to secure this next move. As he told his mother:

My future has also been half decided. I am to be taken on as Chorus Master in December [at the Court Opera in Munich]. Wagner is against this, he wants me as Music Director. For the present I shall start in December to train the chorus for *Die Meistersinger* but also be free from working on all other operas except this one; for this I shall receive a special gratuity which pleases me very much for I do not wish to remain a Chorus Master.⁴¹

To Wagner's annoyance, Richter was passed over for the vacant music directorship but by writing both to Court Secretary Dufflipp and the Intendant of the Court Theatre, Baron Carl von Perfall, he secured him the post at the Munich Court Opera of repetiteur as well as chorus master for *Die Meistersinger*, as in his original plan, and for other operas such as Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Gluck's *Armida*, Spohr's *Jessonda* and Rossini's *William Tell*. To supplement his income, Richter also secured some teaching duties for himself at the new Royal Music School, which was headed by the indefatigable von Bülow. Richter's departure from Tribtschen was a matter of sincere regret to Wagner, who told Mathilde Maier that 'the cultured person in my company is a Viennese musician who can play the horn, violin and piano, who is totally organised and is also a child-like, good and handsome man. I shall now have to give him up to a post in Munich.'⁴² Richter would return to live with Wagner at Tribtschen between June 1870 and April 1871 but first came two turbulent years in Munich.

41 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, Oct. 1867.

42 Richard Wagner to Mathilde Maier, 17 Nov. 1867.

CHAPTER 3

1868–1869

MUNICH

Richter's first encounter with any anti-Wagner sentiment in Munich occurred soon after his arrival in December 1867. In spite of his appointment at the Court Opera he had to pass an audition as *repetiteur* set for him by Franz Lachner, General Music Director of the city and an opponent of Wagner. Lachner had met Richter on a visit to Vienna in February 1866 when he was pleased to give him a glowing reference as a potential *Kapellmeister*. Now Lachner was to test him again, but with Richter's colours firmly fixed to the Wagnerian mast, the young man no longer found a friend in the General Music Director. A message was sent to Richter to appear at ten o'clock the next morning at the opera house and accompany a production rehearsal of Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*. He was ordered not to bring a vocal score but to play from the full score provided. Fortunately he knew the work from his horn-playing days at the Vienna Opera and he duly came through the test with flying colours. He played the work with astonishing facility and earned the admiration and respect of both singers and observers, of whom there were many because word had got about of a possible public humiliation. Lachner's plan had misfired but he grudgingly conceded that in Hans Richter 'a Wagnerian had been found who also knew other music.'¹

Richter was lodging in Munich with a *repetiteur* named Ludwig Eberle, who told him of a small town in Bavaria with a charming eighteenth-century opera house in which he had worked with a visiting company from Bamberg. The house had a particularly large and fine stage and Eberle recommended it to Richter. The town's name was Bayreuth. When the idea of building a festival opera house in Munich specifically to stage Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was thwarted by the politics surrounding the scandal of the Wagner–Cosima–von Bülow affair and the impossible position in which it placed his patron King

1 Carl Gianicelli, *Bayreuther Blätter*, vol. 40, 1917, pp. 73–86.

Ludwig, Richter suggested Bayreuth to Wagner as a possible alternative venue because it was still on land belonging to the king. Wagner remembered the town from his youth and warmed to the idea immediately, and although the opera house which was already in the town proved unsuitable for his needs, Bayreuth was chosen as the site for his own purpose-built house. Richter always claimed the credit for having suggested the town of Bayreuth to Wagner.

Work on the preparation of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for the premiere in June now began to gather pace. Bülow's system of piecing together the various components of the cast was once again put into practice. Hans embarked on a monumental series of sixty-six rehearsals with the chorus, which had to be augmented by amateurs from the city to make up the numbers of male choristers. He began, not with learning the music, but by training them to act convincingly and enunciate clearly in anticipation of Wagner's declamatory style of setting his texts. He also coached the two tenors, Max Schlosser who took the part of David and Franz Nachbaur who sang Walther von Stolzing. The latter was not permitted to leave Darmstadt where he was under contract until 1 June, so Hans had to travel there (on 20 April) and work with him. 'I was sentenced to six weeks in Darmstadt', he wrote.² Bülow put it another way. 'We have sent our excellent young repetiteur to Darmstadt where, for a fortnight, he has been giving the Moor a good soaping even if he cannot scrub him white.'³ Wagner also exhorted Richter to:

Go for it ... the finest and only reward for me is to find a man who gives me true joy. Once again I have found him in you, you good man, and believe me that is worth more than any stroke of good fortune. Now stay worthy of me; I don't think you will feel too sorry that your destiny brought you to me.⁴

Other members of the cast included Franz Betz from Berlin as Hans Sachs, Mathilde Mallinger as Eva (Elsa in the previous year's *Lohengrin*) and Sophie Diez, Munich's 'house' mezzo soprano, as Magdalene. Rehearsals for *Die Meistersinger* brought Richter once again into contact with Franz Strauss. This eminent horn player was no friend to Wagner or his music and took every available opportunity to disparage it. During a stage rehearsal of the opera with the ninety-piece orchestra Strauss stood up and told Bülow that the passage in the finale of Act II, about which the composer had sought his copyist's advice, was unplayable, a risky thing to say with Hans Richter about. Sure enough the young chorus master appeared from the wings, leaned down into the pit and asked to borrow Strauss' horn, whereupon he proceeded to demonstrate to the full company (and to Bülow's delight) the error of the player's ways by performing the passage perfectly. Franz Strauss never forgave him. Many years later, in answer to an enquiry, Richter told the journalist F. G. Edwards:

2 Manfred Eger, *Hans Richter, Des Meisters lieber Gesell.*

3 Hans von Bülow to Joachim Raff, 5 May 1868.

4 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 26 Apr. 1868.

I am very sorry I cannot tell you any particular interesting story of Richard Strauss as a boy. I was in Munich from 1867–69. Richard Strauss' father was an excellent horn player at that time but with regard to his behaviour towards the work of Wagner, it is better not to mention it. Strauss' son may be happy that he has not his father in his orchestra. All this is, of course, quite privately and confidentially and you may forget it.⁵

At dinner on 20 June (the day between the final dress rehearsal and the first night) Wagner presented Richter with a set of gold buttons in the form of doves of the Holy Grail, which he himself had received from King Ludwig three years earlier. The first performance of *Die Meistersinger* took place on 21 June and it was a triumph for all concerned. After the premiere, a heated discussion took place at an inn among supporters and opponents of Wagner's music. Richter was there and to take the heat out of the moment he reached for his horn and blew the Nightwatchman's call from the end of the second act. Argument melted into laughter. Apart from the Viennese papers, including the implacable Eduard Hanslick who despised Wagner's music, the composer enjoyed a good press; not that he stayed in Munich to read it, for before the second performance he was back at Tribschen. Richter, meanwhile, remained in Munich and monitored his chorus throughout the five other performances of *Die Meistersinger*. The run did not end without further drama, however, for Wilhelm Fischer, who took the part of Kothner (one of the Mastersingers), was taken ill on the day of the last performance, 16 July. With the prospect looming of cancelling the performance (there was no understudy system in those days), Richter stepped into the breach. Although he had never been on stage before, he said he knew the part and would sing it. It was his one and only performance as a singer, apart from his boyhood days as an alto soloist with the Vienna Hofkapelle. His versatility as a musician knew no bounds and Wagner wrote that 'astonishing a deed as it was, it did not surprise me in the least for I know that in your place I would have done exactly the same.'⁶ The king paid Hans an *ex gratia* payment of two hundred florins for his contribution to the preparation of *Die Meistersinger* on 3 July 1868.

Wagner intimated in the same letter that he had asked Döfflipp to appoint Richter as Royal Music Director at a salary of 1,200 florins and that, failing this, he would try and secure a position for the young man elsewhere. He told Richter that he would have nothing more to do with the Munich theatre and that if the young man found himself without work, he was free to return to Tribschen. Wagner's intervention paid off. On 9 September 1868 and on behalf of the king, Intendant (General Manager) Baron von Perfall announced Hans Richter's appointment as provisional Court Music Director for three years with duties as both conductor and repetiteur. On 25 August, he conducted Rossini's *William Tell*. 'Send my washing very soon', he asked his mother, 'because I want to wear the beautiful shirt when I conduct; the 25 August is the king's birthday.

5 Hans Richter to F. G. Edwards, 10 Dec. 1902.

6 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 21 July 1868.

... Also send the red box containing my buttons, I forgot them.⁷ He backdated his appointment to this date, for he wrote in his conducting book: 'My activities as an "appointed" conductor begin at the Court and National Theatre as Royal Bavarian Court Music Director.'⁸ Bülow, away in Wiesbaden at the time, asked Peter Cornelius to 'write and tell me about Richter's debut as my vice-baton.'⁹ Hans did well and remained in the post for one year and three days, conducting on average three times a month. His repertoire for that period consisted of *William Tell*, *La dame blanche* (Boieldieu), *Das Rothkäppchen* (Dittersdorf), *Le premier jour de Bonheur* (Auber),¹⁰ *Der Postillon von Lonjumeau* (Adam), *Der Rothmantel* (Krempelsetzer), *Le Prophète* and *Les Huguenots* (Meyerbeer), *Fidelio* (Beethoven), *Das graue Männchen* (Ballet), *Ruy Blas* (Max Zenger), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Mozart) and, on 27 July 1869, just a month before he resigned the post, his first performance of *Die Meistersinger*, the opera he would make his own and conduct a further 140 times during the course of his life.

His musical patrons were satisfied with their protégé. Wagner's congratulations on the appointment were included in a letter dated 7 September 1868. Hans von Bülow wrote to Joachim Raff: 'On Sunday it's *Les Huguenots*, otherwise rehearsals for *Die Meistersinger* with Sigl (Beckmesser). I'm leaving the coaching of Hans Sachs (Kindermann) to Richter, whose appointment as Court Music Director was announced yesterday.'¹¹ Bülow developed a high regard for Richter and reported to Wagner in December that the young man was working very capably and earning the respect of his colleagues. 'Don't feel insulted that, as a Christmas present, I have given Hans Richter the seal in the shape of your bust that you gave me. On it I have had engraved the words "Ehrt eure deutschen Meister!"'¹² I think I have led the way as a good example.¹³ A little later, Bülow was calling Richter 'Hans II' when he told Joachim Raff that were he himself to be advanced, then Richter would be appointed first Theatre Kapellmeister.¹⁴

Wagner's letters to Richter (of which one hundred were published in 1924) are full of a variety of topics, from news of the occupants (human and animal) of Tribschen to advice on the second series of performances in Munich of *Die Meistersinger*:

Sigl [as Beckmesser] was said to be correct but somewhat dull; apparently the serenade under the window – namely its passage work – dragged even more than with Hölzl. Urge him to sing these things in a brisker tempo; such moments must only be comical, not boring. Beckmesser is a virtuoso who

7 Hans Richter to Josefine Richter, Aug. 1868.

8 Hans Richter, Conducting Book 1.

9 Hans von Bülow to Peter Cornelius, 24 Aug. 1868.

10 'The best product of the French school in many decades': Hans von Bülow to Emil Bock, 8 July 1868.

11 Hans von Bülow to Joachim Raff, 11 Sep. 1868.

12 'Honour your German masters', the final chorus of *Die Meistersinger*.

13 Hans von Bülow to Richard Wagner, Dec. 1868.

14 Hans von Bülow to Joachim Raff, 18 Jan. 1869.

enjoys his singing skills too well. ... You seem to be well-liked; that's very necessary, particularly in Munich. ... Very soon I'll send you the first act of *Siegfried* to copy. I'd be grateful if you would get on with it straight away. ... I'm beginning to recover, am busily writing out a clean copy of the *Siegfried* score and hope to finish the composition of this, my second *opéra comique*, on my next birthday, when, on my reckoning, I'll be 106 years old.¹⁵

Hans had already started work on copying *Siegfried*; his diary entry shows 23 November 1868 as the day he began. *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, of which *Siegfried* is the second opera, occupied Wagner from 1848, when he wrote the first prose draft of *Der Nibelungen-Mythus als Entwurf zu einem Drama*, to 1874, when he completed the full score of the third act of *Götterdämmerung*. The tetralogy begins with the prologue *Das Rheingold* and it was this work that precipitated Hans Richter's departure from Munich in the summer of 1869. King Ludwig, always eager to have Wagner's operas performed for him, told Hans von Bülow on 25 February 1869 that he wished to see *Tristan und Isolde* in the spring and *Das Rheingold*, which Wagner had completed in May 1854 but which had not yet been staged, on his birthday, 25 August. Its lack of performance was a consequence of Wagner's stipulations that his *Ring des Nibelungen* (which at that time was incomplete) should only be given in its entirety, that it should on no account be in the repertoire of any German theatre whose operational methods he loathed, that it should only be performed before a selected and invited audience and only then in a theatre especially constructed in the countryside for such a purpose. Needless to say the king, equally stubborn when it came to his own wishes, ignored Wagner's protestations by reiterating his demands for a performance on his birthday. In spite of an assurance given by the composer to Bülow that he would attend the occasion (the conductor reported this to Hans von Bronsart in a letter dated 20 April 1869), in the end Wagner decided not to do any more than issue instructions and advice from Tribschen. As Bülow told Court Secretary Dufflipp,

Herr Music Director Richter has returned from Lucerne, with exact musical instructions for the performance of *Das Rheingold* provided by the composer. Would you be so good and take steps to ensure that Herr von Perfall does not set himself up in opposition to these instructions, as he did with *Die Meistersinger* and once again make my task so difficult as a consequence?¹⁶

As events turned out Bülow resigned his post on 8 June. His health was very poor; a tumour in his throat had been diagnosed a year earlier at the time of the *Meistersinger* premiere and in April 1869 he had caught a chill in Regensburg, where he was giving a piano recital. His duties at the Munich Music School were onerous and he now faced the task of reviving *Tristan* for the king with a cast in whom he had no faith ('Mr and Mrs Vogl – good devourers of notes

15 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 25 Nov. 1868.

16 Hans von Bülow to Lorenz von Dufflipp, 7 Apr. 1869.

but otherwise? ... The result will be at best a *fiasco d'estime*').¹⁷ Cosima and the children had left him for good (on 16 November 1868) and in June 1869 she bore Wagner his only son, Siegfried. This was a further humiliation for the cuckolded Bülow, who was also exhausted and in need of total rest. 'I am saving myself, my health and my future human and artistic existence', he told Hans von Bronsart. '*Periculum in mora*. ... Here I am literally half dead from work and three-quarters dead from worry – *pour le roi de Bavière*. ... My only concern is to be able to get away from here quickly and without a scandal.'¹⁸ Matters came to a head with his orchestra during a stormy rehearsal of *Tristan* on 15 June, though some players, to whom he was grateful, sprang to his defence and evidently realised the worth of the man in their midst whom they were about to lose forever. As he told Richard Pohl:

The performance was surprisingly correct and even beautiful. ... I have already given Richter *Die Meistersinger* (because of new building work in the theatre it will be the last performance of the season and takes place on the 27th with Betz and Mallinger) and have also given him the preparation of *Das Rheingold* for 25 August. He can get it done better than I because he is unbroken, fresh, healthy and ambitious.¹⁹

Richter telegraphed a worried Cosima: 'Bülow came to life during performance, afterwards cheerful, calls of "Bülow stay!", success tremendous.'²⁰ Although the king had given his Music Director leave until 1 October, during which time he was to reconsider his decision to resign, Bülow did not need it. He plainly saw what was coming as far as *Das Rheingold* was concerned and there was no question of second thoughts; his mind was made up and he left, spending most of the next three years in Italy.

The new building work mentioned by Bülow involved rebuilding the stage to accommodate the special machinery for *Das Rheingold* and lowering the pit to modify the acoustics. Meanwhile Richter had already been travelling back and forth between Munich and Tribschen to receive instructions from Wagner about either the preparation of *Das Rheingold* or the copying of *Siegfried*. Cosima noted in her diary on 5 April, 'I spent the day on the sofa listening to R[ichard] going through *Das Rheingold* with Richter, and embroidering'.²¹ There was one last happy occasion, the calm before the storm, when Richter was invited by Cosima to Tribschen for Wagner's birthday on 22 May. Early in the morning he blew birthday greetings in the form of Siegfried's horn call and a string quartet from Paris played three Beethoven quartets. Others involved in the production of *Das Rheingold* also undertook the journey: the stage director Reinhold Hallwachs,

17 Hans von Bülow to Dr K. Gille, 30 May 1869.

18 Hans von Bülow to Hans von Bronsart, 10 June 1869.

19 Hans von Bülow to Richard Pohl, 23 June 1869.

20 Cosima Wagner's diary, 21 June 1869.

21 Cosima Wagner's diary, 5 Apr. 1869.

the machinist Carl Brandt (who made a very favourable impression upon the composer), the singers Franz Betz, Otto Schelper and Karl (Max) Schlosser (the first two eventually pulled out as Wotan and Alberich respectively and Schlosser changed roles from Loge to Mime at the last minute) and the scene painter Jank. As problems with the staging of the opera began to emerge and as other crises arose, so the date of the performance began to be repeatedly put back and the king had to make do with Spohr's *Jessonda* on his birthday. The sequence of events which led to Richter's departure can be seen in Cosima's diary (R. denotes Richard Wagner).

4 July ... As R. is playing me what he has written, Richter comes in, to our astonishment. Dismal news from Munich, the theatre manager a coward, all the rest so crude that it defies description. Dear good Richter weeps as he recalls his happy days in Tribschen.

8 July ... In the evening said farewell to R[ichter], he will resign his position if Hans [von Bülow] really goes.

25 July ... In the morning a letter from Richter, who has requested his dismissal. He is being asked to stay on, R. answers that he should insist on his dismissal.

26 July ... Costumes for *Das Rheingold* arrived, very silly and unimaginative.

5 August ... Richter reports that they could not get the right singer for Alberich and he asks whether they might accept the wrong one.

13 August ... Richter describes the conditions in Munich as ever more horrible.

28 August ... Then came telegram after telegram and letter after letter all reporting that the dress rehearsal of *Das Rheingold* had been appalling, ridiculous to the highest degree, and that stupidity had joined hands with malice to ruin everything.

29 August ... Richter announces his decision not to conduct. ... R. telegraphs a 'bravo' to Richter. ... In the evening news from Richter, he really has been suspended.

2 September ... *Rheingold* impossible, the return of Richter to the conductor's desk would be the signal for the resumption of the old witch hunt against us and the king; and besides this, the staging of the work is so abominable that the machinist [Brandt] is demanding three months to put it right.

10 September ... Late in the afternoon Richter arrives. *Das Rheingold* is to be done in a fortnight with all the roles changed; the singer R. rehearsed for Loge is to sing Mime, the orchestra has been reduced etc. etc.

14 September ... Richter has left for Paris.²²

22 Cosima Wagner's diary, 4 July to 14 Sep. 1869.

Just two telegrams and one letter from Richter to Wagner, all written during the *Rheingold* affair, have survived. These and another source, Judith Gautier, provide a more detailed insight into the sequence of events. Richter's letter is long and detailed.

Your last telegram gave me firm proof that you do not wish to worry about anything that is going on in Munich. I understand that quite perfectly and in the interest of the magnificent creations you still wish to give the world, I must indeed express the wish that you, my honoured Master, are not prevented from working by the crowd of unworthy people who are here. But now I do not know if I should come with Wotan, Alberich and Loge or not?

Things look awful here! Perfall always wants to understand things better, gives his instructions regarding the [stage] machinery and above all he wants to get himself noticed as an 'intelligent boss' in every possible way. So meetings, conferences, and discussions are held; he takes his pleasure by debating and 'encapsulating' matters (his favourite expression). Then when everyone comes out of these meetings, they all know even less than when they went in and so further post-conference meetings have to be held. What is going to happen regarding the costume designs I do not know, i.e. how far they will be altered.

There are only two men here who really know what they are doing and how you want the stage machinery to be; they are the Brandts (especially the elder from Darmstadt) but their hands are tied. During the holidays, the others built some machines which have since proved impractical as they are not at all easy to handle in the time allowed in the score. Brandt was the only one who had thought about that aspect and who spoke with me in private. Now they are all falling over one another in their hurry to get something finished which is usable within the fixed time limits.

In the rehearsal Hallwachs could hardly get a word in edgeways about the machinery, for it's the Intendant's [Perfall] way that something always occurs to him only after he's heard someone else's opinion. It's like Bedlam here. A few days ago the Intendant and I had a bad meeting. He called me and accused me strongly of ignoring his position as being in charge and of allowing myself to be commanded only 'from Lucerne'. He described this as an 'unheard of situation' and as 'tactlessness', that the most important issues, as for example costumes and stage machinery, should be handled by a Music Director, and told me to write to you that the future welfare of my post is dependent on my 'good standing' with my Intendant. In other words he told me to stop acting the role of an intermediary and that he would walk out of the conference if I were to read out the letter about changes in costume design. Naturally I guaranteed him nothing and in fact, regarding my post, I told him bluntly that to have it suited me only as long as I enjoy the honour of carrying out tasks for my Master. In any case his indignation subsided very soon because his cowardice always gains the upper hand in the end. At present I cannot describe at all how abominably he also treated my mother. If perhaps you do not think it desirable that I come to Lucerne now, I will, with your permission, take the liberty of doing so at the beginning of September.

For the moment I have undertaken to offer my resignation to the king, either personally or in writing, within the next few days and to tell him the

whole truth about the mess in the theatre and to ask him to have the goodness to allow me my salary until the winter, when my mother has obtained a secure position once again and I have completed the piano score of *Siegfried*. Please, most honoured Master, give me your kind permission.

I would have liked to have reported better news to you on these pages but I am given very little opportunity here to do so. On the other hand I have experienced very many good things, namely from members of the orchestra. ... To their honourable credit I must report that they have tackled the study of your masterpiece with the greatest enthusiasm, the singers as much as the musicians. I have told them frankly that in view of the muddle taking place on stage it is now a matter of the highest honour that we demonstrate the great work to the public as perfectly as possible. I have already had over five hours of long rehearsals with the orchestra. Nobody complained, not even those who always grumble. No one can escape the magic of *Das Rheingold*.²³

A witness to the latter stages of the *Rheingold* affair was Judith Gautier, the French author and music journalist, daughter of the writer Théophile Gautier and married to Catulle Mendès. Both ardently followed the Wagnerian cause. Judith and Catulle visited Tribschen with the poet Villiers de l'Isle-Adam in July 1869 *en route* to an exhibition and the *Rheingold* premiere in Munich. It was in Munich that she caught her first glimpse of Hans Richter in a restaurant. She described him as having 'a golden beard and gold-rimmed glasses [which] glistened in the sun. He had an expressive face which fairly radiated happiness and enthusiasm.'²⁴ Richter noticed Judith's enthusiastic applause for the restaurant musicians' rendering of the *Meistersinger* Overture and immediately came over and introduced himself. 'The Master', he said, 'wrote to me to put myself at your service and to act as your guide in Munich.'²⁵ From the restaurant, Hans took his new guest to Countess Schleinitz's home, where Liszt was in attendance. Judith quickly became aware of Richter's anxiety over the staging of *Rheingold*. Although he professed himself satisfied with his orchestra and singers, he was deeply suspicious of the management in general and Intendant Perfall in particular, in spite of Wagner's initial support for his appointment. On 25 August, Richter told Judith that 'Perfall will not allow anything to be seen of his stage arrangements, and he has the expression of a traitor'. She saw Hans as 'St Christopher with the child Jesus, who would bear the whole weight of the undertaking upon his robust shoulders.'²⁶

There are several technical problems in *Das Rheingold*. The first is to recreate the opening scene of the Rhine in which the three Rhinemaidens are to be found swimming. Then there is the change of scene as Wotan and Loge descend and later ascend from Valhalla to Nibelheim and back. This is the change (mentioned in Richter's letter to Wagner) where the timing is critical, finite and governed

23 Hans Richter to Richard Wagner, 11 Aug. 1869.

24 Richard Wagner to Otto Wesendonck, 21 Aug. 1869.

25 Hans Richter to Richard Wagner, 28 Aug. 1869.

26 Judith Gautier, *Wagner at Home*, trans. E. D. Massie (London, 1910).

by the music. Then there is the portrayal of the giants Fafner and Fasolt, the special effects of transforming Alberich into a dragon or a toad when he demonstrates the power of the Tarnhelm and, at the conclusion of the work, the entry of the gods into Valhalla over the rainbow bridge built for them by Donner. The scene changes were handled awkwardly and Valhalla appeared tiny upon a miniature mountain. The journey down to Nibelheim was accompanied by loud hisses as steam and smoke were poured on to the stage, drowning the orchestra. At the end Richter, 'red with anger, throws down his baton; usually amiable, [he] looks positively fierce.'²⁷ Just a week before the final rehearsal, a confident Wagner had urged Otto Wesendonck to attend it because it would be 'very respectable, nothing having been spared to fulfil all ... technical requirements',²⁸ yet there are those, including Ernest Newman, who have since accused Wagner of anticipating an embarrassing disaster and of manipulating events accordingly in order to organise a *putsch* against the theatre. At the pre-dress rehearsal on the 26 August (at which Liszt embraced Richter for his sterling musical achievement with the opera), there were neither costumes nor scenery and the Rhinemaidens shuffled about in straw hats and very little else before the closed curtains. Gautier's account of the final rehearsal on 27 August was vivid:

A frightful oil lamp suspended from the highest moulding was supposed to represent the Rhine gold. It only recalled the lantern which is placed by night atop a street obstruction. Each Rhinemaiden was depicted as a mannikin with dangling arms and hair hanging before its face. It was precipitated head first from above, and half way down remained suspended, balancing from the end of a string. ... Soon after the mannikins were withdrawn and the true singers, standing upon supports, half concealed by the jutting out of the paper rocks, appeared and agitated their arms to represent swimming. Then they went away, and the puppet Rhinemaidens returned and capered desperately about the smoking lamp. What absurdity! They would not dare to present anything so bad at the Punch and Judy show of the Champs-Élysée.²⁹

This dress rehearsal on 27 August is the key to the whole business. It was held before the king and a select audience which included many notable artists and musicians from all over Europe such as Liszt, Saint-Saëns, Joachim, Serov, Paderloup, Levi, Klindworth, Hanslick, Pohl, Henry Chorley, Manuel Garcia, Turgenev and Pauline Viardot-Garcia. Perfall came before the curtain at the start of the rehearsal to ask for the audience's indulgence regarding any inadequacies they might notice during the event, not an action undertaken to inspire anyone's confidence in what they were about to witness. Richter registered his opinion publicly in the manner of his former mentor Bülow by ostentatiously rapping his baton on the conductor's music desk but he did not yet have sufficient status

27 Ibid.

28 Richard Wagner to Otto Wesendonck, 21 Aug. 1869.

29 Gautier, *Wagner at Home*.

to act in such a manner and it did not go unnoticed. It was not the most tactful behaviour of someone in his relatively junior position. Someone who struck a happier note was the English critic Charles Ainslie Barry, who was present and wrote a review for the *Guardian*, the first time Hans Richter's name appeared in the English press. Barry, or C. A. B. as he signed himself, became a life-long friend of the conductor and would be responsible for writing many programme notes for Richter's concerts in England throughout the years to come. His review stated that 'Herr Hans Richter conducted. Though but quite a young man, he is said to have a practical knowledge of every instrument employed in the orchestra; as a conductor he has certainly especial talent and, as was fully proved by their playing, had drilled the band to a remarkable state of efficiency.'³⁰

On the day after the dress rehearsal, Richter sent a telegram which rang alarm bells at Tribschen. Scenery and props were little more than symbolic, he wrote, with cardboard mountains and a lantern for the Rhinegold. The journey to Nibelheim was accompanied by too much smoke and the grinding gears of stage machinery. Even the final shaft of light to represent the rainbow bridge illuminated Wotan's nose rather than fulfilling its intended purpose. In spite of the excellence of the musical state of affairs, the conductor urged Wagner to do everything in his power to prevent the performance, even suggesting that the composer's many friends present in Munich should not be disappointed by the cancellation of the opera. He proposed a quick substitution for *Das Rheingold* of 'Meistersinger, Lohengrin, Tannhäuser and possibly Tristan.'³¹ Ernest Newman, in his *Life of Wagner*, cynically considers this an attempt by Richter to increase his own repertoire and conducting experience but a fairer interpretation would be to regard it as naïve.

Two telegrams were sent by Richter on 29 August 1869. The first reported that the opera had been postponed and that he had refused to conduct it but that nevertheless his musical honour was saved. The second followed five hours later and said that, because he had rejected the staging, he was now suspended from his post by the theatre authorities and that another conductor was being sought to take over. Richter ended his telegram 'Liszt shares my opinion.'³² Approaches were made to Herbeck (Vienna), Lassen (Weimar), Levi (Karlsruhe), and even Saint-Saëns (Paris) but they all refused to take Richter's place in the pit. All attempts which Wagner then undertook to save the situation were thwarted by Perfall and Dufflipp, who were both adamant that Richter had gone too far and that he had given the composer an exaggerated account of the state of affairs on stage. Wagner travelled to Munich on 1 September, hoping for a technical rehearsal with sets, costumes and lighting followed by a full orchestral rehearsal conducted by Richter. Both ideas were rejected, though a technical rehearsal was held that evening without either composer or conductor present.

30 *The Guardian*, 9 Sep. 1869.

31 Hans Richter to Richard Wagner, 28 Aug. 1869.

32 Hans Richter to Richard Wagner, 29 Aug. 1869.

The king (warned of Wagner's arrival in Munich) fled to his country retreat at the Hochkopf to avoid any contact with him and even threatened to withdraw his retainer and ban his works forever from the Munich stage. After two days of fruitless negotiations with the theatre officials, Wagner returned to Tribschen (on 2 September) and Richter followed five days later.

On 2 September Franz Betz (Wotan), who had described the production to Wagner as laughable and urged him to come and see for himself, walked out and was eventually replaced by August Kindermann. The king's response to Richter's action had been one of fury and indignation. He told Düfflipp to try and get Bülow to change his mind, make an exception and return to conduct.

If he knows he is doing this for me, he'll certainly do it; remind him of his indebtedness to me, which he has shown so often in the past. I expect the performance to proceed on Wednesday and all the changes indicated by me to have been undertaken. Among other things, the ageing of the gods did not come off and can be fully corrected by the simplest means, e.g. the burning of spirits mixed with salt. Schlosser's performance as Loge was quite wrong. ... If Richter or indeed anyone else in the theatre set out to defy my explicit orders, these weeds must be mercilessly uprooted. I order you to take steps against such infamy. ... This is my command. Amen.³³

The following day the king wrote to Düfflipp again, expressing his fullest confidence in him and condemning 'the behaviour of the theatrical riff-raff' as 'criminal and shameless. It is an open revolt against my orders and this I cannot tolerate.' He then turned his guns on Richter, who 'may on no account conduct any longer and is dismissed forthwith. That is agreed. Members of the theatre must obey my orders and not Wagner's whims. ... Richter must jump to it and Betz and the others be brought to heel. I have never encountered such insolence.' He ended by reiterating his confidence in Düfflipp (and by implication Perfall) and signed off 'Vivat Düfflipp! Periat Theaterpack!'³⁴

Wagner's reply (13 August 1869) to Richter's long letter of warning had urged the young man to resign, stressing that the king would understand his wish to present Wagner's work only according to the composer's intentions and not at the dictates of the theatre administration! He also warned Richter that if the king did not eventually accede to their artistic wishes, he must understand that things would go pretty badly for him in Munich. Richter's letter has been given in detail in order to present his side of events because Newman, in his *Life of Wagner*, takes a very critical and uncharitable view of Richter's part in the proceedings. He denies a conductor (particularly a young one) the right to take a firm stand when the total presentation of an opera is in jeopardy but Richter maintained (just as any maestro would today) that what ones sees on stage is as

33 King Ludwig to Lorenz von Düfflipp, 29 Aug. 1869.

34 'Long live Düfflipp! Perish the theatricals!': King Ludwig to Lorenz von Düfflipp, 30 Aug. 1869.

important as what one hears from the pit. As to his ambition (that it was all a Machiavellian plot to jump into poor Bülow's shoes the moment he had left Munich) and Newman's implication that a huge bluff was underway to make the king back down and impose the Richter–Wagner duo on the theatre – this is sheer nonsense. Richter was far and away the most gifted conductor of his generation and there were simply no others on the spot who possessed one iota of his talent. He may have been an unknown young man of twenty-six at the time but even without Wagner's help (and there is no denying that he shot to the top because of it) Hans Richter would have carved out a career for himself as a figure of international fame.

Wagner had had enough of the routine of German opera houses and was already bent on creating and running his own theatre to present his works according to his own concept. A month after the *Rheingold* affair, his pamphlet *Über das Dirigieren* (On Conducting) appeared and in it he bitterly attacked the prevailing system and the slavish manner in which it was accepted and served by the German Kapellmeister. More importantly, it is also evident that the first mention of resignation came from Richter (on 11 August) and not Wagner, who nevertheless supported him in his reply two days later. These were hardly the well-laid schemes of an ambitious young conductor. Newman finds no fault with Perfall but the man was a bureaucrat with limited musical ability who operated through committees. From Richter's letter to Wagner it appears that Perfall even dragged Richter's mother into the affair by sacking her from her post as a teacher at the Munich Music School, which was nothing more than an act of vindictive revenge taken upon the young man. The truth is that both sides got themselves so deeply entrenched on matters of principle that the situation became hopeless. Richter believed unequivocally in Wagner's musical ideas and the rest of his professional life bears witness to his talents.

The man who did conduct the first night of *Das Rheingold*, which eventually took place on 22 September 1869, was Franz Wüllner, a choral conductor and pedagogue with no operatic experience. He bore the brunt of Wagner's unleashed fury:

Get your hands off my score! That's my advice, sir, or may the devil take you! Go and beat time amongst your glee clubs and choral societies, or if you must have an opera score in your hand, go and choose one written by your friend Perfall. ... You two gentlemen will have to spend longer at school before understanding how to deal with a man such as me!³⁵

Wüllner's work was virtually done for him by the meticulous preparation carried out by Richter but even so, he took three hours to perform the opera, whereas Wagner's chosen conductor had taken two and a half. By the time the premiere took place, the staging problems were all but solved but, because few of the musical celebrities who had been present at the dress rehearsal could make a

35 Richard Wagner to Franz Wüllner, [11] Sep. 1869.

second journey to Munich within a month, the audience was more representative of the general public and consequently less comprehending of and sympathetic to Wagner's work. There were no arias or set pieces and there was too much recitative for their taste and understanding. The press (which had been having a field day throughout the whole affair) seemed no more enlightened. Brandt did his work well, however, and Wagner did not forget him in 1876 when it came to staging the complete *Ring*. The king, however, wanted to forget Hans Richter, whose last appearance in Munich had been on the day after the dress rehearsal. To celebrate Goethe's birthday on 28 August he conducted Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture and Gluck's *Iphigenia in Aulis* Overture with Wagner's ending. It would be thirty-nine years before he conducted in Munich again, long after the main characters were all dead (including the king, who committed suicide in 1886). When he returned, it was to conduct *Die Meistersinger* in 1908, the opera's 40th anniversary and his own 125th performance of the work.

CHAPTER 4

1870–1871

BRUSSELS; TRIBSCHEN

Hans Richter invited Judith Gautier to visit his mother with him before he left Munich for Lucerne. She lived ‘in a little village somewhere in the neighbourhood of Munich’.

Frau Richter was a professor of singing, and it was the lesson hour when we entered the little house where she lived. Scales and trills of remarkable shrillness struck our ears while we waited. ... Frau Richter was still a young woman of attractive presence and manner. She spoke very regretfully of the events which had led to the dismissal of her son and she seemed to fear that he would never again find so good a position. They brought us beer and pretzels. The talk languished a little at first, but when Richter told us his mother had invented a method of singing which increased the power of the voice five-fold, she at once became interested and animated. In fact the pupils we had heard just before had seemed to us to have a very unusual volume of tone. Frau Richter’s method consisted in throwing the sound when singing against the roof of the palate which then forms a sort of drum, increasing the resonance and the force of the tone to an astonishing degree. Richter sat down at the piano and sang according to this method. His voice came out in tremendous volume, making the little house tremble to its foundation. ... Our amiable hostess explained her discovery in detail, illustrating meanwhile in a voice that sounded like a bell. ‘The curious thing about it’, said Richter, ‘is that this system which my mother has found, does away with all fatigue. One is able to use the voice indefinitely in this way.’ And Richter, to prove the truth of his assertion, sang us the entire third scene from the *Rheingold*.¹

Hans left Munich on 7 September 1869 together with his friend Emanuel Glaser. They spent three days in Zurich where Richter met the young Irish-French composer Augusta Holmès, who had been present at the *Rheingold* dress

1 Gautier, *Wagner at Home*.

rehearsal and who subsequently wrote an article on the event for the Paris newspaper *Siècle*. Richter travelled on to Tribtschen, where he arrived in the late afternoon of the 10th. He spent the rest of the evening briefing Wagner and Cosima on developments in Munich and Wagner probably sent his letter to Willner as a consequence of hearing what Richter had to say. On the 12th Richter and Cosima 'drafted a factual account of the situation' as a series of reports and counter-reports were appearing daily in the press.² Next day Augusta Holmès visited Tribtschen together with her friends Catulle and Judith Mendès. The significance of the presence at Tribtschen of the three French nationals is interesting for on the day after their visit (14 September) Richter left Wagner's home with his friend Glaser as a companion to investigate the musical life of Paris. They stayed for just over a month.

Berlioz had died earlier that year (although his brand of Romanticism had already fallen into neglect) and the music of Meyerbeer and Offenbach was beginning to lose its hold over the Paris Opéra. The Théâtre lyrique was being more adventurous and had staged Wagner's *Rienzi* in April that year, whilst the conductor Padeloup had inaugurated his *concerts populaires* which were continually bringing new music to the public's attention. Composers currently active at the time of Richter's visit would have included Massenet, Franck, Lalo, Gounod, Saint-Saëns, Bizet and Fauré. Further changes (in particular the foundation of the *Société Nationale de Musique*) would be rung within a year or two of his visit as a result of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–71, which was brewing in 1869. During his visit, Richter made only one diary entry and that was on 20 September 1869 when he drank china tea with the Mendès couple and the Belgian musician Franz Servais. Together with Louis Brassin (director of the Brussels Conservatoire), Servais had conceived the idea of staging *Lohengrin* in Brussels with Richter as conductor. Wagner's response, according to Judith Gautier, was positive if, and only if, Richter could make any money out of the affair and in that way repay himself for what he had lost as a result of his loyalty to the composer. On 26 October, Hans left for Brussels with the task of preparing and conducting the first performance in French of *Lohengrin*, which took place at the Théâtre de la Monnaie on 22 March 1870 'after much torment [but] a great success; after the first act the Queen called me into her box.'³ At first Wagner had been very sceptical of the venture, which was the brainchild of the pianist Louis Brassin and for which Richter was singled out. A week before Hans left Paris for Brussels, Wagner told him that over a period of eighteen years various proposals to perform his operas had emanated from Brussels but all had come to nothing.

If they are serious this time about *Lohengrin* then I really am astonished. Belgium belongs to the Barbary States, and I have never felt comfortable with

2 Cosima Wagner's diary, 12 Sep. 1869.

3 Hans Richter's diary, 22 Mar. 1870.

the administration in Brussels. Of course no one will ask me about *Lohengrin*. ... We can't expect much from an area where they speak French, believe me! In particular there's no money to be had from there! ... Unfortunately you were mad about Paris. ... What I hear of Padeloup is not very encouraging, things seem to be going badly for him and his enterprise. ... I don't think we can count on him any more. There are certain things that don't work, and particularly in Paris. Those *concerts populaires* were once a smash hit – but now period! That was Padeloup's mission but he's not cut out for anything else. I no longer believe in performances of my operas in Paris. At best the only success would be a state-subsidised international theatre with permanent German operas.⁴

Wagner, who was becoming fonder of Richter and now often called him his *Geselle* or companion, found it difficult to greet the Belgian *Lohengrin* with anything like his usual enthusiasm even though he agreed that it could well do him good and promote his work elsewhere. He felt, however, that it was more important that Richter should get the maximum benefit from it, in particular a 'development to greater independence both as artist and man.'⁵ After Wagner's own bad experiences with concert-giving, he felt himself unqualified to offer advice, although what he had to say on the subject together with his example of Padeloup would have given the conductor plenty to think about a decade later when the London Richter Concerts began. 'Don't undertake anything that is uncertain' was the advice received from Wagner which Richter heeded all his life.⁶ For the moment Wagner told him to forget the *Rheingold* affair and rather concentrate on performing his earlier works but he also wrote of greater things to come:

I doubt that Betz will have opened up new opportunities for you, and fully believe that after this recent Munich abomination the general tendency will be against us. There's one thing I do know; something good and confidence-inspiring will come of it in a totally unexpected manner. And do you know what I advise you to do in this belief? Listen! Play the Brussels piece as best you can, then come at once to Tribschen and help me again, as you did with *Meistersinger*, only this time with the Nibelungen but taking a greater share. We shall then perform the Nibelungen as it should be – on that you can depend – and you shall receive it all in your hands as your due. You can be assured of this and make your calculations accordingly. Everything else is nothing as far as you are concerned. I shan't say more for I can't say better than this. Believe me!⁷

4 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 19 Oct. 1869.

5 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 19 Dec. 1869.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

By February 1870, Wagner was writing that Ludwig ('my young man in Munich')⁸ had, in spite of Wagner's protestations to the contrary, set his heart on a performance of *Die Walküre*. This time there was little more than a token resistance by the composer, who had resigned himself to another defeat were he to resist. On the other hand it served to strengthen his resolve to build his own theatre in which his word would be law. He told Richter that his wish that he should return to Tribschen after Brussels was based not out of concern for his material well-being but rather on his desire that they be bound together for the future. Meanwhile congratulations were the order of the day as the success of *Lohengrin* reached Wagner's ears.

So you received a golden laurel wreath and the Queen summoned you? Next time it will be an Emperor who receives you. ... The Vienna *Meistersinger* is supposed to have been dreadful; you'll probably have already heard about it. In Berlin it should go marginally better ... I've great troubles once again in Munich, God knows what they'll do there now.⁹

A few days after the *Lohengrin* premiere (there were a further twenty-two performances which Richter did not conduct) Wagner wrote again.

Once more you have held our banner on high! In Munich it was with *Rheingold*, when you refused to conduct an inadequate performance, now again it is because you have steered the little ship, my *Lohengrin*, through all sorts of hurdles and obstacles and brought it safely to harbour. ... May the triumph that you have achieved in the French language compensate for the sad experience in our own Fatherland. I thank you with all my heart.¹⁰

On 7 April 1870 Richter arrived in Vienna and stayed with his mother and stepfather. On the way there from Brussels he had travelled via Paris (where he visited the Louvre), Tribschen and Munich. During the couple of days he spent with Wagner (he was greeted with 'rejoicing and happiness')¹¹ the composer presented him with a birthday gift, a score of *Lohengrin* in which he had inscribed as follows:

Weil er so gut hat dirigirt ihn,
 Kriegt Richter heute auch den *Lohengrin*.
 Richard Wagner, Tribschen um die Zeit des Geburtstages
 desselben 1870¹²

8 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 4 Feb. 1870.

9 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, undated [Mar. 1870].

10 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 25 Mar. 1870.

11 Hans Richter's diary, 31 Mar. 1870.

12 This example of Wagner's doggerel, with its grammatical aberrations that produce a rhyme, can be translated roughly as: *Because Richter did so well in conductin' / Today he gets the score of Lohengrin*. Richard Wagner, Tribschen about the time of the birthday of same, 1870.

He spent his birthday (4 April) in Munich where he had a happy reunion with unspecified musicians and also met with Liszt, who issued the first of many invitations to him to move to Budapest. The Hungarian paper *Fővárosi Lapoka*, a review of literature, art and music, had already recommended Richter to the musical authorities in the city on 9 January 1870. Though both Liszt and Wagner were to be influential in finally securing a post there for him in 1871, for the moment both men failed in their attempts. Wagner received a letter from the acting director of the Opera in Pest, Anton von Zichy, and sent it on to Hans. On its flyleaf, Wagner expressed the hope that Richter would conduct *Tannhäuser* there at the end of the year. Zichy's letter regretted that, in spite of Wagner's recommendation of Richter for a post, the incumbent Ferenc Erkel showed no sign of leaving but that his name would be borne in mind should such a vacancy arise.

From Wagner's letters to Richter in Vienna written in the months of May and June 1870 and from the one extant letter from Richter to Wagner, it would appear that the young man used his time there to teach score-reading and to coach singers but he also studied the technique of singing and the art of teaching it from his mother, who had now established her own practice in the city. The composer's letters were full of instructions and exhortations, orders and demands, though they were not devoid of Wagner's special brand of humour. Richter wrote to Wagner on the occasion of the composer's birthday.

Where can I find the words sufficient to express what I feel for you? Nothing is said by mundane congratulations, for really all of us, the whole world in fact, should celebrate the fact that you, great Master, live among us; and what friends and admirers now do, soon the whole world will do – celebrate 22 May 1813 as the first day of a new, truly gigantic and great era. I can say no more than that my whole life belongs to you, esteemed Master.¹³

Wagner's reply regretted Hans' absence from the birthday celebrations in which forty-five soldiers played the *Huldigungsmarsch* instead of one horn played by Hans. He was then asked to ensure that both opera houses in Vienna and Berlin secured the correct instrument for the Nightwatchman's horn at the end of the second act of *Die Meistersinger*. Above all, he and his friends were on no account to go to Munich to hear Wüllner conduct *Die Walküre* for King Ludwig, the sequel to the *Rheingold* affair and damned by Wagner as the 'Walküre filth'. To attend would be to show approval of the event; on the contrary an open protest and boycott would be more appropriate. In conclusion, Wagner gave Richter his blessing and pointed out that one day the latter would be an archbishop when he himself was pope.¹⁴

Hans was also used as a messenger, usually because Wagner was too indignant to write personally. If Vienna's new Court Opera (Hofoper, opened on 25 May

13 Hans Richter to Richard Wagner, undated [c.22 May 1870].

14 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 24 May 1870.

1869) wanted to perform *Rienzi*, then Director Dingelstedt should ask him directly and not via his Dresden publishers. Neither would he have anything to do with the centenary celebrations of Beethoven's birth in Vienna later in the year (when it was hoped he would conduct the Ninth Symphony) if the critics Eduard Hanslick and Eduard Schelle were members of the organising committee. Richter was even obliged to chase up royalty payments due to the composer after performances of his operas, such as the Brussels *Lohengrin*. A brief correspondence ensued on the subject of the German language in singing technique and teaching methods.

No one taught me how to speak German. Tichatschek, Mitterwurzer, Mallinger and many really competent, talented singers speak the German language quite flawlessly when singing without having studied any method beforehand. That is the point; my experience in the methodical treatment of such matters has filled me with such crucial concern and Schmitt is just the one who provides proof of the rightness of my case.¹⁵

'Why have these teachers not produced successes?' he went on to ask, though he was quick to point out that he meant both Richter and, more importantly, his mother well. He had frequently asked Hans to return to Tribschen but this letter was more urgent. There was a job to be completed quickly, the copying of the score of the third act of *Siegfried*. Hitherto Richter had not responded to Wagner's pleas for him to return but this time it was different. Within a week he was at Tribschen; it was 26 June, the day of the King's command performance of *Die Walküre* in Munich, but in Tribschen all the inhabitants drank punch together that evening in an attempt to forget.

Hans soon fell into the Tribschen routine of work and play. Beethoven's music was to dominate the house for much of 1870 (the centenary of his birth), beginning with a gift to him of five small volumes of his music from Wagner followed by a playthrough of the String Quartet in C sharp minor, Op. 131. His Third, Fifth and Seventh Symphonies, as well as some by Haydn, were played in piano duet with Wagner but Richter would also play pieces by Bach as well as Wagner's new and old works. There were also plenty of non-musical activities, as Cosima noted in her diary on 30 June:

Yesterday Richter took the children for a ride in a boat along the Tribschen banks; I did not wish to deprive the children of their enjoyment on account of my nervousness and so as not to make things difficult for Richter, I did not go into the boat. Thus I was running around on the bank in the most absurd, indescribable fear, unceasingly working out how best I could leap to the rescue in case of an accident. The ride was calm and pleasant, Rus swam behind the children's boat ... I suffered on my own behalf and rejoiced on theirs.¹⁶

15 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 20 June 1870.

16 Cosima Wagner's diary, 30 June 1870.

As well as copying the third act of *Siegfried*, Richter was also making a copy of Wagner's sketches for *Götterdämmerung* which were sent to King Ludwig for his birthday on 25 August 1870. Since his departure from Vienna in 1866, Hans had acquired an enormous knowledge at first hand of Wagner's works. In four years he had observed Bülow's preparation of both *Die Meistersinger* and *Tristan und Isolde* and had conducted one performance of the former. He had thoroughly prepared and conducted *Rheingold* and *Lohengrin*, including the final dress rehearsal of the former and the opening night of the latter and he was now immersed in copying parts of *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*, the surest way to learn and digest an orchestral score before conducting it. The period from October 1866 to April 1871, which include Richter's two sojourns at Tribschen, were fundamental to his life ahead. It was no wonder that he would be able to conduct so many of Wagner's works from memory and with such authority.

On 10 July 1870 Richter went on a five-day walking holiday with Wagner, Cosima, her two daughters by Bülow – Blandine and Daniela – and various other members of the Tribschen household. They climbed the Pilatus, the mountain overlooking Tribschen and Lake Lucerne, Wagner and Cosima on horseback, the children carried in a sedan chair. They enjoyed excellent weather and stayed in the Hotel am Klimeshorn at 6,230 feet, the excursion ending with a beautiful moonlit night. The next day they climbed the Klimeshorn in the morning and Richter, together with Jakob Stocker and a visiting student Lorenz Schobinger-Amrhyn, the Tamlishorn. The following morning, Schopenhauer was read to the assembled company followed by another afternoon walk and a move to the Hotel Bellevue am Esel. Unfortunately after ten minutes they were surrounded by a thick mist and the heavens opened. They were soaked to the skin when they arrived at the hotel and spent a rather miserable evening and the following day together. Cosima took to her bed feeling unwell and Hans continued his Schopenhauer studies alone. On the morning of the 14th he returned to Lucerne with Schobinger, who was leaving the party. In the city he discovered that Karl Klindworth, the pianist and arranger for that instrument of many of Wagner's works, had arrived with a message for Wagner. Glasenapp asserts that it came from Bülow in Berlin and contained his agreement to divorce Cosima and so make way for the composer to marry her. On the other hand, Gianicelli says that the message was news of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War but, as this only occurred five days later, his version can be discounted. At first Hans took Klindworth to Tribschen where, to while away the time until better weather arrived, they played the Norms' trio from Act I of *Götterdämmerung*. In a short while the weather improved considerably, the Pilatus standing suddenly clear and beautiful. Richter and Klindworth decided on impulse to set off for Wagner's hotel immediately. They arrived at the Klimeshorn in the evening and resumed their journey after a few hours, arriving at the Esel hotel at dawn, 'a splendid morning with the Berner Oberland looking majestically beautiful.'¹⁷ Though

17 Hans Richter's diary, 15 July 1870.

it was so early, Richter went in to the dining room under Wagner's bedroom and began to play *Die Meistersinger* on the piano ('In the morning I heard the *Morgentraumdeutweise*' recalled Cosima).¹⁸ Glasenapp said that Richter played the Prelude to the opera but Gianicelli, confirming Cosima's diary entry, said it was the first two lines of Walther's Prize Song. Wagner rushed down in his dressing gown to greet his friends; he took a special delight in early morning surprises.

Later that day the whole party returned to Tribschen, where the domestic routine and the busy schedule of entertaining were resumed. After supper on 16 July, Klindworth played Act III of *Siegfried* and extracts were read from Wagner's autobiography *Mein Leben*. In spite of the declaration of war on 19 July 1870, there were several French nationals as Wagner's guests at the time, including Judith and Catulle Mendès, Saint-Saëns and Duparc, a situation Cosima found embarrassing. Music-making, such as on 20 July when Saint-Saëns accompanied Wagner singing Act II of *Die Walküre*, helped to ease her discomfort.

Another visitor was Nietzsche, who arrived on 28 July, the day that Cosima heard that her divorce had come through. She and Wagner began to make wedding plans straightaway. Much Beethoven was played and Wagner, despite all the momentous events going on around him, completed his essay on the composer. Richter finished the copy of Wagner's sketch of Act I of *Götterdämmerung* for King Ludwig on 18 August. That same evening Hans entertained the household by singing the Pharaohs' duet from Rossini's *Mosè*, an opera in which he had played horn in Vienna. Everyone derived much amusement from this cabaret turn, though the music itself incensed Wagner to such a degree that he maintained that no German should suffer the disgrace of enforced involvement with it. Hans continued to be a companion to the children, though sometimes he was over-zealous in his play, as Cosima confided to her diary:

I am writing this at Loldi's bedside. I am concerned about her; our good Richter is to blame for her illness, because he allowed her to swim and kept her too long in the cold water. I have difficulty in restraining R. from showing Richter his annoyance over his lack of caution.¹⁹

Next morning (Ludwig's birthday, 25 August) at eight o'clock at the Protestant church, Hans Richter was one of two witnesses to the marriage of Richard Wagner and Cosima von Bülow (the other was their friend, the writer Baroness Malwida von Meysenbug).

A few days later Hans told his friend Camillo Sitte that Wagner had restrained him from enlisting, preferring instead that he should reserve his energies for another future battle.

18 Cosima Wagner's diary, 15 July 1870. *Morgentraumdeutweise* is Walther von Stolzing's prize-winning song.

19 Ibid., 24 July 1870.

Yes, dear Camillo, I shall conduct the *Ring des Nibelungen* in three years at the most. Where? I cannot nor may not tell you but not in Munich, Berlin or Vienna. ... I shall spend the whole winter here. The peace does me so much good, quite apart from the great intellectual pleasure which I derive from living with the greatest of all Masters. I really don't know why I deserve such indescribable happiness.²⁰

Wagner's prediction about the *Ring* may have been a miscalculation of three years (1876 not 1873) but nevertheless he kept the promise made in his letter of 19 December 1869 that Richter would conduct.

Throughout the autumn, Richter worked on two projects, first a copy of Wagner's article 'Beethoven' (which he completed on 28 September) and a fair copy of the full score of Act III of *Siegfried*, which he began on 18 October. Another project came to nothing, much to Richter's eventual relief. In November 1870, Wagner, inspired by the Siege of Paris, decided to write the text of a farce in the style of Aristophanes which he called *Die Kapitulation* and for which he wished Hans to write the music in the style of Offenbach. This parody was intended for performance in small theatres throughout the land. A month later Cosima noted:

In the evening Richter plays us his music for *Die Kapitulation* and admits to us that he would find it embarrassing to put his name to it; he declares that the reason Betz does not reply to him is undoubtedly that he thinks Richter needs money and has therefore started to compose!²¹

If Hans found no pleasure in this task, a much more agreeable one was soon to take shape. On 20 December he set off for Zurich for the first rehearsal the next morning of the *Siegfried Idyll* or the *Tribtschener Idyll* as it was originally known. Many years later, the conductor told Theodor Müller-Reuter:

On 4 December 1870 the Master gave me the original score of the completed *Siegfried Idyll*; he wished Frau Wagner to have a beautiful fair copy but he gave his own original to me.²² I immediately copied out the orchestral parts and travelled to Zürich, where, with the help of my friend Oscar Kahl, at that time leader of the city orchestra, I engaged the musicians. On Wednesday 21 December the first rehearsal took place at ten o'clock in the morning in the foyer of the old theatre. The Wesendoncks were present. The musicians were superb and the music sounded wonderful.²³

Cosima, who knew and suspected nothing of the surprise that awaited her, commented only that the children were working in secret and that there was great

20 Hans Richter to Camillo Sitte, undated [28 Aug. 1870].

21 Cosima Wagner's diary, 16 Dec. 1870.

22 The autograph manuscript of the full score of the *Idyll* is now in the Richard Wagner Museum at Tribtschen.

23 Hans Richter to Theodor Müller-Reuter, 18 Sep. 1909.

excitement everywhere around the house. Hans, meanwhile, met the musicians in Lucerne for a two-hour rehearsal of the work on the afternoon of Christmas Eve at the Hotel du Lac. In his diary he listed the gifts he received that evening (mainly clothes, though the previous month Wagner had given him a gold pen) but he also described his fears about the practicalities of the next morning's enterprise. 'Great fear about podia and instruments. At 7.30 p.m. with Friedrich into town to fetch cello and double bass.'²⁴ Exactly twelve hours later, the music was performed on the staircase to awaken Cosima. Hans played the trumpet (there are thirteen bars) and second viola (seven bars near the end) as well as relaying Wagner's beat from midway down the stairs to those players further down who could not see him. 'Now at last I understood all R's working in secret, also dear Richter's trumpet (he blazed out the *Siegfried* theme splendidly and had learned the trumpet especially to do it) which had won him many admonishments from me.'²⁵ After lunch the company adjourned to the gallery on the ground floor where the *Idyll* began and ended a concert which also included the Wedding March from *Lohengrin* and Beethoven's Septet. Nietzsche had joined the household on Christmas Eve and Hans played *Tristan und Isolde* for him and Cosima on more than one occasion over the Christmas period. The celebrations concluded on New Year's Eve with two Beethoven string quartets; Wagner coached the players in Op. 59 No. 1 but Op. 135 was sight-read by the Zurich players Hegar, Rauchenecker, Kahl and Ruhoff. After the musicians had left, Richard and Cosima Wagner, Friedrich Nietzsche and Hans Richter toasted in the New Year of 1871.

A post for Richter in Budapest was becoming more probable. His friend Franz Servais, instigator of the Brussels *Lohengrin* and devoted follower of Liszt, wrote from Budapest in November 1870 that Liszt assured Hans of his 'strongest support in the matter of the Pesth Theatre. ... He charges me to tell you that you can count completely on him and he greets you affectionately. He asks if you will accept the post. I told him in confidence that I thought your answer would be "Yes".'²⁶ Talk of Richter's move to Budapest began in earnest in the New Year of 1871. Cosima records a letter from the Hungarian composer and critic Viktor Langer to Hans offering him the post of conductor there on behalf of the management. 'Richter will have to accept it but for us it will be difficult to let him go – we look on him after all as our eldest son!'²⁷ The next day, Liszt telegraphed Richter that he should come urgently to Pest but Wagner persuaded him to await a formal written contract. For the next four months, Richter concentrated on completing the copying of *Siegfried*. Wagner finished the full score on 5 February and Hans completed the copy three days later. There was much playing of Beethoven's string quartets, in particular the late ones, with

24 Hans Richter's diary, 24 Dec. 1870. Friedrich was a servant at Tribschen.

25 Cosima Wagner's diary, 25 Dec. 1870, but see pp. 7 and 57–8 for further reports of Richter's trumpet playing.

26 Franz Servais to Hans Richter, 18 Nov. 1870.

27 Cosima Wagner's diary, 5 Jan. 1871.

Hans playing viola instead of Hegar. These events took place mostly on Sundays, one of which Cosima described to Nietzsche:

Richter himself dominates the whole thing with his viola and recently amused us with his cries of ‘Don’t rush!’ The music stand, which he made himself, fell over in the Scherzo of the E flat major quartet. He felt himself obliged to make good musically what he had failed to do as a carpenter. He picked up both the stand and the music, singing his own and the cellist’s part at the same time and did it all so calmly that the violinists just carried on playing and eventually the cellist came in again. Richter compelled us to silence too. When the Presto was over we all collapsed in laughter, the cellist declaring that he didn’t know how he had managed to get back in again and the violinists for their part didn’t know how they had kept going but Richter’s presence of mind and domination had brought it about. With his hands in the pockets of his jacket he bore our merriment with strict aplomb.²⁸

By the beginning of April 1871 Richter was anxious to rejoin his mother in Vienna and assist her in her teaching work, though she was still singing within the confines of her own home, as Franz Servais described to Hans in the New Year of 1871, when he mentioned accompanying Josefine in *Die Walküre* and the first act of *Tristan und Isolde*.²⁹ Richter’s decision to go was conveyed to Wagner, who promptly borrowed one thousand florins from Cosima to give to his secretary as a farewell gift. There was a general exodus from Tribschen on 15 April, the Wagners travelling via Bayreuth to Leipzig and Richter to Vienna via Augsburg and Munich. Having parted company with the Wagners in Augsburg, Hans arrived home on the morning of 19 April. His second and final visit to Tribschen was at an end. The Wagners, meanwhile, had assessed Bayreuth and concluded that the town, if not the existing opera house, was the place where Wagner’s music dramas would be staged. Richter still made no move towards Budapest, holding off from a commitment that might preclude him from rejoining Wagner. On the other hand he must have been beginning to doubt the composer’s original target of 1873 as the year for the premiere of the complete *Ring*. In May 1871, Wagner wrote that ‘from next Easter [1872] you will be my appointed future Kapellmeister but there’s work to be done beforehand. You’ll see. ... In the late summer there’ll be a large conference in Bayreuth; land purchase, building work etc.’³⁰ Wagner felt that he had to make amends for the outcome of the *Rheingold* affair. He also realised that he should no longer regard Richter primarily as a copyist but as a burgeoning conductor.

Don’t say that we shouldn’t worry about you; we have our worries and with good reason. You cannot dispel our feelings that we regard the succession of troubles which have dogged you these past two years with genuine grief.

28 Cosima Wagner to Friederich Nietzsche, in Eger, *Hans Richter, Des Meisters lieber Gesell*.

29 Franz Servais to Hans Richter, undated [Jan. 1871].

30 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 18 May 1871.

From our observations we can only wish very much that you will take the post in Pest immediately. As both conductor and Kapellmeister you are in your element. I do not doubt that you will then find your equilibrium. Should my enterprise take place in 1873, I must be able to depend on you from Easter 1872. ... I've sent you the score of *Rheingold* which Schott wants to have typeset. Unfortunately this time I must express the wish that you'll harness your former energies in order to finish work on this score immediately. When you've sorted out the instruments in question once and for all for *Rheingold*, successive scores can then follow the same scheme and be arranged by another competent musician, so that you need have no more to do with it in the future. Another great service you could render me would be to recommend such a musician. I need a capable, musical scribe without fail; he could begin next winter. Send me the rest of *Siegfried* as far as you've got, don't trouble yourself with it any longer – I don't want that! ... Now let's see how things will go with you. I hope for the best. Strangely enough the opportunity in Pest coincides with Tausig's death. A 100-piece Wagner orchestra is supposed to have been engaged in Berlin which Tausig wanted to train using my ideas. My first thought was that if it comes off you should get it in Tausig's place. But that's the way things go; one moment there's shilly-shallying, the next there's a rush but mostly there's uncertainty.³¹

On 2 August Hans left Vienna by steamer down the Danube for Pest. The next afternoon he was in the flat of Baron Felix von Orczy and within fifteen minutes had completed negotiations for his contract as a staff Kapellmeister at the opera house. It was signed on the morning of 4 August 1871, effective from the end of the month. Meanwhile he paid a short visit to his birthplace Raab, before returning home to Vienna for a fortnight. Towards the end of the month, he returned and began to prepare his first opera, *Lohengrin*. His first task was to rescue the work, which he found disfigured by atrocious cuts.³² He had ensemble calls for the singers and sectional rehearsals for the orchestra. These were followed by a rehearsal of Act I, two of Act II and detailed rehearsal of Act III, before a final rehearsal of the complete opera on 5 October. His career as a conductor (which would continue unbroken for the next forty-one years) began when, on the evening of 7 October 1871, he took his place in the pit of the National Opera House in Pest. His diary records that his reception was warm. There was great applause after the Prelude and the prayer and after the double chorus in Act II. He was called on stage twice at the end of Act I and again at the end of Act II. He recorded two other facts: the chorus of twenty-two was paid five florins as a bonus that day (with such small numbers they surely earned it) and the performance was attended by the Emperor of Brazil, Pedro II, who was also to attend the first Bayreuth Festival five years later.

31 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 29 July 1871.

32 Its first performance had been five years earlier on 1 Dec. 1866, sung in Hungarian under Károly Hubay.

CHAPTER 5

1871–1874

BUDAPEST

Nothing of importance happened in the musical life of Pest without the knowledge and influence of Liszt and it was he who played a prominent role in securing Hans Richter his post as Kapellmeister at the city's opera house. At the end of August 1871 he told Viktor Langer that:

Richter's appointment is a vital gain. Baron Orczy has acted well and wisely thereby to secure and promote his musical progress. Richter's task to achieve fullest recognition is made easier for him by being a born Hungarian and by his absolutely correct and modest manner, together with his exceptional talent and skill as a conductor.¹

Liszt's first point needs to be qualified, however, in the context of 'musical progress'. As far as Richter was concerned, this was embodied by only one composer, Wagner. The second point was equally vital. Richter may have been a born Hungarian but his life from the age of eleven had been spent elsewhere, in Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Above all it was centred on German culture, German music and the German language, not the sort of background that achieved instant popularity in Hungary. Liszt had already succumbed to Germanisation and in due course Richter and his younger colleague Arthur Nikisch would follow the same path. Nationalism and a certain degree of independence was the legacy of the 1848–49 War of Independence and of the disastrous defeats of the Habsburg Empire in 1859 by Italy and 1866 by Prussia. Opera at the National Theatre was having to contend with the Vienna Opera which lured young Hungarians away from their homeland with more lucrative contracts. The repertoire of Pest's opera house consisted mainly of German, Italian and French composers (respectively Beethoven, Weber, Wagner and

1 Franz Liszt to Viktor Langer, 25 Aug. 1871.

Meyerbeer; Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti and Verdi; Auber, Gounod and Halévy), although Hungarians were beginning to come forward with their own works, Erkel leading the way. Ferenc Erkel was also the music director of the Pest Opera and had maintained high musical standards over many years despite the poor remuneration paid to its orchestral players. He was aided in the pit by his talented sons Gyula and Sándor.

In Hungary, Ferenc Erkel (known today as the composer of the opera *Bánk Bán*, completed in 1861) was the leading conductor of his day and, as a composer, second only to Liszt. By 1870 much of the success of Hungarian music-making (orchestras and choral societies in particular) as well as teaching methods and institutions owed their existence or survival to Erkel. Consequently he stood accused of nepotism and of grooming a musical dynasty for years to come as his third son, Elek, was a conductor at the People's Theatre and his fourth, László, a choral conductor. When Hans Richter arrived in Pest, he unwittingly became a means by which Erkel could be removed by his opponents. Howls of protest were also raised when a conductor had to be displaced by Richter's appointment, particularly as it was not a junior Erkel who had to go but Károly Huber, who then became head of violin teaching at the conservatoire. Liszt summed the position up when he wrote to Princess Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein: 'Erkel represents the old Hungarian regime plus a few compromises, while Richter represents the new state of affairs at its most extreme. His god is Wagner, he knows no other. Consequently he professes absolute Germanism as revealed by his god.'² Richter's friend Franz Servais had written early in the New Year of 1871 to warn Hans that an offer of the post in Budapest was imminent but he also went on to give his friend a brief account of how things stood in the city and what awaited him.

Liszt has arranged everything perfectly for you. ... Everything is still very secret, no-one knows anything. Moreover Liszt has instructed me to tell you that you would do well to arrive here immediately; that is his advice. ... Liszt has been appointed Director of the future School of Music here. Apart from the theatre, you will probably also be professor of instrumentation, score reading etc. to supplement your salary. I have also spoken to Liszt about it. Now dear friend, don't waste time talking ... strike while the iron is hot. When you pass through Vienna do not speak of this. Erkel, who conducts at the Pest Theatre, is a fox, therefore you must be extremely prudent.³

Richter's fame and reputation had preceded his arrival in Pest, yet not even that could have prepared the musicians and public alike for what lay in store. He took the orchestra and ensemble of the National Theatre apart, and Cosima Wagner commented in her diary 'Richter ... makes his singers pay fines when

2 Franz Liszt to Princess Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, 19 Nov. 1871.

3 Franz Servais to Hans Richter, undated [Jan. 1871].

they alter something in the operas!⁴ The choice of *Lohengrin* as his first opera with which to present himself to Pest was shrewd. He knew it from memory, he rehearsed it from memory and he performed it from memory. It was already in the repertory of the theatre but the performers and orchestral players would never have thought so from the way in which he systematically took it apart and put it back together again to reveal its true beauty. His approach to the Philharmonic concerts, which had been discontinued through lack of finance and interest, was just as thorough. Whereas Erkel had become complacent and lax despite earlier triumphs on the concert platform, Richter brought a standard of discipline and driving energy which transformed the concerts into events to which the public flocked. The number of rehearsals was increased, with extra ones occasionally paid for by Richter. Even stage presentation was thoroughly overhauled with the players now uniformly dressed in white tie and black suits. Furthermore, a complete reorganisation of the orchestra's seating plan was undertaken. The violins were divided either side of the conductor with violas and cellos in the middle; at the back were the double basses to the left, brass and percussion in the middle, and wind players to the right. Richter insisted that extra players were brought in to supplement the orchestra where necessary for large musical events. In their conductor the players found a thoroughly prepared musician, who stood at the head of his orchestra with calm assurance, complete knowledge and total command. His platform manner was impeccable, combining a detached authority to give clear cues with an emotional response to inspire his men. The result was consistent and flawless playing rooted in a commitment which had long been lacking.

In the forty-four continuous months of Richter's stay in Budapest he conducted eighteen Philharmonic concerts and five under the auspices of the Society of the Friends of Music, which he led from the spring of 1873 when Károly Thern resigned. Richter's concerts show a programming policy, which would in time arouse resentment at so much German music. Twelve of the twenty-three events contained orchestral or vocal extracts from the Wagner operas. He performed all but the first symphonies of Beethoven and Schumann, two by Mozart, Schubert and Volkmann and one each by Haydn and Raff. Overtures and incidental works including concertos were also mainly by the Germans Bach, Spohr, Volkmann, Goldmark, Henschel, Mendelssohn, Weber, Schumann, Beethoven and Wagner. The names of Berlioz, Méhul, Cherubini and Stradella were exceptions and the only Hungarians represented apart from the Hungarian-German Liszt were László Zimay and Ödön Mihalovich. Richter was conducting orchestral concerts professionally for the first time in his life and much of the music included in these programmes gave him the repertoire experience, which he was anxious to learn, but his bias remained unconcealed. Turning to the performances of operas which he conducted in Pest in the four years 1871–75, Wagner was represented by *Der fliegende Holländer*

4 Cosima Wagner's diary, 12 May 1873.

(15), *Tannhäuser* (13), *Lohengrin* (12) and *Rienzi* (4), Mozart by *Le nozze di Figaro* (8) and (curiously) *Der Schauspieldirektor* (1). Meyerbeer's operas dominated with *Robert le Diable* (15), *Dinorah* (13), *L'Africaine* (13), *Les Huguenots* (9), *Le Prophète* (8) and his incidental music to *Struensee* (3). The other German operas were Beethoven's *Fidelio* (2), Volkmann's *Richard III* (8) and Weber's *Der Freischütz* (18) as well as the incidental music to Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (4). The Italian operas were Rossini's *William Tell* (20), Bellini's *Norma* (8), Donizetti's *Don Sebastian* (6) and Verdi's *Il Trovatore* (1), while his French repertoire consisted of Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* (20) and *Faust* (1) and Halévy's *La Juive* (5). Of these 207 performances which constituted this operatic activity in Pest, 146 (seventy per cent) were of German operas.

Richter was also busy as a chamber music player in Pest, sometimes playing piano, accompanying singers or playing the French horn or violin. On 20 December 1871 he played second viola in Mendelssohn's Octet (half the group was Hellmesberger's string quartet from Vienna). He played as duo-pianist in Brahms' *Liebeslieder Wälzer* on 6 March 1872 and horn in that composer's Trio Op. 40 on 24 November. On 25 March 1873 he played viola in Beethoven's Septet and played the piano accompaniment for vocal works in a concert in aid of the Charitable Institution of Authors, while on 7 October he accompanied the twenty-one-year-old American singer Minnie Hauk in Liszt's *Die Loreley* in a concert given by the National Choral Society. This concert took place on the eve of the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of the start of Liszt's artistic career. The centrepiece of this festival was a performance conducted by Richter on 9 November 1873 of Liszt's oratorio *Christus* with the Buda Choral and Orchestral Academy, the Society of the Friends of Music in Pest and the National Theatre orchestra. It was a grand jubilee occasion.

When rumours emanated from Germany that similar celebrations were being planned there, the Hungarian Society of Authors, Artists and Performers organised themselves quickly to be first to honour Liszt. He arrived in Pest on 8 November to a welcome of epic proportions with a torch-lit concert by a military band in front of his flat in Hal (Fish) Square, followed by a reception accorded him by the city. On the morning of 9 November he was presented with a golden laurel wreath and later that afternoon the performance took place of *Christus* at the Concert Hall. The festivities were concluded when a banquet for five hundred people was given on the afternoon of the next day. The final dress rehearsal of *Christus* had been held on the afternoon of 7 November and was besieged by thousands of people who were unable to buy tickets for the performance two days later. Liszt's suggestion that the committee might recoup some of the heavy financial expense of the celebrations by charging an entrance fee for the rehearsal was rejected and the event declared private. The public took matters into their own hands, however, and smashed windows to gain entry into the hall. Nothing could be done to prevent the invasion and it was all Richter could do to steer the rehearsal to a successful conclusion in spite of many an interruption from the over-enthusiastic throng. The first complete performance

Figure 2. Richter, under the watchful eye of Wagner and the applauding Liszt, conducting in Budapest in 1871. *Borsszem Jankó* (Johnny Peppercorn) was a satirical magazine of the day and was clearly commenting on the young man's concert programmes.



of *Christus* had been given in Weimar earlier in the year (29 May 1873) under the composer's own direction but public reaction had been difficult to gauge as applause was forbidden in church. The best sign was that no one left before the end of the performance, including Wagner, who was present and whose opinion of the work had hitherto been ambivalent because he considered the work was not German enough. The Weimar rendition of the work fell far short of Richter's in Pest, not least because of the amount of rehearsal time set aside for it and the thoroughness with which the conductor approached his task. It was a splendid success, the public was enthusiastic and the composer expressed his gratitude ten days later at a concert conducted by Richter. Liszt presented him with the full score, elaborately bound, in which was inscribed 'To Hans Richter, in grateful remembrance of his masterful direction of this oratorio at the Festival performance on Sunday 9 November 1873. Most sincerely F. Liszt. 19 Nov. 73 Pest.'

Meanwhile Wagner had not severed any of the bonds which bound Richter to him and his cause. Though he was pleased that Budapest recompensed Hans for the abrupt end to his conducting career in Munich through the *Rheingold* affair, there was still Bayreuth and the *Ring*. Wagner no longer looked upon Hans as a copyist.

The question now occurs to me as to who, from Easter of next year on, will take care of the musical preparation, for which I would have engaged you, if

you'd been free. I cannot imagine that, right at the start of your work there ... your theatre management would release you for five three-month periods without terminating your present engagement straightaway. That's the point which gives me much cause for thought at present. I share these worries with you to make my current position quite clear.⁵

Wagner engaged a new copyist from Zurich in November 1871 ('Herr Spiegel ... not a very pleasant addition to our household')⁶ and the poor man, immediately christened the new 'Herr Richter', was subjected by all the children to do what his predecessor had done, join in somersaults! Wagner still continued to pressure and blackmail Hans in an unseemly attempt to dampen the great success he was having in Budapest: 'Oh! Richter! The Italian Richter is now called Mariani; he conducted a *Lohengrin* in Bologna so well that all Italy is mad about the piece. Yes! You should hear how things are going there, somewhat different to Hungary! In the end must I bring Mariani to Bayreuth??'⁷

By the New Year of 1872 Wagner had made definite plans to move to Bayreuth in May. To begin with, he would use temporary accommodation while a new house (which would become Wahnfried) was built for him by the city, ready for occupation in the autumn of 1873. He had also received a tract of land on which to build his new theatre, which Brandt had promised him would be completed by the summer of 1873. He would scour the theatres of Germany for his singers and staff and he would require them from the autumn of 1872.

You must therefore spend the whole winter and spring [1872–73] preparing and coaching the individual singers and also bring my orchestra together. With the performances in the summer you would have to give me nine months. Now see to it how you do it, for I know of no one who could replace you. ... I see now that it's a good thing if certain friends don't hide themselves away in Tribtschen, for they can achieve other things elsewhere. To be a conductor you have to have character and be a clever fellow.⁸

A month later plans were further advanced and Hans was receiving specific orders:

On 22 May the foundation stone of the theatre in Bayreuth will be laid. I wish to give a model performance of the Ninth Symphony on that occasion in the existing theatre. A selected chorus of two hundred singers from the Berlin and Leipzig Choral Societies is already promised; I also want an élite orchestra of one hundred men and am turning to the orchestral leaders of Vienna, Berlin, Dresden, Karlsruhe etc. to get the best men sent from there. They will need five days' leave, two for travelling and three for rehearsals and performance. The musicians will not get a fee, just travelling expenses, free

5 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, undated [c.28 Sep. 1871].

6 Cosima Wagner's diary, 24 Nov. 1871.

7 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 25 Nov. 1871.

8 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 4 Jan. 1872.

board and accommodation in Bayreuth. Now I await the necessary positive responses. If it happens thus – I need you. You must be on the spot to keep order as my General Concert Master. ... So take leave from about 10 May until after the festival, which takes place on the 22nd. I am counting on you. ... Open fire!⁹

Richter sent practical help beginning with the creation of a Wagner Society in Pest. Musicians from the orchestra in the city would join those sought from other cities and profits amounting to one thousand florins from the Philharmonic concert in Pest on 28 February 1872 (extracts from *Die Meistersinger*, the *Huldigungsmarsch* and Beethoven's *Eroica* Symphony) were sent to the Bayreuth building fund. This elicited another stream of orders.

As far as you are concerned, I am definitely depending on you for the following musicians: two first violins, two seconds and two violas (good ones), one cello, one double bass, one first clarinet and one first trumpet; Hellmesberger [in Vienna] is getting me horns. Now you, who always prattle on about a contra-bassoon, must get one for me, Beethoven wishes it! I'll not turn to anyone else for one. So!?!¹⁰

In the end, Pest's contribution was limited to a clarinet, trumpet, double bass, cello and one second violin, all of whom asked for a meagre fifty florins instead of travel expenses.

On 12 May Hans left Pest for Vienna and met Wagner later that evening at the home of their mutual friend, the doctor Joseph Standhartner. The following day Wagner, Cosima and Richter set off for Bayreuth, where they arrived at nine the next morning for an immediate meeting with the mayor of the town, Theodor Muncker. Hans had much to do for the next few days: the cellist brothers Friedrich and Leopold Grützmaker together with Heinrich de Ahna, a violinist and member of Joseph Joachim's quartet, had withdrawn at the last moment and had to be replaced. The ever suspicious Cosima blamed the anti-Wagner composer and conductor Ferdinand Hiller and Joachim himself for exerting pressure on the instrumentalists. Hans was delegated the responsibility of receiving everyone and ensuring that all preparations for each artist had been made. The first rehearsals took place on 20 and 21 May in the town opera house. Cosima commented that most of the musicians took a while to understand Wagner's interpretative qualities as a conductor and of the solo singers Marie Lehmann, Albert Niemann and Franz Betz gave sterling performances, in particular Lehmann. The alto soloist, Wagner's stepniece Johanna Jachmann-Wagner, arrived without knowing her part and Hans was given the task of getting her properly prepared very quickly. He was constantly dealing with crises wherever and whenever they occurred. Because a trumpeter from Berlin had suddenly withdrawn, Hans played second trumpet in the symphony but also had

9 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 6 Feb. 1872.

10 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 27 Apr. 1872.

to play triangle in the *Kaisermarsch* and bass drum in the last movement of the symphony (presumably from the second trumpet chair!) at the final rehearsal.¹¹ The next day, 22 May, was Wagner's birthday, and at 11 o'clock in the pouring rain the foundation-stone laying ceremony took place. Hans was unfortunately prevented from attending because he had to oversee preparations at the opera house for the speeches which took place before assembled dignitaries at noon. He was, however, present for the performance of the *Choral Symphony*, which began at five o'clock that afternoon. 'Splendid! Unique!' were the two words which describe his impression of the event. There is no mention in his diary of whether he was still having to deputise for missing orchestral players and so play in the actual performance.

Richter now saw for himself how an élite orchestra of the best players had been assembled from all parts of the country and how they had been welded by Wagner into a cohesive musical unit within a very short space of time. It was to provide invaluable experience for what lay ahead in staging the *Ring*, though an important difference was the players' familiarity with Beethoven's work compared with their total unfamiliarity with Wagner's epic. These 1872 celebrations were also to prove invaluable to him in forming musical friendships, of which many would endure for years. One such new friend was the leader of the orchestra August Wilhelmj, who was later to lead the first Bayreuth Festival and the London Wagner Festival of 1877. Another was the music dealer from Mannheim Emil Heckel, founder of the first Richard Wagner Association and a tireless worker in the Bayreuth cause. On the day after the performance, Richter attended a patrons' meeting in the town at which a formal decision to go ahead with building the festival theatre was taken, after which he set off for Budapest with his musicians, his old friend Camillo Sitte and with Anton Seidl.

Seidl was born in Pest in 1850 and at the time of the Bayreuth ceremony was completing his studies at the Conservatoire in the city. He was introduced to Wagner at Richter's instigation and made part of the team set up to prepare for the first festival. Richter was to Seidl what Esser had been to Richter. Seidl, describing himself as a disciple, called Richter (only seven years his senior) his Jesus Christ and Wagner his law-giving God. With the unfortunate Mr Spiegel having been quickly sent back to Zurich to resume his career as a music teacher, Seidl soon took over work as a copyist in the so-called Nibelungen Chancellery. This was set up in October 1872 at Richter's suggestion and consisted of a group of aspiring conductors and coaches, who were initially assigned the work of copying and correcting orchestral parts but were later to have their duties extended: from the musical preparation of the soloists to assistant conducting and turning their hand to anything demanded of them by Wagner. The resident pianist was Josef Rubinstein, a Russian Jew who had been a fellow student with Hans in Vienna. Richter remained senior to the members of the Nibelungen Chancellery, though over the years men such as Anton Seidl, Franz Fischer and

11 Hans Richter's diary, 21 May 1872.

Felix Mottl (who followed Richter's tracks through Vienna's Imperial Choir and the Conservatoire) began their training in it and later proved their own worth as Wagner conductors. Seidl described their work to Richter, who must have recalled his own first impressions and feelings of awe at meeting Wagner for the first time just six years earlier.

Early on Saturday I went to [the banker] Herr Feustel to change my money; at the same time I asked him when was the best time to visit the Master and where he lived. He gave me one of his employees as a guide and having come to the street I began to study my speech. I'd memorised some very fine words when my companion stopped before a lovely two-storey house [today Dammallee 7] and rang the bell. The door opened and we entered. Russ lay across the entrance hall and did not move, just gave a low growl, a warning that he was not to be disturbed. We stepped over him. A woman came; my guide told her we had been sent by Herr Feustel. She went upstairs and after a while returned to say I should go up. I took off my coat and went up with a beating heart. I entered the salon; a door off stood open to Wagner's workroom. Here I saw him busy putting his books in order. Without looking up he said 'Come in. Now then, you've come from Herr Feustel. What's so urgent?' I was so nonplussed at this brusque questioning that I forgot my memorised speech and could not utter a word. He came nearer and looked at me; I stammered that I was called Seidl and born in Pest. 'O Jesus, Jesus, Herr Seidl, welcome to my home. I apologise for the disorder but I only moved here yesterday and I still don't know whether I'm coming or going with this unpleasant task of putting books in order and such like', and so it went on with much friendly laughter. ...

There are three of us so far. A bassoonist and a trumpeter from Leipzig, who understands all wind instruments because he was once an instrument maker; he is called Eichel. The second is an unbearable fellow, a blockhead by the name of Emmerich Kastner from Vienna. ... I am the third, another is coming from Leipzig [Herman Zumpel]. I have given them the string parts to copy. I transpose the tubas. I write the fourth horn and fourth tuba in one part, so that the fifth horn plays the first tenor tuba, the seventh horn the second tenor tuba, the sixth horn the first bass tuba, the eighth horn the second bass tuba, because the fifth and seventh horns are high horn players and the sixth and eighth low horn players. Is that right? ...

I live quite nicely on the first floor of a house in the Ziegelgasse [now Badstrasse 31]. The flat consists of four rooms. The first is my living room, the second a communal workroom for the Nibelungen Chancellery; here we three work (later we will be four). Wagner sent pictures to decorate this room [including] a large life-size photograph of the King of Bavaria.

P.S. The master warms daily to me; wherever he goes he presents me with a smile as his chief of the Chancellery. 'I am the captain of the robbers, you are my lieutenant'. It's all like a dream to me.¹²

12 Anton Seidl to Hans Richter, 6 Oct. 1872.

Though back in Pest for most of the rest of 1873, Richter had won Wagner's trust once again by his presence at New Year. It would seem that Wagner was only really safe from his own paranoia about his lieutenants when he had shackled them to him. As soon as they returned to leading their own lives, and particularly if they were being successful in areas which had nothing to do with his own cause, Wagner became mistrustful and hurled all sorts of wild accusations at them based on half-truths, reports, rumours, or, more usually, the product of his own fertile imaginings. For the moment, however, Hans was basking in his Master's praise. 'Now I have two arms, my left one is Feustel and you are my right!'¹³ Feustel was Friedrich Feustel, mentioned in Seidl's letter to Richter, a banker of influence in Bayreuth whose task it now was to raise sufficient subscriptions for the Bayreuth Festival. Wagner would gladly have brought Hans to Bayreuth then and there, had he had the money to pay him the same salary as he received in Budapest. But he also knew that Richter (thirty years his junior) would be bored in the sleepy town of Bayreuth because he thrived on the daily pressures of theatre life, opera performances and orchestral concerts, none of which was currently available in the town. From Seidl's reports of his life with Wagner, Richter could see exactly how his place and function within the household had been taken by his compatriot:

Last Saturday we were all together and he was in a good mood. After supper we went into the salon and he asked, 'Now gentlemen, who trusts himself to make music with me?' No one stirred, not even I. 'Herr Seidl, surely you have the courage? How about *Rheingold*?' Thunderstruck and scared stiff, I took the piano score in my hand. He sat down and played the introduction to the second scene (Valhalla motif) and where the voices begin (Fricka), he called me to sit down and play. I did my best whilst he sang. I sat enchanted at the piano, the impression of his singing, his solemn phrasing and expressive feeling made such an impression upon me that I took fire; he had to restrain me at Loge's appearance, which previously had been my Achilles heel. When the giants' powerful and weighty motif was heard he laughed and said, 'Very good, here come two who want their salary'. I played for about an hour, and he sang at the top of his voice with me. At the end (where Wotan sets off for Nibelheim with Loge) he and his wife [die Meisterin] were very pleased with me. The perspiration was streaming down my forehead.¹⁴

There are no letters from Wagner to Richter between December 1872 and March 1874. Hans visited Wagner in Bayreuth for three days in the New Year of 1873 at the composer's invitation, which also included a request that he should come and sort out 'a fatal incident concerning the young Seidl',¹⁵ something which Hans described in his diary as 'unpleasantness with Seidl'.¹⁶ Seidl had

13 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 13 June 1872.

14 Anton Seidl to Hans Richter, 3 Nov. 1872.

15 Richard Wagner to Hans Richter, 16 Dec. 1872.

16 Hans Richter's diary, 7 Jan. 1873.