(1) WOLFGANG AMADEUS[1] (*b.* Salzburg, Jan. 27, 1756; *d.* Vienna, Dec. 5, 1791).

LIFE

Even as a child of three Mozart showed his love of music in a remarkable manner. He listened eagerly to his sister Marianne's music-lessons, amused himself for hours with picking out thirds, and showed a good memory for the pieces he heard. Encouraged by these indications his father began, almost in play, to teach him little minuets on the harpsichord; but the boy showed such aptitude that the play soon became real work. Marianne's MS. music-book[2] was called into requisition, the father writing down in it pieces of progressive difficulty. The impulse to compose similar pieces for himself was soon roused in the boy; these, which already betray his feeling for beauty both of sound and form, he played to his father, who wrote them down in the book. Before long he was able to enter his own compositions. Schachtner the court trumpeter, and a friend of the family, relates many touching instances of his lively and essentially child-like disposition[3]; of his eagerness in learning anything, especially arithmetic; of his ear, which was so delicate that he could detect and remember to the next day a difference of half a quarter of a tone, and so susceptible that he fainted away at the sound of a trumpet; and of his earnestness over his music-lessons. His father wrote to him in 1778:

'As a child and a boy you were too serious even to be childish; and when sitting at the harpsichord, or doing anything in the shape of music, you would not stand a joke from any one. Indeed, from the precocity of your talent, and the extremely thoughtful expression of your countenance, many people feared you would not live to grow up.'

When a little over five and a half, Mozart took part in a comedy, 'Sigismundus Hungariae Rex,' set to music by Eberlin the court organist, and performed in the hall of the University of Salzburg, Sept. 1 and 3, 1761. There were about 150 performers, including young counts, students and choristers of the chapel.

The father, struck by the rapid progress of his children, determined to travel with them. Their first excursion was in Jan. 1762, to Munich, where the Elector received them kindly, and expressed great admiration; and encouraged by this success the family next went to Vienna, giving a concert at Linz by the way.

The reputation of the little prodigies had preceded them to Vienna, but the reality far exceeded the expectations formed by the court and nobility. The Emperor was especially taken with the 'kleiner Hexenmeister' (little magician), and in joke made him play first with one finger only, and then with the keyboard covered. Wolfgang asked expressly for Wagenseil, the court composer, that he might be sure of having a real connoisseur among his hearers. 'I am playing a concerto of yours,' he said, 'you must turn over for me.' He treated the Empress with all the frankness of an unspoilt child, jumping up into her lap, throwing his arms round her neck and kissing her. Of course the upper classes went wild about the children, and 'all the ladies lost their hearts to the little fellow.' But a change soon came, for Wolfgang took the scarlet fever, and even after his recovery people held aloof from fear of infection. After a short excursion to Pressburg the family returned to Salzburg in the beginning of 1763.

The father now considered himself justified in attempting a longer journey, his main objective this time being Paris. They left Salzburg on June 9, and travelled by Munich, Augsburg, Schwetzingen, Mainz, Frankfort,[4] Coblenz, Aix-la-Chapelle and Brussels, giving public concerts, or playing at the various courts. Wolfgang played the violin, and also the organ at the various churches.

They arrived in Paris on Nov. 18, and stayed five months. The children played before the court at Versailles, gave two concerts and excited the greatest enthusiasm. Grimm, the cultivated man of letters, took them up warmly, and was of great use in procuring them introductions and rendering services of various kinds. To show Wolfgang's talent in composition, the father had four sonatas for pianoforte and violin engraved, two (K. 6, 7)[5] being dedicated to the Princess Victoire, the King's second daughter, and two (K. 8, 9) to the witty Comtesse de Tessé. The young musician's portrait was twice painted during his stay in Paris, by Carmontelle in the well-known family group, and by M. B. Ollivier in the picture of a tea-party in the Prince de Conti's salon, which now hangs in the Louvre.[6]

They left Paris, Apr. 10, 1764, and went by Calais to London, where they took lodgings in Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane.[7] Here also they

[1] He was christened in full Joannes Chrysostomus Wolfgangus Theophilus: instead of Theophilus his father wrote Gottlieb—in Latin Amadeus. In his earlier letters Mozart added his confirmation name Sigismundus. On his first works, and those engraved in Paris in 1764, he signs himself J. G. Wolfgang, afterwards Wolfgang Amadeus; in private life he was always Wolfgang.

[2] Now in the Mozarteum at Salzburg. On his seventh name-day (1762) Wolfgang received from his father a music-book of this sort for his own use, now in the possession of Dr. L. Koenig of Kiel. It consisted of a collection of little pieces by various composers written out by Leopold in the form of suites, and designed to serve both as an album of piano music and as a guide to the various forms of composition. It was published in 1922, with an introduction by H. Abert.

[3] Letter to Mozart's sister, dated Salzburg, 1792; given entire by Jahn, I. 21. The references throughout are, unless otherwise stated, to the English translation.

[4] Here the father announced in the programme, Aug. 30, that 'he would play with the keyboard covered,' thus turning the Emperor's joke to account. Here also Goethe heard him—'I was about 14, and I still distinctly remember the little man with his frizzled wig, and sword.' Eckermann's *Gespräche mit Goethe* (Leipzig, 1908), II. 178.

[5] The numbers throughout refer to Köchel's catalogue of Mozart's compositions. For the chronological order of the works the third edition, as revised by Dr. A. Einstein, has been generally followed.

[6] It is possible, however, that this latter picture was painted during the Mozarts' return visit in 1766.

[7] For the details of Mozart's stay, and the condition of music at the time, see Pohl's *Haydn und Mozart in London* (Vienna, 1867). Further particulars may be gleaned from Leopold's own diary published by Dr. A. Schurig in 1920 as *Leopold Mozart: Reiseaufzeichnungen*, and from F. G. Edwards's *Musical Haunts in London* (1895).

met with a gracious reception at court, and the children, especially Wolfgang, made an extraordinary impression. The King put before the 'invincible' Wolfgang pieces by J. C. Bach, Abel, Wagenseil and Handel, which he played at sight, and also made him play on his organ, to the still greater admiration of everybody. He then accompanied the Queen in a song, and a flute-player in his solo, and improvised a charming melody to the bass-part of one of Handel's airs. He became very intimate with the Queen's music-master, J. Christian Bach, and with the singers Tenducci and Manzuoli, the latter of whom gave him singing-lessons of his own accord. He also made the acquaintance of the Hon. Daines Barrington, a man of very versatile attainments, who after putting him to the severest tests, wrote a paper for the Royal Society, in which he detailed the facts and his own admiration and astonishment.[1] After a second performance at court the children gave their first concert on Tuesday, June 5, at the Great Room in Spring Gardens. In the advertisement the father called his children 'prodigies of nature,' and directed special attention to Wolfgang; 'his father had brought him to England, not doubting but that he will meet with success in a kingdom where his countryman Handel, the late famous virtuoso, received during his lifetime such particular protection.' The town was very full for the King's birthday (June 4), and the receipts were as much as 100 guineas; moreover, many of the performers engaged declined receiving any remuneration for their services. The sensation was immense; even the father was astonished, and wrote home describing their progress. 'To play the British patriot' he next allowed Wolfgang to play the harpsichord and organ at a concert at Ranelagh on June 29, 'for the benefit of a useful public charity.'[2] A projected visit to Tunbridge Wells, which was then at the height of its vogue as a fashionable resort, had to be suddenly abandoned. Towards the end of July Leopold took cold in returning from a concert at Lord Thanet's, and had a severe illness. During his convalescence they went to Chelsea, then a detached village, and lived at the house of a Dr. Randal in Fivefields (now No. 182 Ebury Street). Not being able to play any instrument, on his father's account, Wolfgang composed his first two symphonies (K. 16, 19),[3] and amused himself with a number of experiments in composition which possess a special interest in that they were never intended for his father's eyes and never underwent correction by him.[4] On their return to town the Mozarts lodged at a Mr. Williamson's, No. 15 Thrift Street (now Frith Street, Soho); and on Oct. 25 were again invited to court. The father had six of Wolfgang's sonatas for harpsichord and violin (K. 10-15) engraved at his own cost, and dedicated to the Queen, who sent him 50 guineas. The last two concerts, in which 'all the overtures were of the little boy's own composition,' took place respectively on Feb. 21, 1765, at the Little Theatre, Haymarket, and May 13, in Hickford's Great Room, Brewer Street, the latter at reduced prices, as the charm of novelty had worn off. Here the children played a piece of Wolfgang's for four hands on the same harpsichord, a thing then quite new.[5] The instrument was one with two manuals and pedals, as well as a Venetian swell, made by Burkhard Shudi for the King of Prussia.[6]

From this time the father put forth repeated invitations to the public to hear and test the youthful prodigies in private, 'every day from 12 to 3, admittance 2/6 each person,' first at their lodgings, and afterwards at the Swan and Hoop Tavern, Cornhill. Playing with the keyboard covered is mentioned as a special attraction. Visitors, however, became constantly fewer, in spite of the increasing urgency with which they were invited (the *Advertiser* of July 11 contains the last advertisement), and some popular disturbances, together with the appearance of the first symptoms of George the Third's malady, made the elder Mozart determine to leave the country. The family, however, first visited the British Museum (opened Jan. 15, 1759), to which the father presented Wolfgang's printed sonatas, and a copy of the engraving from Carmontelle's picture. In memory of his visit Wolfgang composed, by request, a four-part motet,[7] his only vocal piece to English words, and presented the autograph to the Museum. They left London on July 24, stayed until the end of the month at Bourne Place with the nephew of Sir Horace Mann, Walpole's correspondent, and on Aug. 1 left England for the Hague in consequence of an invitation to the court of Holland.

They were detained a month at Lille by Wolfgang's falling ill, and spent a few days at Ghent and Antwerp. They arrived at the Hague on Sept. 11 and were most graciously received by the Prince of Orange and his sister, Princess Caroline of Nassau Weilburg. For Sept. 30 a concert was arranged, at which, according to the announcements, all the overtures were again to be of Wolfgang's composition. But a few days before the little girl

[1] *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. lx. for the year 1770, p. 54. Reprinted in Barrington's *Miscellanies* (1781).

[2] Probably the Lying-in Hospital (Surrey), the foundation-stone of which was laid in 1765.

[3] K. 17 and 18 are copies of works by other composers.

[4] They are preserved in a little music-book now in the Berlin library, and were published by Breitkopf in 1909 under the title '*Mozart als achtjähriger Componist*.' The marked difference between them and the work written under Leopold's supervision is significant.

[5] It is possible that this sonata has been preserved in a unique printed copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale. See G. de Saint-Foix, 'Une Sonate inconnue de Mozart,' *Revue musicale*, May 1921.

[6] See A. J. Hipkins's *History of the Pianoforte* (1897). An account of the concert was given in the *Salzburger Zeitung*, Aug. 6, 1765.

[7] 'God is our Refuge and Strength.' For facsimile of the autograph see Pohl's *Mozart in London* and Wyzewa and Saint-Foix's *W. A. Mozart*. The piece, edited by Dr. W. H. Cummings, was reprinted in *Musical News*, Jan. 27, 1906.