

After the new year of 1919 the situation in Vienna became increasingly difficult which is an understatement because things had come to a point which, under more normal conditions, everyone would have considered at best one half inch from the impossible. Food was getting even more scarce than it already was and fantastically expensive because the money devaluation was galloping downwards with fantastic speed. Nobody really knew how one would juggle through another day or another week. More and more things had to be substituted, especially food had become almost entirely "capital Ersatz", which meant that one had to be satisfied buying something that had a somewhat similar appearance to the original food but, of course, lacked all the nutritive qualities and usually was almost indigestible.

As I indicated in previous chapters I had had a meteoric kind of career and as a result I had enough money in the bank to be independent for the rest of a lifetime as an artist if conditions had stayed normal but once the price of a very inferior meal reached the sum of 50,000 to 100,000 kronen it was obvious that the weeks or days of our financial endurance had to be counted. The economic future of an artist at that time was a very big question mark. All one could do was to try to go on and watch for some kind of unexpected opening. That would have been perhaps alright for me if I had been alone but with a family of three children (the third boy arrived in Vienna at that time), especially in view of the presence of the baby something drastic had to be done. Somehow Hedi heard about the situation in Holland, one of the few European countries which had escaped the devastations of the war by staying neutral. The Dutch people were known for their willingness to help and for their remarkable hospitality. Without hesitation Hedi put an ad into one of the Dutch papers and soon received an answer from a family which offered their hospitality to the two boys so we had to equip them and send them by train to Holland. Of course, it was a great risk to send the two boys alone on such a long trip but they were lucky, people seemed helpful on the way and they arrived in relatively good condition at their point of destination where they were received with great kindness by Mijneer and Mevrouw Sanson, an elderly couple. The baby, of course, had to stay with us.

With her typical taurian energy Hedi attacked the rest of the problem. She checked carefully on the situation and she found that the railroad fares, especially in Germany, had not gone up with quite the same speed as the value of our money had gone down. So we reached quickly the point where the total amount of our remaining bank account was exactly identical with the cost of the railroad tickets to Holland. It was at that same moment that we received

a letter from another family in Holland in Nymwegen which was not far from the German border. They were willing to take us in to their household so we could get a start. It was a frantic decision we had to make without an hour to lose and we had to make thousand decisions of what to leave behind and what to take along. Most of my art work was left partly in my studio and partly put into storage. The most necessary bundles of clothing, bedding, laundry, etc. still represented a considerable baggage. After reducing everything to a minimum of essentials we somehow got to the railroad station. We had already secured the tickets the day before and when we got on the train it was found that our essential baggage was 20,000 kronen worth of overweight. Fortunately, one of Hedi's brothers was with us at the station and since we had arrived there ahead of time (with some luck) he had time to somehow go back and reach friends to borrow the 20,000 kronen, which seemed a formidable sum but was really the equivalent of ten to twenty cents. My memory of the details is somewhat hazy but I think it was the kind Dr. Urban who still was able to help us out in the last moment and it was not one minute too soon when my brother-in-law returned to the station with the money. Thus we managed to get our carefully selected possessions on the train.

The trip was of course long and tedious ~~but~~ without any interesting events. We finally were glad to arrive in Holland at the place where our hosts were living. They were very nice middle class people who just had a desire to be of help but it was perfectly obvious that they could keep us only to find an opportunity for a new start. It seemed that Nymwegen was a kind of provincial city and any hope to find soon some work as a portrait painter or in other artistic fields seemed pretty much out of the question. Our hosts suggested that the best chance would be to find some work for me in a lumber yard or on the docks, not realizing that I was completely unsuited, or physically trained to compete with any of the people who do this kind of work. Even my life in the army turned out to be insufficient to cultivate a muscular development and physical endurance required in such occupations. It was interesting to realize that ~~even~~ through the war the people in Austria and Germany had continued the division of people who lived by hard physical labor and the people in educated professions who, in order to cover the enormous intellectual and educational preparations, could really not afford to spend time on developing the physical strength through hard labor or ~~physical~~ sports on the side the way it is being taken for granted in America and to a certain degree in England and Holland.

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One thing was perfectly obvious and that was the fact that with what my background had to offer in the line of making a living it would be impossible to find immediate work with an income. With Hedi's training as a musician and violinist graduated from the famous Academy of Music in Vienna there was some chance to find a job in little orchestras of moving picture theaters or similar institutions so she went out and with her indomitable Taurian energy secured one of those jobs. The usual prejudice against female members of an orchestra did not seem to exist in Holland. Anyhow, the greatest need of the moment was taken care of and was a great relief since it kept Hedi occupied within her regular profession and especially because we did arrive in Holland, in a foreign country we knew nothing about, not understanding a word of Dutch and having arrived without a single cent in our pocket. As I explained before, had we hesitated for another day or two we could not have even been able to accomplish that much. Of course, it all boiled down to the fact that I had to stay home to attend to the baby, the bottles, the diapers and all the other inevitable details.

Fortunately, this situation did not last too long. As a result of some strange coincidences we received suddenly a very generous invitation from a rich man in the Hague. Somehow the details of the situation seem to have escaped my memory, the main thing was that we suddenly were closer to the cultural and artistic center of Holland. Mijnheer Van Hasselt lived in a very fine residential section of the Hague. He was a retired business man who lived in a very fine villa with his second wife.

Mevrouw van Hasselt was his second wife and there were two daughters from his first wife present. The whole household was characteristically Dutch, as far as I could grasp such an impression, new as I was in facing the life in Holland. And yet, it is a natural fact that a stranger notices hundreds of little habits, attitudes, customs, conventions, which, taken for granted by the native inhabitants of a place, immediately arouse the curiosity and the attention of someone who comes from a different set of experiences. Thus, one notices quite soon that, in the average Dutch house, neatness and cleanliness is not just part of efficient living but a matter of almost religious importance. Spotless order is so prominent that one becomes subject to it even before one had seen people on their ladders scrubbing every brick of a house with soap and water.

Besides this cleanliness there was an equally prominent cult of punctuality and perhaps an emphasis on dignity and formality in personal appearance

and conduct. There was definitely a total absence of the exaggerated often disgustingly submissive courtesy one found in Vienna or the affectionately tolerated Austrian "Schlamper^ei" (a combination of informality, carelessness, disorder, etc.). As far as I could observe people were considered either as belonging to ^{the} Pieter de Hooch style (extremely neat and orderly) or as people "à la Jan Steen" (very disorderly). Those two artists had become symbols of human character. On the whole, it makes me shudder, in retrospect, when I think of how many unconscious habits of us Austrians must have taxed the patience of our kind hosts. They all were friendly and considerate. Mijnheer seemed to be able to enjoy life. He loved comfort, status, a nice house, a fine car with chauffeur, being a member of a fine club and other social privileges which were the results of a very successful business career. He seemed to get a satisfaction out of playing the part of a Sinter Klaas (Santa Claus) and it was hard to decide whether he or Mevrouw had the more gracious ways of bestowing their wonderful hospitality on us.

Of the two daughters who were still single the older one, Mies, was a quiet, slim person with noble features. She was capable of great spiritual depth but it took quite sometime until we learned to recognise her full capacity for devotion and understanding as a friend. There was from the beginning of our acquaintance an immediate silent contact between her and me and this inner bond has never diminished although my stay in Holland was less than two years and, after my departure for America, I was not able to keep up a correspondance. She married later a pastor Neimuller and lived in It seemed to have been a beautiful and happy relationship on a high spiritual level. I was always grateful for the fact that she had not been forced by the power of social and family pressures into one of those conventional marriages. She died a few years ago. Her husband passed away first. I was very glad to have located her again and to exchange a few letters while she was still alive.

The other Miss van Hasselt had more the temperament of Mijnheer, was mostly interested in enjoying the physical side of life. She was kind and friendly but there never developed any kind of contact.

The only problem that represented a certain difficulty was that aforementioned neatness of this household. Of course, we learned very quickly how to adjust to the requirements as far as our personal life was concerned but it simply was out of the question to use a living room or a bedroom as a studio to paint in.

Among the people we were introduced to at that time was Mevrouw Mesdag. She had a very fine house with antique furniture and so on. She was an extremely

kind and very charming lady beyond middle age and she belonged to the famous artist's dynasty Mesdag which had produced several important painters. Meyrow Mesdag also painted. In her house lived another interesting person. It was the well known and successful sculptor, Jeltsema. He was six feet tall or maybe slightly over and he was very strong muscularly which he had to be, while He was working on a granite sculpture for the government at that time. He also seemed to develop soon a real friendship towards me and my work. He showed real respect and interest for my way of painting and that was a great psychological help because on the whole most of the nice Dutch people have really little interest in art and a painter feels easily lost in a frigid non-artistic or even anti-artistic atmosphere unless he is lucky enough to become a member of the closed group of artists and art lovers. I should hasten to add that this is not an exclusively Dutch situation but that artists have to face similar conditions almost everywhere with very few exceptions. Only in Holland, the country of Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Vermeer, etc., it is sometimes difficult to remember that Rembrandt was almost a beggar before he died, that Frans Hals spent his last years in a poor house and the great pioneering landscape dramatist, Ruysdael, died of starvation.

Meyrow Mesdag had a nice studio on an upper floor. She no longer used it because she had stopped painting and she simply invited me to use the studio. Her house was right on the gorgeous Oude Scheveningsche Weg with its grandiose trees creating powerful high vaults and arches of green foliage. Almost across the street nearby was the Van Hasselt residence slightly removed from the grand alley. It was in this charming Mesdag studio that I started to paint a watercolor portrait, lifesized, of Mijnheer Van Hasselt. He was not a personality where I had to dig for hidden secrets and I just concentrated on making the picture as much alive as possible. The Dutch dignity more or less prevented my use of dynamic or dramatic motion so I just painted; head and shoulders turned straight at you in lifesize. It was another opportunity to become involved in making a picture live. A watercolor, especially handled with my technique of fine details, can come so much closer to a living effect than oil painting. On the paper there is nothing but almost pure pigment with just enough traces of some gum which makes it adhere to the surface without altering the character or the quality of the pigment. In oil, especially as it is used by most painters during this century, there is always a considerable amount of fatty and sticky ingredients included, plus the inevitable varnish on top of it which even in a fresh condition is certainly quite different from the quality of a living skin

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or the glassy surface of an eye. This is not the place to go into the very interesting story of how difficult the chemical and technical procedures of the old masters were. I myself used oil paints rather rarely. When I did, especially in some of my murals which for certain reasons could not be executed in fresco, I used a sufficiently absorbent canvas so that the surface had hardly any of the unnatural oily effect.

I worked very hard on this portrait because my gratitude to the man induced me to put into it all I could. I always have a very strict agreement with my portrait sitters to avoid any attempt to see my work before it is finished and I don't remember a single case where my models made any difficulty in that direction. I don't remember how long I worked on the portrait but when it was finished and in the frame I put it on an easel and showed it to Mijnheer. He looked at it and silently for some time and when he turned around tears were rolling down his cheeks. He tried to express his feelings about it and said: "I have to think of the fact that some day I will be gone and probably all the members of my family, my house, my car and all my other possessions will be gone too. It is a really deep experience to think that when all that will be no more, anybody will be able to step in front of this picture and have it look at him with my eyes and with my face as I could look at him now myself. It is really like looking into a fine mirror and having the presence of my personality facing you. I never realized what a miracle art can be!" This coming from a sober, undemonstrative Dutch gentleman was to me like a confirmation that my whole passion to reach for "life" had been at work again. It was even more impressive as a reaction from him when I remembered how one day he had come into my studio for a sitting. As soon as he had entered I was almost shocked at the strongly distracted facial expression and his nervous condition. I, of course, asked immediately: "For Heaven's Sake, what has happened to you!" He almost stuttered when he started to tell me in Dutch. I remembered that in those few sentences the word "verschrikkelijk" (terrible) kept coming up as the key note of his story. What really had happened was this: An old business friend from the time before his retirement had come to visit him. He was a German and, of course, insisted on being taken to the famous Maurits Huis, the gallery which, among other masterpieces, contains "The Young Steer" by Paulus Potter and, above all, the "Anatomy Lesson" by Rembrandt. Mijnheer did not complain about the steer but he certainly seemed very upset about the "Anatomy Lesson". He seemed unable to recover quickly from the horrible punishment of having to visit this painting and having to look at it and he kept saying, "God, God, God, ("G" pronounced like CH in German "Ach") they should not have such horrible pictures in the public place!"

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I should add a few more words about Jeltsema, the sculptor. I had the feeling of having a real friend in him and, although he was so much taller than I, he seemed to look up to me. I think it simply was his recognition that my attitude towards art, my work, was honest and serious without any ifs or buts. I accepted his friendship with the same dignity as it was offered. He took me to his workshop where he was working on a granite sculpture for a government building. It was at that ^{OCCASION THAT} I actually experienced what it means to work in granite. I had admired those tremendous Egyptian sculptures executed in granite or diorite and I knew that those were among the hardest stones but when Jeltsema put a modern steel chisel into my hand and showed me how to hit it with the heavy hammer I tried to mobilize every bit of my muscle power of which I was somewhat proud. It gave me a certain satisfaction to hammer at the chisel against the granite surface with all my might and to see the sparks flying with increasing intensity. After a while I felt I should stop before I set the whole place on fire, so I did. There was my friend already standing with a gesture of polite consideration handing me a nice magnifying glass and, after considerable search, we managed to find a slight scratch in the granite. Thereupon he explained to me that it takes a considerable training besides muscle power to chip off any worthwhile amount from such a block and that he and his expert assistant ruined about eighty-five or six modern scandinavian steel chisels every day and every day they had to be repaired to be used again.

It was only later just before I left Holland that I learned that my friend was one of the first internationally famous cases of transvestites and that he grew up as a girl in girls' schools and later became a man recognized by the medical profession. After I had left Holland I heard that he got married and, like all my other friends, he had to disappear in the distant twilight of my life where people become victims of ^{MY} inability to correspond.

It was a slow gradual process by which our circle of acquaintances increased. This was necessary partly because I needed portrait commissions and a closer contact with the art world. My peculiar style with a concentration on precision detail execution was usually admired because it reminded people of the great old masters of the Dutch and German school with their quaint orderliness. No matter how much life I poured into a simple portrait there was no reason to get upset about some outbursts of imagination and all the other characteristics of the real giants of the past. The whole circle of friends around the Van Hassalts and the Mesdags were of a definite conservative nature and many great works by Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Jan Steen, or Adrian Brower, in spite of the overwhelming international fame was still beyond the digestive capacity of many

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good Dutchmen. More than once did I hear somebody explaining to me with undisguised pride how they really were able to get rid of all the Raphaels, Titians, etc. and how many, many gulden they received for "deese Katholieke Kunst". Of course, some of those Rembrandts were in reality much more outrageous but they had to be kept in the country because they attracted a great many tourists and guilders. There also was the fact that the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg in Russia (now Leningrad) and also the remarkable collection in Kassel in Germany possessed many more Rembrandts, and some of the most significant ones at that, than the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam or the Maurits Huis in Den Haag. I kept remembering the little exhibition they had during the big Three-hundredth Anniversary of Rembrandt's birthday in 1906 when somebody in the city government had the idea of showing the people with the mayor's permission for Hendrickje Stoffels, the illiterate maid of Rembrandt, "to keep Rembrandt Van Rijn in her house if he makes himself handy and useful". This permit was issued after a long period of suffering and humiliation for Hendrickje as well as for Rembrandt at the time when she seemed the only person who believed in him and made it possible for him to create some of his most powerful work. Next to this permit they showed in that exhibition the most inspiring lists of the guilders and dollars which the city of Amsterdam received as profit from the great number of people who came to Holland in that year just for the anniversary.

Of the people of great prominence in the life of Dutch art I met the two topmost masters. The one was Jan Toorop and the other one was Willem Van Kooijenburg. I had mentioned Jan Toorop before in connection with Gustaf Klimt as one of the members of the small group of European artists who were known as Neo-Impressionistic Spiritual Symbolists (the third one was Klimpf, the Belgian).

Toorop was really an interesting case. He was unmistakably Eurasian in origin, to be specific he was Javanese. There were many Javanese, or half Javanese, people in Holland. Java was the main part of the East Indian Empire of Holland and many young Dutchmen went to Java to work there in some business until they had amassed enough of a personal fortune to retire and to return to Holland. In Java there were parts of society with a very ancient culture and very refined traditions. Young girls were trained to move gracefully and, especially the movements of the head and of hands, had often reached a degree of esthetic charm hardly ever found in Europeans. Many Dutchmen married into some of these old aristocratic families and had often very bright and interesting looking children. When the time of retirement came the children were, in many cases, taken along to live with their father in Holland. The mother was left behind, partly because it was difficult to expect an adjustment to Dutch society in Holland after middle age

had been reached and partly because the retiring man was perhaps looking for a new chapter in his life.

Toorop was one of these Javanese Dutchmen, or rather Dutch-Javanese. He introduced an entirely new and genuine oriental feeling through his paintings and drawings.

During the first part of his career he concentrated on his native ability of unmistakably Javanese emphasis on line, composition. His pictures and drawings were sometimes of a mystical symbolism with a great feeling for the "decorative" element. When it comes to this term "decorative" one has to be somewhat careful today. During those days of the impact of Beardsley drawings, Gustaf Klimt, Toorop and others there was a definite return to the study of lines, forms, textures and other visual elements which had been neglected during the periods of Realism and Impressionism. In France it was Gauguin who turned away from the little brush strokes and dots of the Impressionistic and Pointilistic School. He also concentrated on continuity of line and careful balancing of flat areas usually in bright colors, particularly during his South Sea periods. On the other hand the Wiener Werkstadt and other artists outside of France really laid the foundation to an entirely new direction in art which later culminated in the severe functionalism of the Bauhaus. Such changes could not be accomplished over night and even the vocabulary for such new tendencies was missing. The term "abstract" which became so important in the later "isms" had not appeared yet and during those first years of struggle art simply was divided into two categories. The one was Naturalistic (either a realistic description of objects, landscapes with or without people or a fleeting impression of scenes in nature) the other tried to concentrate on a stylized purification of lines and shapes. It was an inevitable and logical continuation on the general turning away scientifically, philosophically and artistically from the dogmatic acceptance of solid matter as "the reality". Of course, it took many more generations and all the fantastically brilliant fireworks in the field of physics and mathematics from Gauss to Rutherford, Niels Bohr and Einstein and modern nuclear physics with its subdivisions into particles or particles of particles down to the quarks to finally push the belief in the reality of solid matter into the realms of mistaken illusions of the past.

But at the time of Toorop and Klimt only very few people were ready to understand what was going on. Such scientific, philosophical, artistic revolutions based on the evolving of a new attitude towards the world sometimes take place simultaneously in the different fields. At other times the scientific avant gard jumps ahead and leaves it to the philosophical and artistic work to

catch up and adjust itself to new facts or concepts. It seems that in the case of the big revolution during the last part of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century the struggle towards a new non-materialistic world concept took place first in the artistic field and therefore very few artists and other people were able to understand the philosophical and scientific meaning of those revolutions. Most people just had the general impression that there was something radically new on the way and therefore that movement with its subconscious symbolism and its dreamlike unreality of almost ethereally slim figures and definitely unrealistic line movements were called "Art Nouveau" (meaning New Art) and the characteristic quality (un-impressionistic and un-realistic) was simply called "decorative". It was probably the unexpectedly wide influence this new style had on everything from applied art to dress designing and architecture which seemed a new approach to what was at that time called the art of decorating design. Later when passion for functional purity of design became so powerful everything that could be recognized as mere decoration was looked upon with great contempt but we should remember that before the new terminology of functional honesty, abstraction, etc. had become popular the meaning of the word "decorative" had none of the depreciation of the meaning.

It really is very interesting to follow some of the accepted terms in art through the different changes of meaning. Some terms which are now generally accepted for certain styles and which are always mentioned with the greatest respect, if not admiration, used to be either brutal expressions of condemnation or accidental nicknames. The Baroque style was named that way to express the utter irresponsible or even insane explosiveness of that style yet today it is simply the normal name of an art movement which includes some of the most revered masters (in painting, it starts with Michelangelo and includes artists like El Greco, Rubens, Rembrandt, for example, and in music titans like Johan Sebastian Bach, Palestrina and other famous composers). In religious architecture cathedrals of the Gothic style are recognized as the most sublime and spiritual treatment of a house of God. Renaissance cathedrals like, for example, the famous Saint Peter's Cathedral in Rome (architects include Bramante, Michelangelo and Raphael) seem like an overwhelming grand opera performance planned for super-theatrical mass effects yet the name Gothic at the time when the incomparable masterpieces of that style were created represented the most violent expression of horror in face of unspeakable barbarism. In spite of the mad destructiveness of the wild invaders like the Huns, the Vandals or the Vikings it seems that the savagery of the Goth had left the strongest impression. How could architecture survive at all when the walls of the building were unable to uphold the roofs and crazy buttresses had to reach into the paved ground surrounding the cathedral in order

to carry the top weight artificially from the outside. Even hard boiled art historians often mention those "Gothic miscarriages" with a lump in their throat and the incredible hand-carved lacework of these towers and roosters are not only admired for their spiritual impressiveness but also for their unbelievable technical refinements. One could make a long list of such names which illustrate the change or reversal of meaning and judgement during different periods.

To return to the story of Toorop we have to mention that he, too, underwent a great change. He was converted to the Catholic Church and the latter part of his artistic creation was devoted almost entirely to religious subjects. He kept on developing his style of drawing and composition and reached at times a remarkable, almost monumental, simplicity with a spirit somewhat akin to Fra Angelico. In spite of this change he seemed to be accepted in Holland as something like a ruling patriarch of art.

The other figure of outstanding importance was Willem Van Konijnenburg. He was another very gifted artist but in his case the most important factor might be focussed on his patron. There was a Mijhuizer who recognized an unusual calibre in Van Konijnenburg's work and decided to make it possible for this one artist to really develop all his potentialities. He paid very generously for any painting Van Konijnenburg produced and then he spared no expenses to arrange a room in such a way that the quality of the picture would really have a chance to function visually. Thus, there was created a situation where the usual temptation of competing in official exhibitions was practically removed. At some rare occasions one or more examples of the artist's work were exhibited. As far as I can remember they were not for sale. The only opportunity I had at first to study Konijnenburg's style was through the reproductions in special Konijnenburg issues of the fabulous magazine "Vendingen". Later when my circle of acquaintances had become a little larger, perhaps through my lecture courses, somebody made it possible for me to meet Toorop and Van Konijnenburg personally and I even received an invitation to Mijhuizer and his very unusual home with rooms most carefully adjusted to the presence of Van Konijnenburg's paintings.

It is sometimes difficult to understand why the mentality of a patron of an artist is so rare and why such a phenomenon ^{or} seemed to be almost impossible to appear in American society. Since this is a very crucial problem I might permit myself to include a little experience I had years later in America when I gave the first University course on Living American art at the Metropolitan Museum. Of course, I tried to give considerable time to the discussion of this problem of patronizing art when I discovered that I had very rich and prominent people

among my pupils. I made every effort to emphasize the difference between paying enormous sums for properly authenticated old masters or other famous, more recent works of art and the rare ability to give to perhaps unknown living artists the financial possibility to develop most of the potentialities he carries with him. I spent hours in describing details of the sometimes fantastic tricks and rackets of the art market and on the other hand the ugly exploitation and, or, neglect of the living artists in America as well as in other countries. Since I made it a point never to speak about my own work I mentioned nothing about my extraordinary years under the patronage of my friends in Tobitschau. The only other example of the patronizing, that is the understanding of an artist's needs and the cooperation with an artist without destroying the dignity of his ideals and the proper functioning of his work, was the story of Van Koiijnenburg and his friend, Mijnheer *de Coque*. When my semester was over and the summer vacations had come to an end one of my course members phoned and invited me for tea. She said it was urgent and to be ready for a surprise. When I arrived at her Fifth Avenue apartment she had a real studio easel standing near the fire place. On it was a framed picture carefully covered with some fine fabric as if waiting for an unveiling. The lady gave me first a story of explanations. She emphasized how deeply impressed she was with my lectures and how she really tried to understand what I was trying to speak about because it really meant so much to her. Therefore she never was satisfied with just applauding after all my lectures like all the others, but, in order to prove to me that my ideas were seeds that had fallen onto fertile ground, she got a reservation on one of the big luxury liners to Europe (this was still in the Twenty's when one could not yet fly by jet plane). She went as directly as possible to the Hague and tried to visit Van Koiijnenburg in order to buy one of his paintings. Van Koiijnenburg refused to see customers and she was told that none of his paintings were for sale. There must have been genuine pioneer blood in that lady because she was determined not to be discouraged by a simple refusal. She simply had to prove how deeply she understood my message about the patronizing of art. Since all Europe still suffered from the after-effects of the First World War it is safe to say that Willem Van Koiijnenburg was the only artist who really did not need to look for a customer who might buy one of his pictures. Our lady felt she had the real spirit of what to do for art so she managed to get in touch with Koiijnenburg's housekeeper and she spent a considerable sum of money to persuade the woman to do something which might have cost her her job. Koiijnenburg had a way of developing each composition by producing a number of preliminary sketches or studies. Once in a while when he had a bad day he got disgusted with one of the drawings and dropped it into his big

wastebasket. The housekeeper got one of these drawings before it was destroyed because it did not live up to the master's expectations. My devoted pupil paid a generous sum to acquire that discarded drawing, returned proudly to New York, had it carefully framed and now this "only one Konijsenburg" piece was waiting for its unveiling on the easel. It took me quite some time until I was capable again to believe that somebody in my audience might actually know what I was trying so hard to convey through my lectures.

In the Hague and in other parts of the country Konijsenburg was revered as one of the top artists next to Toorop but his name and his work were unknown in other countries. Many years later an art dealer in New York, I think under the influence of my lady of Fifth Avenue, topped the whole story by securing an additional number of probably discarded work and introduced it to the art world here. This exhibition was terribly unfair and if Konijsenburg would have wanted to exhibit in America it is quite certain that he would have objected to being presented by those left over examples of his work. He and the exhibitions were forgotten automatically soon.

There was a great deal of avant garde work done at that time. Mondrian was not as much in the foreground as later but he and "De Stijl" movement were already doing important pioneer work. The general public was not ready for it yet and the usual antagonism towards new forms of art was quite pronounced. Due to dependence on portrait work all my friends and acquaintances were of that conservative group. I had my hands full of persuading and educating my pupils to admire and to tolerate Vincent Van Gogh and other post-impressionistic art, therefore I never had an opportunity to meet the real pioneers of modern art in Holland at that time.

To return to our general situation I have to mention that we could not possibly think of taking indefinitely advantage of Hijnbeer Van Hasselt's hospitality. Ernst and Peter, the two older boys, had been living with the Sarsen's, an elderly couple, who did a wonderful job in giving the boys the warmth of a homelike atmosphere and a very kind and intelligent care. It was natural that Hedi wanted to have a place of her own where the whole family could be under one roof as soon as her and my income would permit such an expense. The main obstacle was that due to amount of proportion large influx of refugees from Germany, Austria and other starving countries a very severe shortage of housing facilities developed. It had become extremely difficult for Dutch citizens in the Hague and other places to find an apartment. The government found it necessary to pass a law that apartments had to be preserved for Dutch citizens. It meant that it was "impossible" for us as foreigners to find a new home. Perhaps it was that word impossible

that inspired Hedi to get into action. The situation to her was really rather simple. If the available apartments or houses were legally out of reach the thing to do was to secure an apartment or a house which was not built yet, thus the problem was to find a landlord who was building a house and was responsive to her intense, charming or hypnotic pleas accompanied by most effective waves of tears. As a result she came home with a lease for a future house signed by the unforgettable Wijnheer De Nieb. It was now just a matter of waiting a while until the building job was finished and so we moved into the little house on the Alkmaersche Street in Scheveningen near the Duinjes (the Dunes) close to the sea but well protected by the big masses of the hotels; the children moved in, we hired a sturdy maid (Lisa), we borrowed from friends some furniture, there was one room for the children, a room for the maid, bedroom, a studio for my painting and a somewhat larger room on the ground floor used as living room and later as the place where I gave my lectures. There was one more problem left. That was to find the best schools for the two boys. Hardy, the third one, was still too small to have such a problem. Hedi inquired carefully and found that the most progressive schools were the ones of the Anthroposophic Society which tried to put the teaching of Dr. Rudolph Steiner into practice.

Rudolph Steiner had become quite influential in certain prominent circles in Holland and since one of the purposes of this book is the description of the psychological situation of the post war Europe I shall have to mention a little more about Steiner.