

‘general’ was King August of Saxony.

The downside of being seven years old was that I had to start formal education. My father found an excellent tutor for me in Karl Schneider and an excellent collaborator for himself, Pavlov and Karl worked together on translating the libretto of his Russian children’s opera into German. It had two acts with songs and dance and in German it was called “Nächstenliebe”, which means ‘neighbourly love’. Although my father had taught me to read music early on, he realised it was now time for me to learn to play the piano seriously. A revered pair of concert pianists – Professor Mark Günzburg and his wife – appeared impressed enough with my talents to teach me without cost. After about two years, they felt I was ready for my first concert in front of an invited audience. I performed the Mozart Sonata in F major. About halfway through I lost my place and so I had to improvise in the Mozartian style for quite a while until I found my place again and could finish with a flourish. I was rewarded with much applause, and no one was prouder than my teachers, who were much relieved that I had not embarrassed them. I doubt if anyone in the audience had noticed anything and my talent for improvisation had been proven. However I was not good at practising, playing with my companions and roller-skating was much more interesting!

Some older boys heard about my musical talents and took me to a matinee performance in the Central Theatre that performed operettas. They