

# PROMISES TO KEEP



Jean Twiss

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*Jean spent the winter of 1979 with her friends at "Mornanacre", Harrisville, Mississippi.*

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*Jean Twiss*

“But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.”

— *from Stopping by Woods on a Snowy  
Evening by Robert Frost*

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*TO EDITH ANNE*

*A young friend, who is an inspiration to me, who now wears the little gold cross set with pearls and who seeks the Pearl of Great Price.*

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## FOREWORD

Towards the end of 1977, some friends were gathered in Edmonton and, during our time together, Jean shared some of her recent experiences.

It was an extremely moving occasion for me. One of those all too rare times when I felt I would never be the same again. For a short while I was able to hold and savour the memory of the experience I had been given. I saw in it the hope of change in myself, and a vision of wider reaching changes. I left feeling a new life within me, and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

I mentioned to Jean that I felt what she had shared on that day should be written for all to read. She accepted this idea and suggested that I should write the foreword.

Having now descended into the valley of everyday life, with its ordinary days and ways, the glow of yesterday tends to fade, and I am faced with the task of translating a deep experience into the words and actions of everyday life.

It occurred to me that perhaps those who read these pages may also be uplifted by the challenges contained therein, and that they too may find a vision of what God has planned for their lives. It is also possible that others have similar struggles relating a vision to everyday living.

My daily struggle to maintain this vision has been aptly described by Oswald Chambers in "My Utmost for His Highest" when he asked the question: "The last time you were on the mount with God, you saw all power in Heaven and earth belonged to Jesus — will you be skeptical now, in the valley of humiliation?"

For myself, I am learning that I only *see* the glory of God on the mount, but it is in the valley where that vision has to be *lived*.

Peter Heyes,  
Calgary, Alberta

## EARLY LIFE

I write my story for my friends at their request.

My father was born in County Kerry, Ireland. His father was a wealthy landowner. There were several children. The children loved their mother but hated their father because he was a dictator and his word was law. The children were all well-educated. One of the girls was very musical. She studied music abroad and became a fine pianist. My father wanted to become a lawyer, but his father said, "No, you will enter Trinity College, Dublin, and become an Anglican priest." My father excelled in his studies, especially in the classics, reading Greek and Latin as easily as English. But he knew in his heart he was not meant to become an Anglican priest.

One night, shortly before his graduation, he slipped from his room, climbed over the college fence, and went to a beloved aunt-by-marriage to seek her advice. She advised him to run away from college and work his way to Canada. His father, even on his death-bed never forgave him and he was the only child not mentioned in his father's will.

My father eventually landed in a small town in Saskatchewan. One night he was invited out for supper. On the mantle was a picture of a girl he had never seen before. He gazed long and thoughtfully at her picture and in his heart he said, "That is the girl I am going to marry." Eventually he did.

My mother was born in Ontario, Canada. She was the second eldest of seven children. Her father died when she was twelve years old. My mother grew up loving books and the great outdoors. She spent many of her holidays in the beautiful Muskoka district. She was very artistic and greatly enjoyed wood-carving, doing burnt wood designs and other crafts. I still

have a hand-carved walnut tea tray she made in 1910 and a long glove box with a lovely all-over burnt wood design.

My parents were married Christmas Day, 1912. I was born, a wanted and much loved child, on February 5, 1914 on a very cold and stormy night, 55° below zero. Later, I longed for brothers and sisters but none came.

Before her marriage my mother was a teacher and always enjoyed her work and the children she taught. I would sit for hours listening to the stories she told me of when she was a teacher — the one-room school houses with many grades and pupils, how she would board for a short time in one home, then on to another. She lived in many homes. This was part of the way she was paid for her services.

My earliest memory is being in a box strapped on to my sled and my father pulling me through the lovely, bright snow. I was less than two years old. Suddenly, around a bend, the sleigh tipped. Although I was not hurt, I did not like the feel of the snow in my sleeve and mitt. My father laughed heartily, probably at the expression on my face. I resented his laughter. This was the first time I experienced resentment. I have remembered it all my life.

My parents loved each other dearly and were very happy together. They both enjoyed reading and often read together in the evenings — Shakespeare, Browning, Tennyson and other good books. They discussed current topics of the day. They did not always come to the same conclusion, but they would always disagree agreeably. They would often vote on opposite sides in an election and this was a source of amusement to them both.

There were no quarrels and arguments between my parents that I ever heard. I had a delightful and happy childhood.

Only once did my father shock both my mother and me. That was when I was fourteen and had fallen while skating and broken my wrist. The nearest doctor was twenty-four miles away. In those days people did not drive their cars in winter. Our little car was stored for the winter, but my father decided to get it going and swore at it when it did not respond. Neither my mother nor I had ever heard him swear before and we were shocked.

Money was never plentiful. My father worked in businesses where he was paid a fixed salary. He never enjoyed the business world. Both of my parents had very strict ideas about money.

There were no charge accounts. If we desired something we did not get it until we had the money to pay for it.

In my father's office, displayed in a prominent place, were always these printed lines:

“Neither a borrower nor a lender be  
For borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry  
And loan oft loses both itself and friend.”

Shakespeare

He believed in saving part of his salary each month. Sometimes it might be only twenty-five or fifty cents. There were no pensions or welfare plans in those days.

We always lived in small towns. We always had our own home, never large, but modest and attractive. My mother grew beautiful plants. Her pride and joy was a large hanging basket of Star-of-Bethlehem, which everyone admired. I remember going with my mother to gather wild flowers to put on our dining-table and elsewhere about the house.

Mealtime was always a special time when the family was together. Conversation was fun and interesting. Breakfast was in the kitchen, and the other two meals in the dining-room. The table was always beautifully set with white tablecloth and serviettes. We had only one set of dishes and silverware. The motto hanging in the dining-room was:

“The beauty of the house is order,  
The blessing of the house is contentment,  
The glory of the house is hospitality,  
The crown of the house is Godliness.”

Both my parents loved people and we always had lots of company. The fourth Friday of every month was my mother's special ‘At Home’ day. The ladies of the town always came for tea and cakes on that day. As I grew older and came home from school, I was allowed to help serve the guests, which I considered a great honor.

My father was very fond of chess. He had great powers of concentration. Sometimes one game would go on for days. One night, while he and his partner were playing chess, my mother's friend asked for a spool of black thread. She wound this round and round my father, his arms folded as he concentrated on his next move. When he went to make his move, he was greatly surprised to find himself bound and unable to move his arms.

I enjoyed school, and in the early grades was always near the top of the class. My friends and I did not have our entertainment organized for us. We had to use our imaginations in games and other activities to amuse ourselves. We always had lots of fun as well as quarrels and arguments over what or what not we would play and who would have the first turn.

Saturday morning was tennis morning for girls and boys, so it was a race to get to the courts before somebody else claimed them first. In the afternoon the courts were reserved for adults. We children used to reach them sometimes as early as 6:30 a.m. These games were very important to all of us and not to be missed.

My bedroom was long and narrow in shape with a study table and book shelves at one end. It was never tidy and I was always searching for something I had mislaid or couldn't find. My mother tried her best to help me keep my bedroom tidy, but in vain. One day she made a rule that I could not go for tennis until my room was in perfect order. This included bureau drawers. Talking back to my mother and temper tantrums failed me. She was adamant. She carefully explained to me that if you have a place for everything and always put everything in its place, then you have time for the things you really want to do.

I missed Saturday tennis for several Saturdays as I tried to make the room look tidy, but tucked away in corners and clothes cupboard much untidiness remained. I felt bitter and resentful toward my mother and blamed her because I was missing tennis with my friends. But now, after growing up, I see how wise she was and how true her theory when put into practice.

After some weeks had elapsed I did learn to keep my room tidy and took great pride in keeping it that way every day. Since then I have never been able to tolerate clutter and untidiness, both of which do nothing to raise my spirits or those of my friends.

One rule for me in our family was that I must always come home directly from school before going elsewhere to play. My mother was almost always there to greet me and hear about my day. Then I would go happily off to play with my friends. The rare occasions my mother was not at home she would leave a note for me and a tasty snack. I missed her on these days and was always glad to know that tomorrow she would be there.

An important lesson my parents taught me was that all one's life one must live with oneself. Therefore, it was very important to get to know oneself, to spend time alone with oneself, to develop one's inner resources to develop creativity. So, each day, from the time I was a small child, I was given time alone. I had to amuse myself. I had books, art media, a few dolls and toys and my father's chess set with castles and knights, kings and queens. I learned from memory such lines as these:

"This is not advice but a great truism.  
Know Thyself."

Socrates

I have always been especially grateful for this lesson. It has stood me in good stead all my life.

Other lines I had to memorize at an early age, were:

"To thine own self be true  
And it must follow as the night the day  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

Shakespeare

My allowance was five cents a week. This was always spent on candy or gum. One day some of my friends and I decided to steal chocolate bars and other sweets from some of the shops. We did well in our stealing until my father found out what I was doing. He had a good talk with me, saying that it would be necessary to go to the manager of each shop, tell him what I had done and pay for what I had stolen. The money he would lend me and I would pay him five cents a week until the debt was cleared. I was very unhappy. My father went with me to make my confessions. It was months before I again had my five cents a week allowance. But I experienced a free heart which was a great gift.

Another time, a petition was going round which the business men signed to guarantee a certain sum of money to a travelling concert group. My father's name usually headed the petition. This particular year he decided not to sign the petition and made his decision known to the townspeople. But I did not know this. He thought other people, this particular year, should take the initiative. One of the citizens came to me on the street saying my father had not signed the petition and he needed his signature. Would I please take the petition to his office and promise to get his signature? I promised. When my father

refused to sign giving me his reasons, I burst into tears, telling him of the promise I had made to a certain person to get his signature. My father took the petition from me and signed his name. Then he looked at me and said, "I wouldn't have you break a promise for anybody in the world." I was nine years old and heart-broken that my father, for my sake, had broken his word.

My parents taught me that right is right, wrong is wrong and that there are eternal values which never change from age to age. As I remember my parents and look back on my growing up years, I realize how fortunate I was to experience parental unity, love and care, to have rules and guide lines, to know what I could and could not do. This is a great security for any child. True, I was not always a willing learner or a willing follower of the rules set down for me. But I understood them and once a rule was made by my parents no amount of rebellion on my part would change their minds. I always knew, in my heart, that they were right. But I had a strong will for wanting what I wanted when I wanted it. My parents recognized this early in my life and set out to help me understand that what I wanted for myself was not always best or right. Since then, after leaving home, I can look back to incidences in my life where I had to make a decision whether to follow the crowd or not, and because of rules and guide lines laid down for me by my parents, I have been able to say, "No".

## BICYCLE, HORSE, OR MUSIC?

My parents and I loved music and I began to express a big wish to play the piano. It was a red-letter day when a piano came into our home. Lessons for one half-hour were one dollar each. That was a lot of money in those days. My parents explained that they could not give me both music lessons and the things some of my friends had such as a bicycle or a horse. I understood and happily chose music lessons. I was up every morning at 6 a.m. to practice. I never had to be asked to practice or study anything to do with music. In fact my parents would insist I play outdoors before they would allow me to spend more time on music.

One of my tasks was to do the supper dishes. We had our main meal at noon so there were never many supper dishes. I didn't relish this task, however light, and if there was a pan or dish I didn't like I would hide it under the stove, which was raised on four legs above the floor. But I would happily help the family across the street, where there were five children, with their dishes any number of times.

I loved children and used to dream that when I grew up I would have seven of my own. The first three would be boys, the next two girls and finally twin girls. I visualized how lovely the twins would look in dresses I would make for them, exactly alike.

When I was growing up, all girls wore dresses. There were no such things as jeans and pant-suits. The boys wore short pants until they were about twelve when they would have their first pair of longs, a never-to-be-forgotten day for them.

We had never heard of baby-sitters. Friends with babies would allow my friends and me to care for their children. We wheeled them in carriages or go-carts and would happily care for them for hours on end. This was a real treat for us and we never thought of being paid for any care we gave.

My mother taught Sunday School. My father remained at home and always cooked Sunday lunch. I went to Sunday School but was never in my mother's class. What we learned at Sunday School we children did not put into practice during the week.

When I could play the piano well enough I was asked to be the Sunday School pianist. This I enjoyed very much, the hymns, the marches for the small children, the quiet music as people were assembling, so Sunday School, because of this, had meaning for me.

Sunday evenings we attended church together as a family.

As my music studies advanced so did my school work. I began to wish more time for music and developed a dislike for school and time spent on subjects such as Geometry which I thought would never be of use to me. My school work slipped. Although I did not fail any grade, I sometimes barely managed to pass. My parents tried to help me but I did not want their advice. I knew they were disappointed especially when I finished Grade Eleven and announced I would never again go back into a school classroom.

That year I won a medal for highest marks in the piano examinations. I decided to make music my career. It was now time to begin work on my degree from the Toronto Conservatory of Music. I did not have any special God-given talent in music, I just loved it and worked extremely hard at it.

My parents decided to send me to a music teacher in British Columbia, where I could stay with an aunt and uncle who were anxious to help in any way they could.

I met Evelyne, who took lessons from the same teacher. We were "kindred spirits" in music. Our teacher gave us duets and public recital work to do together. I always wanted to play the most interesting and challenging piano parts to which Evelyne, being very unselfish, agreed. When our teacher found out about this I lost my freedom of choice.

Evelyne's home became a 'home away from home' for me. I was always welcome to spend the weekends with them, and welcome to join them in a meal at any time. Evelyne had a brother two years younger and a sister nine years old. They were a happy and joyous family and they did something I had never heard of or seen done before. Each morning, after breakfast, they read the Bible and prayed together for the day. They each had a small note-book, in which before breakfast

they had written down their thoughts for the day. These thoughts they then shared with each other — thoughts of all kinds: the part each thought he should do in caring for and tidying the home, apologies if someone had been wrong, ideas for others which would bring joy to them, thoughts for fun and things to do. They explained to me that they had met the Oxford Group, now known as Moral Re-Armament, and had learned that God has a plan for the world and you have a part. They explained to me that good friends share a conversation, so as well as pray to God, one should listen to the still small voice within and God would put thoughts into your mind and give you direction for your day.

I had decided God didn't answer prayers: I had often asked Him for many things I wanted which never came my way. But the idea that He had a plan for my life and could tell me what to do in any situation was new to me. I listened and observed and learned. Then one day, after several months had elapsed, I told Evelyne's mother I would like to give my life to God and learn to listen as her family did. We knelt down together and I gave all that I knew of myself to all I knew of God. To mark the occasion Evelyne's mother bought me a beautiful small gold cross with a pearl in each corner and a gold chain. As she gave it to me she said, "Always seek the Pearl of Great Price." That little cross has always been one of my most cherished possessions. But, sad to say, I did not always seek the Pearl of Great Price.

I learned about the four absolute moral standards of the Oxford Group—Absolute Honesty, Absolute Purity, Absolute Unselfishness, Absolute Love. These were guides. One would never reach them in this world, but one would know by measuring one's thoughts and actions by these standards when one was off course.

Today there are large centres for Moral Re-Armament in different parts of the world where people of many nations, colors, classes and creeds meet together. There are films, music, books, live theatre. But in those days there was just the idea that God could speak to you and direct your life if you chose to say yes to Him.

One of the first thoughts I had was to apologize to Evelyne for my selfishness in wanting to play the most interesting and challenging parts in our piano work together.

I had strong likes and dislikes in people. I always wanted to

be with people who were bright and colorful and interesting. The others didn't interest me. One day I had the clear thought to ask Louisa to be my friend. Louisa was trying this listening business too. She was not good-looking and I considered her dull and uninteresting. However, I was trying an experiment, so I obeyed the thought. To my surprise, she became one of my dearest and closest friends. I learned that God has made every person different and unique and everyone is worth getting to know. But the temptation to continue to pick and choose my friends was still with me. I yielded to it and continued to pick and choose and classify people for more years than I like to remember. However, eventually the miracle happened. I no longer have preference for particular individuals, or wrong relationships with them. There is no one from whom I feel divided. When I told God I wanted a change in my heart towards people and knew that I was powerless to bring it about myself, the miracle happened.

But going back to music studies, the days passed happily. Soon my two years of study were completed. I had my music degree and the time had come to leave my dear friends in British Columbia and return home.

## THE GREAT DEPRESSION

I returned to a town I hardly recognized. It had become a ghost town — the streets and shops were empty of people, houses stood deserted. People were moving out. This was in the Nineteen-Thirties. The Great Depression had come. My parents decided to move to Edmonton where my father would look for work.

We rented a small house for six months in the Norwood district of Edmonton. Edmonton was not the large city it is today. I think the population then was around 110,000. Each day my father set out to find some kind of work but there was none. I felt sad when I met him on the street in tattered shoes and worn clothes. But his face always lit up when he saw me and he always had a smile for me. I, too, tried to find music students, also work in a music shop but nothing came my way.

At the end of six months we had nothing left and no money for rent.

My mother's sister and her family of four lived in a beautiful home with seven bedrooms near the University. The Depression did not appear to affect them. The family were all at University, doing well, with lots of dates and parties. If my father would put a cement floor in the garage my parents could live there and I could have the basement room in the house. This we did. My father still searched for work but could find nothing.

One evening in the paper I saw a notice of an Oxford Group meeting. I went and met several people who to this day are still my friends. I had found people who understood this listening business. They befriended me and invited me to their homes. In one of these homes I met a business man. He noticed that I was new and came over to introduce himself and speak with me, asking me questions about my interests, my family. I found

myself telling him of my father's unsuccessful search for work. I did not realize he was one of the heads of a large lumber company with businesses in several towns. He told me he needed a man in Wetaskiwin, and did I think my father would consider a job like that. I replied that my father would do anything. So that is how my parents came to live in Wetaskiwin. They found rooms in a large house where other people also lived but each family had their own private quarters. My father's salary was fifty dollars per month.

I remained on at my aunt's. She decided one day that I should apply to become a nurse and went to the trouble of getting the necessary application forms. The last thing I wanted to be was a nurse. Fortunately, Absolute Honesty meant I had to answer all the questions honestly. The last question was: 'Give your reasons for wishing to become a nurse.' I wrote, "Because I can find no work to do. My aunt desires that I train to be a nurse but I do not wish to do so." I quickly mailed my application. Needless to say it was not accepted.

One of my cousins, close to me in age, became interested in this idea of listening to God. We had some good talks together and exchanged confidences. She became a real friend to me and I felt less lonely. One day she told her mother of our listening times together. Later, when I arrived home, my shabby suitcase was packed and waiting on the doorstep for me. My aunt wanted none of my fanatic ideas to influence any of her family and I was told to leave and not come back. This created bitter feelings in my mother who refused to again visit my aunt. But not so my father. He did not believe there should be discord among people. He would visit my aunt whenever he could and always received a warm and genuine welcome.

My suitcase was not heavy. At that time I had one skirt, one pullover and a pink cotton dress with white collar and cuffs.

Two of my Oxford Group friends invited me to share their home. They had an extra bedroom. They also had two small boys I loved very much. I was not long in this home when I met a nurse who was separated from her husband and with three small children. She would give me board and room in exchange for the care of her children. I stayed with her for more than a year and was very happy in this home. Then a nurse friend, Amanda, whom I had met at an Oxford Group meeting and who was caring for an elderly couple in their own home, asked me if I would consider being a maid in this home, and, as well

as board and room, I would receive a small wage. I decided to accept this offer.

Amanda and I became good friends and team-mates. We tried to help each other by having listening times together, getting ideas about the care of the home, the care and happiness of the patients. My faith in listening to God became more real. Listening to God is something one must practise and learn. It is not all that easy, at least that has been my experience.

## THE CLASSROOM

One day I had the clear thought, "You are not meant to make a career in music. Music will play a large part. I want you to become a school teacher." My dislike of school had never left me so I knew this was not my own thought. I also thought God did not know what He was asking of me — to do something so distasteful to me. I tried to put the thought out of my mind. I did not succeed. The thought kept coming: "Finish Grade Twelve. Apologize to your parents. Be honest with them about everything in your life, not only the pleasant things but also those things they do not know about and of which you are most ashamed."

Amanda and I gave much prayer and thought to this and one day I said goodbye and went to be with my parents in Wetaskiwin. I was completely honest with them about everything in my life. My father wept. My mother did not. They had given me so much love and care and put so much thought into my growing-up years that they found it hard to realize they had raised a self-centred daughter. I had given so little to them in return. Of course they forgave me and after that we all understood and knew each other better.

There are many influences outside the home. I believe it is important that families don't think just for themselves but reach out, giving thought and care to what goes on in the community. I like the way I heard a Dutch mother once express it, "If your family is your aim then you are at a dead end. But if your family is your part in building a new world then you are on the highroad of history."

My parents were both overjoyed that I would finish my Grade Twelve by correspondence. That would give us time to raise money for a one-year course at Normal School as teacher-training was in those days. I found my attitude to

becoming a teacher changing and knew for certain that this plan was right for me.

I enjoyed Normal School very much especially the practice teaching in the classrooms. I was one of the top nineteen students in practice teaching and although I did not know it then, after a few years of teaching experience would be invited to join the staff of the Demonstration School in the Normal School.

My first school was a one-room rural school nine miles from Wetaskiwin. The school had a picturesque setting nestled amidst a grove of trees. It was exactly the old-fashioned type of school one can now only read about in books. There were thirteen students, Grades One to Nine, but some of the grades were missing. The children came from good homes. There was real care for each other in this school. The students accepted full responsibility for their own learning and the older students helped the younger ones. We had our picnic lunches together, played games during the noon hour — Red Light, Treasure Hunt, Pum Pum Pull-Away, Anti-I-Over, Soft Ball. I played too.

I was often invited to the homes of my students. The parents took an active interest in the welfare of the children and all that went on at school. They helped with concerts and parties. The Christmas concert was of great importance and most of the days in December were fully spent in its preparation. People from all the districts round about would come.

I loved school and I thanked God I was enjoying everything about it so much.

I boarded close to the school with a fine elderly couple. They had a piano and always encouraged me to play. My salary was seven hundred and fifty six dollars a year and board and room was eighteen dollars a month. My conviction was that I should pay back to my father the money he had so generously sacrificed to send me to Normal School. This I did month by month.

I stayed in this teaching position for two years, then moved to Jasper Place, a rather tough district just outside Edmonton. This was a much larger school with a principal and staff of teachers. I was given a mixed Grades Four and Five class with a class enrolment of fifty-four. These children were unruly, rude, and undisciplined. They threw chalk and spit-balls at me, jumped out the windows when the bell rang, and their talking

never ceased. I was in a panic. I was not comforted by the thought passed on by other staff members that the police were often called in and that if a teacher could get through Jasper Place she could then handle any situation.

I decided I was going to be the boss and worked until the wee small hours one morning making up a long list of rules and regulations to pin on the bulletin board the next morning. The children were not interested in my becoming the boss and completely ignored the rules and regulations.

I was still listening to God, but too often I knew I made my own decisions. Now I was desperate and needed God's wisdom. The thought came to me to tell the children exactly what I thought of them, which was anything but flattering. They listened quietly and with interest to everything I had to say. Then one girl boldly asked if they could tell me what they thought of me. They disliked everything about me and didn't think I knew much about teaching. I found myself being honest with them about my unhappiness and fears, my desire to help and be a good teacher. I asked their suggestions and help. Their first suggestion was to tear up all the rules and regulations. I did. The next suggestion was a class club to meet each day as soon as school opened with a chairman and secretary to plan the school day and help with the war effort. We needed a motto but nobody could think of one. I suggested one I had learned from my Oxford Group friends, "It's not who is right but what is right." The class liked and adopted it. Letters in red, white and blue were made in the colors of the Union Jack, the flag Canada had at that time. The motto was hung across the front of the classroom above the blackboard. The children spent most of the morning getting organized. They were full of ideas. School work was not accomplished that morning but there was a new attitude between teacher and students. As time went on I taught these children to listen to the deepest thing in their hearts and to write their thoughts down. As I was honest with them, so were they with me. I grew to love these children. The principal came one day to ask me what had happened to the class — they, instead of being the problem, were helping him to solve problems on the playground. Many of these children came from unhappy homes. They were longing for a purpose and great living. They were overjoyed when chosen by the school to be the class with a half-day off to do a special collection for the war effort.

The war was very much a part of all our lives. My aunt received the sad news that her only son had been killed. She and my mother had had no communication since the day, several years ago, she had asked me to leave. My father told my mother her place was at her sister's side and suggested she pack her suitcase and go to be with her. My mother did. My aunt welcomed her with open arms and heart. Then she telephoned me asking if I would be willing to let bygones be bygones and come for supper. I was delighted.

A few years later when I was teaching in the Demonstration School, my aunt whose family were now grown and away from home invited me to share her lovely home. My bedroom was on the third floor. It was a beautiful room and quiet for study. I had a sitting room with my piano in it on the second floor. My aunt and I grew to respect and love each other dearly. She never was demanding of me in any way. I was free to live and do as I chose. The years spent with her were happy. She died a few years ago at the age of ninety-five.

## WHEN CHILDREN LISTEN

After my Jasper Place experience the invitation came to join the staff of the Demonstration School in the Normal School teacher-training building, University of Alberta. I was given Grade Four. The class enrolment never went beyond thirty students. Large classes of teachers in training came to observe classes being taught. The staff was in no way controlled by the Edmonton Public School Board. We were encouraged and free to work out new ideas, to experiment. The professors worked closely with us. Student teachers came to the classes to do their practice teaching. The staff were fully responsible for their grades and their training during these sessions. The hours of preparation in this school were long, but life was stimulating and adventurous.

I decided to have a listening time with my students each morning. This became a very real time for all of us. Our motto above the blackboard was the same as in my Jasper Place classroom. Again, as I was honest with my students, so they were with me and with each other. We settled all quarrels with a listening time, each finding out where he was wrong and saying sorry. We learned that if you say sorry and really mean it, an enemy turns into a friend. One little girl, Nancy, who was a poor reader and burst into tears when I tried to help her one day, came to me and said, "God told me I should let you help me learn to read and not to be afraid any more." She made rapid progress and was soon taking her turn in reading stories to the class. Her mother, who was a hair dresser, invited me for supper, and to express her gratitude, insisted on doing my hair each week free of charge.

Ben, nine years, came to school with his mother who asked me to keep a watchful eye for him at all times. He was very shy, easily hurt and needed a great deal of attention, his mother said. All this I found to be very true. Ben rarely spoke, and whenever

he brought anything for the class to see, one of the other children always showed the class what he had brought. He worked with the other children but whenever there were visitors, as there often were, or a program for the parents, Ben would always say, "Somebody else will have to take my place. I'm too shy." One day I decided there would be no one to take Ben's place. The result was that several children were unable to take part in a program because Ben's part was needed. This caused unhappiness and in the days that followed Ben was miserable. The children would say, "Spoil cat," "Shy, always spoiling everything." During listening times the children were having a hard battle. They eventually got over their resentment toward Ben and included him once more. Ben was still far from happy and cried all one morning with his head on his desk. We told him the decision to be different would have to come from within himself. Just before noon he surprised us all when he looked up with a smile, walked to the front of the room, and said, "I'm sorry I was shy and spoiled things for you. I'll never



*Jean with her students at the University Demonstration School.*



*Listening time.*

be shy again." In May we went to the festival where the children danced, sang, and played their musical instruments. Ben was our announcer and spoke with poise and confidence before a crowded auditorium.

Dean, nine years, came to our school from another country. He was not adjusting to his new surroundings. His mother was worried about him. Dean was unkind to his smaller brother and sister. He had no friends. The other children disliked him and were unkind to him.

The thought came to me to ask Dean to give an illustrated talk to the class about the country from which he had come. This created much interest and the other children realized that coming to live in a new country with strange ways might not be so easy.

I had a private talk with Dean, pointing out how much he had to give to Canada and I hoped he would make friends with the other children. We listened. Dean said, "I'll try to like all the kids. I'll try not to do things I shouldn't do because I am afraid of them."

A talk with the other boys brought out their resentment and dislike of Dean. After a listening time some of the thoughts shared were:

“Be glad Dean came to Canada. Say sorry to him for holding the door on him.”

“Shake hands with Dean. Ask him to be friends and say sorry for being mean to him.”

All the boys stayed after school the next day and told each other what their feelings had been and how they decided to change. They shook hands with Dean.

Dean became one of the most popular boys in the class.

Eleanor was a quiet child, small for her age. She disliked anything to do with Physical Education or Sports. She was very fearful of all these activities. When the whole school was preparing for Sports Field Day, Eleanor told me that her mother said she was not to take part. That night she cried and did not go to sleep until she said to her mother, “I told my teacher a lie today, that you said I couldn’t do sports.” Her mother said, “Well, don’t do it any more and go to sleep now.”

“But mummy, that isn’t the way to stop telling lies. You have to put them right.”

Next morning, Eleanor came to me and said, “This is just between you and my mummy and me.” Then she apologized.



*Honest apology starts teamwork*



*Jean with Eleanor.*

One morning, before school, I had a heated argument and lost my temper with the two people with whom I was living. The school day began as usual and I thought things were going very well when a boy raised his hand and asked me what was wrong. I assured him nothing was wrong. He insisted, "But there must be something wrong." I asked him why he thought so. He replied, "I can tell by your voice." I told the children what had happened at home that morning, that I was in the wrong, and I would say sorry and put things right.

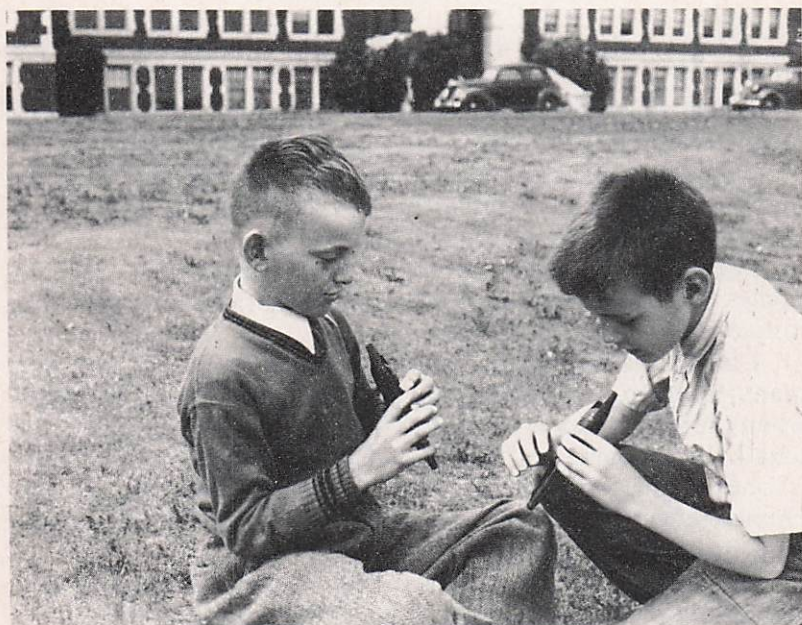
One afternoon I had a tea for all the mothers of my students. They were interested in the changes they had seen in their children. I thought they should know more about these listening times and stories of the changes in the children. I invited them to come whenever they could be with us in the mornings. They accepted this invitation and often came. I had their full support. They were more than generous in their gratitude and sending lovely gifts and surprises, sometimes a special treat of fancy cookies to be passed around just before recess.

Music was very much a part of every day and I planned and did several music programs for school broadcasts. I also did some for Art and for Speech.

I taught in the University Demonstration School for twelve years. Every day was an adventure and I looked forward to each new day. I loved teaching. I spent most summers at Summer School working towards a Bachelor of Education degree.

I have never once regretted becoming a teacher. I am privileged to have known and learned from so many children, far more than if I had had only seven of my own!

Children respond to honesty. They lose faith in adults when adults are not honest with them. I have learned, through working with children, that they are never fooled by adults. In fact, they can read adults almost like an open book. They are interested that adults, as well as they, make mistakes and need to say "sorry." They are interested in helping adults become better people, if they are allowed to do so. Listening times challenged me to be honest with my students, about things in my life, when I felt these would help them, such as the stealing of chocolate bars and sweets when I was their age. The adult who has never done anything wrong, who expects children to do as he directs and at the same time exerts the right to live as



*Music was a part of every day.*



*Dawning of a changed atmosphere.*

he chooses will never influence or win the confidence of a child.

Listening times create trust and confidence. They are the means of tuning in to the source of knowledge, which adults and children alike all need. They can answer the crisis in human relations, and teach us how to get along together so that we can continue to exist on this planet.

"People are more important than things" and "Sound homes make a sound nation," so said Dr. Frank Buchman, the initiator of Moral Re-Armament.

I have seen, during my teaching career, neglected children, many from broken homes, and no one there to care for them when the school day is over or to listen to them when they want to talk. In my view, not to be raised in a sound and loving home is one of the worst deprivations any child can experience. Homes reflect the life of our nation. Homes that pull together pull the country together.

My great wish for Canada is that it will be a land of wise and loving parents and sound homes, where people, regardless of age, will become more important than things. This could

happen quickly. It need take only as long as it takes to make a decision. National problems which now seem insoluble could be quickly solved if those concerned would tune to the voice in the heart. So many people think our problems are deep and complex. But really, they all stem from the same cause, wrong relationships among people. And these can be healed.

My beginning salary in Edmonton was twelve hundred dollars a year. Many of my teacher friends had charge accounts. I decided to have some too. It was such a thrill the first time I ever said, "Charge it, please." I was soon spending my money before I earned it and finally was deep in debt. I began to understand the wisdom about money I had learned from my father. I decided to get out of debt and close all my charge accounts. I have never had a charge account of any kind since then.

There were no adequate pension or welfare plans in those days, so many teachers were saving and investing money for their retirement years. I was advised to do the same. But retirement to me seemed a long way off in the 'never-never-land.' Saving money never appealed to me and I have never made an investment of any kind for the future.

## ENTER ROMANCE

It was about this time when I fell madly in love with an attractive young man. My friends knew him and did not think we were meant for each other. One of my friends ventured to say that if I married this man, life for me would be like hanging on to the tail of a comet. I closed my eyes and thought, "How glorious!"

Our romance was fun at times, peaceful at times, but mostly stormy and insecure. Deep in my heart I knew this marriage was not God's plan for me and I believe the young man knew it too.

When our engagement was broken, I closed (I hoped, forever) a part of my heart. I resolved never to get involved again so that I would never again be hurt.

Some twenty years later, while in India, I met a couple from Australia who were working with Moral Re-Armament. The first evening I met this couple, the husband said to his wife after the meeting, "Jean has closed her heart. We must help her open it again."

Some months later the wife and I were having tea together when a letter was handed to me. It was from the man to whom I had been engaged those many years ago. I read it quickly and tore it to shreds. My friend asked, "Did you have bad news?" Quickly I said it was nothing. Just as quickly, she remembered what her husband had said that first evening we met. She sensed that this letter had something to do with it. She had the clear thought, "Pursue it, pursue it". And pursue it she did, not in a curious or probing way, but with care and loving understanding. I dissolved into tears. Suddenly I wanted to tell her all about it. Afterwards, we knelt down together and asked God to heal the hurt and the bitterness. Once again, I had called on God to do for me what I could not do myself. Some days later, my heart was fully open again. I was different; I had no

dark corners to hide. I thought how much it was like tidying up my bedroom years before.

Since then, I have been able to use this experience to help others. I have been able to answer young people truthfully when they ask me, "How come you never married?"

I know there is no hurt or bitterness in God's plan for my life. These miseries only seem to come when I want my own way and cling to self-will. I am very self-willed. Always, it seems, I have had to learn the hard way by first trying my own way, then experiencing the freeing power of God's way. Change is so exciting and adventurous when one listens and obeys the still small voice in the heart. Why has it taken me so long to learn?

Had I married, it would have been with selfish aims and wrong motives. I would have had no guarantee that the marriage would not be broken. Since then, I have met many happily married couples of all ages whose marriages are built on both partners having an independent faith in God. Therefore, they do not feed off one another's faith; rather, the faith of one stimulates the faith of the other to greater and richer depths. Consequently, every day is satisfying, marriage is purposeful and loving as together such couples seek God's plan within the marriage both believe God wanted and planned.

I have learned that there is always something I can do about any wrong situation. It may be only a small part, but it can be a beginning in the bringing of healing. It may, perhaps, be just a thoughtful, earnest and sincere prayer for the people concerned. It may be something for which I need to say "Sorry". It is, so often, easier for the person who is least to blame to apologize and to ask forgiveness than the person who is most to blame.

There is an alternative to broken marriages and broken homes. I know, because I found it.

## THE EASTER GIFT

In 1951, my father died very suddenly of an internal hemorrhage. He had often spoken to my mother and me of death as *The Great Adventure* and at his funeral he hoped everyone would sing, 'Rejoice, Again I Say Rejoice.'

My mother decided to remain in Wetaskiwin. At the end of two years she came to share an apartment with me in Edmonton. She still missed my father and was very lonely. I was busy and self-centred and did not give her the care and fellowship she so much needed. She began to cling to me and to be demanding of my time and attention, something she had never before done. This I resented very much.

I introduced her to some of the people in the Oxford Group who became her good friends. Listening times appealed to her very much and soon things between us were much better. Her faith in God deepened. She had always given me a gift at Easter. This particular Easter my mother's gift was different. She apologized for wanting to cling to me and for her demands of me. She said, "My Easter gift to you is complete freedom to obey God whatever He tells you to do, wherever He leads you to be even though it means I never see you again." I was deeply stirred and in my heart came a great love and understanding of my mother. Later, she said, "It is so foolish to cling to people. Never have you and I been so close to one another or so free of each other." My mother had taught me the right relationship to have with all my friends. I lost all choosiness in people and to this day cannot think of any person I prefer to another. Each friend is unique and different and everyone a 'royal soul.'

My mother was never strong physically. She developed a heart condition which slowed her down for several years. Listening times meant everything to her. She thought for others and shared many things she was learning. She gave faith to others.

During 1958 her condition worsened and it was necessary for her to be in hospital. She told me in February that she would live to see the flowers come and she hoped I would go to Ireland to meet my father's family and see his native land. My mother died June 28th, 1958. A few days before she died I asked if there was anything she wanted that I could do for her. She was thoughtful for a moment and then said, "I would like, if it's possible, that you would decide to give your life fully to God, every day, for the rest of your life." Those were her last words to me. She knew, in her heart, her daughter had not yet fully decided.

In July 1958 I was on my way to Ireland, having been granted a sabbatical year for travel. I had been invited by my father's brother and his wife. My uncle was a retired Bank Manager. He and his wife had no children. They had travelled widely but the country they loved best was Ireland. They knew its history, all the highways and byways, every nook and cranny. They undertook to teach me all they knew. We travelled by car. My uncle's pride and joy was his black Rover with red leather upholstery. We would be driving along when my uncle would say, "About a quarter of a mile from here on the left-hand side is a small stone cross. That is all that is left of an ancient monastery." He would then proceed to give me the full history of that monastery.

We spent the year travelling, exploring every county, staying in quaint and charming country inns and homes. We also experienced the Gresham, Dublin's finest hotel. But all of us preferred the out-of-the-way country places.

We visited Trinity College. I saw the window of my father's room, explored the famous Library, saw the original famous Book of Kells, and visited the kitchen where cooking is still done in ancient copper pots and pans.

I met the aunt who had advised my father to run away to Canada. There were other relatives too.

We visited 'Summerhill', my father's lovely country home as a child. People still live in it. They gave us a wonderful welcome. I saw the room in which my father was born, the babbling brook nearby where he, with his brothers and sisters, fished for trout, and the stately tree near the house my father always climbed to the very top when there were family arguments and quarrels. He would remain in the tree top until my uncle would go out and call to him, "It's all right now,

George, you can come down." I learned to love, to know and to appreciate my father in Ireland more than I had ever done before.

This was only the first of many trips to Ireland. This country I know better than my own. I am sad for Ireland today. Some people say, "Those who have suffered the most have the most to give." Some day all will be well in Ireland. Some day Ireland will be the answer country and speak to the world.

Before returning to Canada I visited Caux in Switzerland, one of the large world centres for Moral Re-Armament.

## CAUX

I knew something of what to expect at Caux because I had, on several occasions, attended World Assemblies for Moral Re-Armament in the U.S.A. But I was not prepared for the spectacular beauty of Caux above Montreux, nestled among the Alps, overlooking Lake Geneva.

Mountain House, the main building of the Moral Re-Armament centre, was a former luxury palace hotel built in the early 1900's. Here, well known and famous people from many parts of the world came, among them John D. Rockefeller, the American oil magnate, Ysaye, the great concert violinist and Walt Disney, who was so impressed with the beauty and architecture of Mountain House that from this he was inspired to design Disney Castle.

During the war years Mountain House was used for refugees. At the end of the war it was in a state of disrepair and ready for demolition.

It was at this time that a Swiss had the thought that Caux would be a perfect location for a world centre for Moral Re-Armament. As a result ninety-five Swiss families sacrificed to raise the money to purchase Mountain House. Then, people of all walks of life, from every part of Switzerland, and some from other European countries volunteered their services free to restore the building. A Dutch architect assisted in all the conversion work on the building, a locksmith from Bulle repaired the eight hundred locks, a gardener from Basle organized a team of people to landscape the grounds and do the gardens. Meanwhile, many people were at work inside cleaning and doing all the necessary things to make Mountain House ready for its first World Assembly in July, 1946.

Mountain House was furnished with elegance and simplicity. I discovered that behind every piece of furniture, picture, every piece of kitchen equipment there is a story of love and

thought and care and sacrificial giving. It is through this kind of sacrificial giving that the work of Moral Re-Armament is financed.

This World Centre for Moral Re-Armament was Switzerland's gift to the world. Just after the war the first conference was attended by different nations among them French and German, who at Caux found reconciliation. And so was made possible the new relationship, now recorded in history, between France and Germany.

Here, to Caux, continue to come many nations from every continent, summer after summer, people of every class, race, color and creed. They find hope and an answer that satisfies not only the heart but gives direction for a new world order where everyone is needed and the ordinary man can play an extraordinary part.

During my first visit to Caux, in 1958, I had the privilege of meeting Mr. Segerstrale, then Finland's greatest artist. He and his family had benefitted so much from their time at Caux that he desired to give a gift to Mountain House. When I was there he was painting a mural on the large wall in the main dining-room. It is a most beautiful painting. It depicts the water of life available to all men and nations. The technique used was such that the colors deepen year by year.

On other occasions when I have been to Caux, I have had the privilege of meeting Aborigines from Australia, Maoris from New Zealand, people from Scandinavian countries as far north as Lapland as well as people from countries of every continent. At Caux one meets the world — "The world walks into your heart." After such an experience one is never quite the same again.

People ask me how it has happened that it was possible for me to travel as I have done and visit other countries. I tell them that friendships formed at Caux made it possible.

I have always explored Moral Re-Armament for myself and made up my own mind about it. I shall never cease being grateful for meeting this world-wide idea and the direction it had given to my life. Moral Re-Armament is not a sect, not a religion. It is not an organization. One cannot join, cannot resign. There is no membership. There are no fees to pay. Rather, it is an idea in action, the idea that God has a plan and each individual has a part. Personally, it challenges me each day to decide whether I will choose God's way or mine.

I have learned many basic truths from Moral Re-Armament. Here are a few examples: "When man listens, God speaks. When man obeys, God acts." "Definite, adequate information can come from the mind of God to the mind of man." "There is enough in the world for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed. If everyone cares enough and everyone shares enough, then everyone will have enough." "As I am, so is my nation." Moral Re-Armament taught me to stop blaming the other fellow and begin with myself by putting right what was wrong in my own life. It also taught me that there is no wrong situation around me that I cannot help put right however small my contribution.

Although a Canadian it was at World Assemblies for Moral Re-Armament in the U.S.A. and at Caux that I met Canadian Indians for the first time. I realized that all my life I had viewed my red-skinned fellow Canadians with indifference. Some people say indifference is akin to hatred. In a way it is more cruel. Through Moral Re-Armament I found the answer to indifference. I learned to care. Now, I am privileged to have Canadian Indians as my friends. I have learned of their heritage and culture, and have made the words of that powerful song, "What Color Is God's Skin?" a reality in my heart:

"The different races are meant to be  
Our strength and glory from sea to sea."

"Human nature can change" was a great discovery. I have faced many things in my nature, habits to be broken, temper and irritability, resentments and fears. Always, when I have hated these things and gone to God for freedom from them, I have found an answer and become free of them.

I discovered that the four absolute moral standards, when applied in my life, are gateways to adventurous and satisfying personal freedom and are necessary in one's daily living. They are basic to all religions. Even the man or woman with no faith can always begin the experiment with these absolutes. Absolute honesty, for instance, when applied in action is the answer to inflation and sagging economies. These standards in personal, national and international relations are necessary to human survival.

## A GREAT MUSICAL EXPERIENCE

In 1959 I first heard of the German Carl Orff-Schulwerk approach to music. I was eager to learn more. A friend wrote her friend in Hannover, a former superintendent of schools there. She invited us both to visit her and said she would help me find out more about Orff-Schulwerk.

We climbed eighty-two steps to the Hannover flat. I was deeply touched to learn that my bed was a borrowed one carried up all those eighty-two steps. (Would I have accepted such a difficulty in Canada or would I have simply said I did not have a bed?)

During my stay in Hannover I visited schools and saw the Orff-Schulwerk at all levels.

A few years later, during the summer in Toronto, Carl Orff and his associates gave a course in Orff-Schulwerk. I took the course and eagerly returned to school the following September. A whole new field in music education had been opened up to me.

My class of thirty-two nine and ten year olds were given about a dozen beautiful Carl Orff instruments including percussion. However, my hopes were soon dimmed. The children argued and quarrelled constantly over the instruments. I suggested to the children that perhaps the instruments had been given to the wrong class and should go elsewhere. I told the children I did not want to make a decision on my own and that I needed their help. I told them about the Inner Voice in everyone's heart and that if we listened in a time of quiet and wrote down our thoughts God would show us the right plan for the instruments. I made it clear that the thoughts the children might write down were theirs and that they were free to share them only if they wished to do so.

One little girl said sorry to the class for acting as if she owned all the instruments. She thought the instruments were for

everybody and we should take turns practicing on them. Other children shared similar ideas. We could decide each day on practice times and who should practice, then everybody would know the plan. Also we should be willing to work with everybody and not just some children we liked best. None of the children felt the instruments should go elsewhere.

As harmony developed among the children, so too, it came into their music in a way I had never seen or experienced before. They began to compose their own compositions, songs, rhythms and speech patterns, simple at first then in much more depth and complicated harmonies. A music supervisor from the south of the province who visited our class said, "What these children have written should be in the repertoire of every child's music."

Academic subjects also improved. The children realized that if these were well done there would be more time for music. The result was that the children, in small groups, would take instruments to a corner in the school, to the basement or outdoors in summer to practice. Often they could be seen with pencil and paper writing down their thoughts as to who should play which instrument, ideas for a composition, perhaps a title.

Writing down their thoughts became an exciting adventure to these children. There were no more arguments or quarrels that were not solved in this way. Everyone was included. Everyone had a part. What a joy those children were. And how much I learned from them! They were far beyond their teacher in creativity. All I did was give them the opportunity to create. For myself, I watched and listened in wonder to their compositions — Arabian Nights, The Magic Drum Beat, The Playful Pup, To Philip (My baby brother). None of the music was written down. They remembered it all. They were learning the language of music much as one learns any other language and were gaining skills for the study of more complicated instruments they might study later. Regular recorder lessons taught the children the rudiments of music and music reading. They learned to use effectively the recorders with the Orff instruments.

The principal of the school was one of our most ardent fans. He thought people should have an opportunity to see and hear the children in action. Our classroom was open now, at any time, to visitors. We entertained parents, grandparents and all

who were interested as well as out-of-town visitors. The children were invited to perform their own compositions on television and radio. We were invited to give demonstrations at city-wide Teachers' Conventions. For one particular Convention, two of the children wrote a special song called Teachers, in which the whole class took part and for which they were given a standing ovation.

## THE CHOICE

One day a music supervisor from the U.S.A. visited us. She suggested I apply for an American visa and then teach in America at considerably more salary than I was receiving in Edmonton. I applied for a visa and set about filling out the necessary documents. There were no problems. After several months I was told my visa would be granted.

Just at this time, on a busy afternoon of visitors, a man and his wife came to visit the school. They had been in India, working with Theatre Arts, and had just returned to Canada. They were the last to leave and asked me this question: "Would you consider giving some time and teaching in India?" They would write to schools there and I would receive invitations. India! A country on the other side of the world! A country to which I had given no thought! No, I couldn't think of India! I was going to America. One of these visitors said, "America does not need another music teacher."

I tried to talk myself out of going to India. But every morning early I would waken with the outline of India ever before me. Often in quiet I had had the thought, "Walk through every door that opens to you." Was this a door opening to me through which I was meant to walk? I had a deeper feeling that if I went to India, there I would find the depth of faith my mother longed for me to have before she died.

If I went to India I would have to pay my own fare there and back. I knew that compared to ours, salaries were very low. Could I face living in a school and be willing to receive a remuneration of approximately fifteen dollars per month?

Thoughts of India would not leave me. Invitations to schools in that country began to come. Finally, I accepted an invitation to a school in Bangalore in South India. I liked the sound of Bangalore and I was not disappointed in that most beautiful garden city and its perfect climate.

Having made my decision, the Board of Education granted me a year's leave of absence which was later extended to three.

Now, I just needed to find the money for my fare! I knew I could sell my car but that would not be nearly enough. My grand piano kept coming into my mind. That was one thing with which I had determined never to part. It had been a life-long dream to acquire it. The thought persisted to sell it. I could think of no other way to raise the money I needed. I put an advertisement in the paper. The piano did not sell — I did not receive one inquiry in response to the advertisement. I felt relieved and secretly elated. But I still needed the money for my ticket. I asked God why the piano had not sold. Very clearly came the thought that I had a free will, that God did not force anyone to give what they did not wish to give. I knelt down beside my bed and gave God my heart and my piano. The next evening a family with two daughters who were doing well in their piano studies came to see the piano and bought it. I was glad my piano went to a family who would appreciate and care for it.

Six trunks stood in my living-room. Two friends painstakingly packed the precious Orff instruments and my own necessities. When I came to unpack these trunks in India, not one thing was broken or out of place.

I picked up my ticket — a one-way fare to India via London, England. I knew my travel agent quite well as she had previously made all my travel arrangements. I remarked to her that I had no idea how I would find the money for my return ticket.

All this happened at the time of the closing of the Suez. The boat on which I was to travel was cancelled. Many passengers had cancelled not necessary passages. The outcome was, that some weeks later, on September 6, 1967 we set sail from London on a smaller, first-class only boat. There were more crew than passengers. We sailed around South Africa, stopping in Cape Town and other points along the way.

We had some very stormy days on the wide Atlantic. Once the boat cracked and furniture was ripped from the walls. Our spirits did not rise when the captain announced over the intercom, "All passengers please remain calm. Rest assured your captain and crew will do everything for your safety."

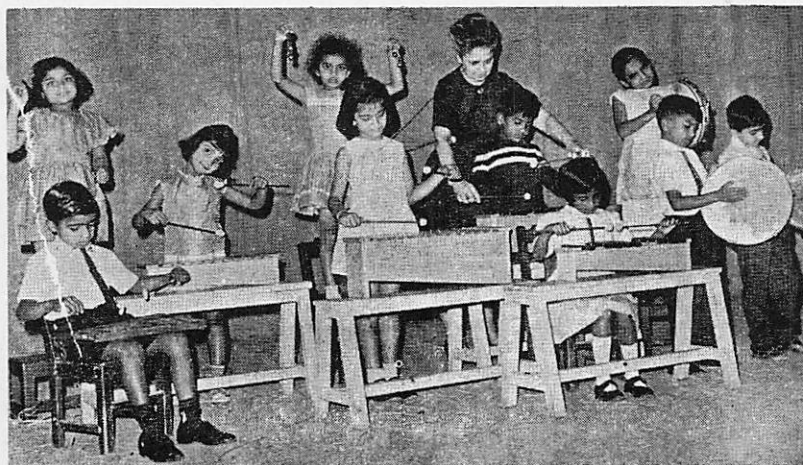
We steamed into Bombay harbor at midnight, October 6, 1967. It was like opening the door of a hot oven and suddenly feeling the heat. But the beautiful harbor with the "Queen's Necklace of Lights" was a sight to behold.

We were not allowed to disembark until 7 a.m. The couple who had made it possible for me to come to India arranged for their son to meet me. He brought with him a friend who invited me to stay in her flat and see something of Bombay before I would take the train on an overnight journey to Bangalore.

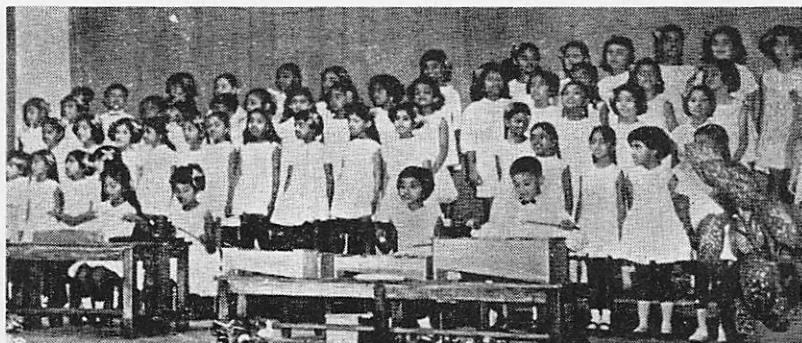
The school in Bangalore was one of the finest, with very high standards. There was a large enrolment of students from kindergarten through to graduation. Some were day students and some were boarders.

I taught the junior classes music and helped some of the older students with French. I organized a one hundred voice choir of children five to eight years of age. I taught them unison songs, rounds and canons, songs with descants. They learned to play their own accompaniments on the Orff instruments. We did some public performances. Never once did I have to reprimand a child in any way. Education to these children was a privilege. They were all so eager to learn. They respected their teachers. They worked hard. They thanked me for every lesson I ever taught them.

One day on the compound a little girl called me, "Miss, Miss." I turned around. She stopped and flashed a lovely smile.



*Jean with children in India.*



*Part of the 100 voiced children's choir in Bangalore.*

I asked her if she wanted something. She said, "You teach us nicely, Miss. Thank you, Miss." Then she ran off to her play.

It was during the school year that I realized how much I had depended on a salary, on familiar friends and circumstances and how easy it is to put one's security in these things.

I sent regular news letters home of which copies were made and sent to friends. I began to hear from people I had never heard of before. Sometimes a ten or twenty dollar bill would be enclosed although not once in any of my letters did I mention money. When friends wrote asking about finances I ignored the question. I wanted to find out if it was really true that "Where God guides, He provides." Other people had told me this was true, but I had always had familiar things on which I had depended.

## PANCHGANI

In 1967 a group of young Indians of every caste and religion committed to the moral re-armament of their country, wanted to have a part in raising funds for a Moral Re-Armament centre near the village of Panchgani in India. They produced a musical called *India Arise* which played in India and was then invited to different European countries.

While waiting in London for my boat to sail, I had the opportunity of seeing *India Arise* in a London Theatre. I met some of the performers and later was to meet them again in India.

People were inspired with the dedication of these young people and there were many offers of help, apart from money raised for buildings. An architect with a well-known Australian firm gave his services free. A Bombay company helped. A horticulturist from France offered her services free for six months to landscape the grounds. This was a big job, as the ground where the centre was to be was waste land. The horticulturist, with the help of an English nurse, would take the jeep to the jungle and bring back good soil to enrich the waste land. Today, large trees, many plants, shrubs and flowers grow in profusion. The centre has become a world centre with people coming to conferences from many countries.

One Indian who travelled with *India Arise* was Mr. Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma. Founder of the weekly newspaper *Himmat* (meaning 'Courage'), he was interviewed on television in Europe. I have never forgotten his challenge to the West: "If the West would choose to imitate Christ, the East would imitate the West."

In the school in Bangalore were children of every religion. I was interested in learning about these different religions. I discovered that one could speak freely and easily with any Indian, a clerk in a shop, an auto rickshaw driver, and they all

knew about listening to the "Inner Voice." Mahatma Gandhi had taught this way. Many of my Indian friends who were not Christians read the Bible. I soon learned that they were not enchanted with our way of living in the West, with films from the West in their cinemas, with Western tourist dress, and with disrespect shown their religious shrines and temples.

I took a fresh look at my own country. Things I did not think much about or took for granted, did not escape the notice of others. It was a strange feeling seeing one's country through the eyes of others.

During a school holiday I attended a Moral Re-Armament conference at Asia Plateau, Panchgani. There were people from many parts of India and other countries.

One morning an Australian came to me and said he had had the thought that I should be one of the speakers that morning at the main conference session. I had no such thought, speaking was not in my line, I had no intention of doing so. A few minutes later this man's wife came to see me. She suggested that if I really wanted to have a part in building a new world I would have to choose teamwork with others. I saw my independent spirit for what it was and how I still reserved the right so often to do as I pleased, therefore missing the greater things in life with others. I decided to go to the set-up meeting where people who had conviction to speak that morning would be pooling their ideas. I wondered what I would say. I decided to tell something of my life in Canada, and how I had sacrificed my grand piano to come to India.

Mr. Rajmohan Gandhi was to lead the morning session. He listened as each speaker quickly outlined what he had in mind. Mr. Gandhi called on me last. When I had finished there was dead silence. Then Mr. Gandhi said, "I can see your grand piano meant a great deal to you. But today there are two teachers here from the North. Do you think you could say something that would be meaningful to them?"

It was time to go to the meeting. I sat next to a lady from Scotland and found myself telling her of my panic. She said I could quickly give all to God, that He would give me the words to say, and she would pray for me.

As I walked to the platform, when my name was called, I still had no words to say. I looked over friendly, interested, expectant faces. To this day I cannot remember exactly what I said. It was brief. I did mention the Indian children I was

teaching, that it was a privilege to be in India and would they please help me? Afterwards, I met the two teachers from the North and we had a stimulating time together.

In the afternoon, as I walked down to the garden patio, I heard long striding steps behind me. It was Rajmohan Gandhi. He said, "What you said this morning was just right. Thank you."

That morning I had learned a lesson in humility and in teamwork. I had learned how much more important it is in conversation with others to seek to say what will mean the most to them and not to me.

A year later my teaching in Bangalore came to an end. Before returning to Canada, I was invited to spend more time at Asia Plateau, Panchgani. I accepted this invitation. I took the Orff instruments with me. They seemed perfect instruments for the lovely Oriental melodies and they blended well with native Indian instruments. Some time later the Orff instruments were part of the orchestra for the musical "Song of Asia" which travelled widely throughout Asia, Europe and as far North as Lapland and finally to Canada at the invitation of the Treaty Seven Indians of Alberta.

New people were constantly arriving to view the centre and to find out more about Moral Re-Armament.

When I had first arrived in India the whole country was tense because of a situation in the North East of India. One district wanted to become a separate state. There was great unrest among the Hills and Plains peoples bordering on bloodshed. The Prime Minister and members of the Delhi parliament had tried every solution they knew with deadlock results. There were three political leaders involved in the North East disputes. They had been deadly enemies for many years.

To one of the conferences in Asia Plateau attended by people of many nations, came these three politicians. They refused to speak to one another for some days. One morning, at the main session, one of the politicians asked if he could speak. He spoke eloquent English and vividly painted a picture of life in the North East for us. He spoke of the things he had seen and learned during the last few days. He now desired to be part of the cure and not the disease. He apologized to his two political opponents for his hatred of them and asked their forgiveness. It was a tense moment. I do not think there was a dry eye in the room as reconciliation took place among these three politicians.

There was an ambassador there from the United Nations. He was deeply moved and said, "Never in all my years at the U.N. have I witnessed reconciliation among politicians such as this. The problems on the table at the U.N. are colossal, but those seated around the table are even more colossal and nobody deals with them."

Thus was the problem in the North East solved by only three people deciding to change and have teamwork together. The Chief Minister of the area stated, "Moral Re-Armament has altered the climate of Assam. That is a fact. I speak as an administrator."

I had often felt discouraged when I listened to world news, when I thought of so many people. Now, I could see that all down through history it has been one or two people, or only a few who have changed history by the decisions they have made and the actions they have taken.

The village ladies of Panchgani decided each day to have a snack bar in the garden patio in order to raise funds for University students to come to the conferences. They themselves made delicious Indian sweets. The Coca Cola and Fanta companies donated crates of soft drinks. One day I dropped a bottle of coke and broke it. A piece of glass cut my leg above the ankle. I did not stop to think how quickly and easily infection can attack a Westerner in the Orient. A few evenings later I was talking with a lady who expressed concern that I did not look well. I went upstairs to bed and she alerted one of the nurses, who, after taking one look at me, immediately called a doctor attending the conference. He was a former Assistant Secretary of the British Medical Association. Another doctor also called was a surgeon from Dublin. The nearest Indian doctor who could have helped was more than fifty miles away. All I could say was, "I'm allergic to tape."

I had searing pains and red marks up my leg. It was blood poisoning. The two doctors attending me knew nothing of my medical history and wondered to what else I might be allergic. They wondered which injection to give. They had prayer and guidance. They administered the injection and waited for forty-eight hours.

When I felt better my doctors thought I should see the Indian doctor who had studied medicine in both India and Britain and who could give tests and x-rays. He greatly praised the skill and wisdom of the two doctors who had so quickly

come to my aid. He told me that they had done all the right things and that I owed my life to them. He put me into hospital for several days for the tests.

The hospital was all on the ground level, each of the rooms opening on to a common compound. I had a private room although there were two beds in it. The other bed was for the relatives of patients who came to be with them and so often cooked for them on little stoves outside. The doorway was covered by only a curtain.

One morning when the doctor and nurse came to see me the room was suddenly filled with people, the relatives of other patients, whose faces expressed sympathy, concern and interest. After that I had visitors every day, Indian people whose soft spoken language I could not understand, but they spoke with their hearts and I knew they were expressing their care and desire to help. I wondered if I in Canada would have so cared for someone I had not seen before.

I was ill for several months and was told that it would be necessary for me to leave India to fully regain my energy. I was invited to Ireland where I would be for seven months before returning to Canada in August 1970.

One morning I received a letter from my travel agent offering to send me a return ticket for which I could pay some time in the future. I was elated. But the next morning during quiet I had the clear thought that this was not the way I was meant to return home. My father's teaching came back to me. I knew I was not meant to return home in debt. I declined my travel agent's gracious offer. But soon, God, I would need my fare home. From where would it come?

Some days later I received a letter informing me that an uncle of mine had died leaving each of his twelve nieces and nephews one thousand, two hundred dollars and what would I like done with mine? This uncle was a bachelor. He lived some distance away and never wrote letters. I had had no contact with him for some years. Sad to say, I never thought of him, even at Christmas, and I had not known of his illness. His care and generosity provided my return fare. I wished so much I could have thanked him.

Soon, I would be leaving India, a country and its people I had grown to love and would always carry in my heart. I was not the same person who had arrived in India. Nor did I ever want to be that person again. My Western superiority and

know-how I wanted to leave behind forever. I saw how divisive it was. I realized how much I would always need in daily living, the wisdom of a power greater than my own. I had proved, beyond a doubt in my own experience, that "Where God guides, He provides." I would never doubt again. I had also been placed in situations where I had daily to turn to God for direction. I was finding that deeper faith of which my mother spoke and this was something no one could ever take from me. I had lived just over two years in a developing country. I was constantly aware of the friendship and many kindnesses shown to me. Always people shared so generously what they had, which was sometimes very, very little. I decided that when I returned to Canada I would never again let materialism grip me.

## RETURN HOME

I returned to Canada in August 1970. In three short years highrises had dotted the Edmonton skyline. Everything seemed different. I missed the faces of the Indian people on the streets, happy, alive and expectant compared to those of the West which to me seemed so often unhappy and bored. Everyone was rushing about. I missed the slower pace.

The boys now wore their hair long. The girls dressed as boys. I could not tell the girls from the boys.

I looked forward to school and my placement was in an unfamiliar area to me. There was a lovely music room and a good supply of Orff instruments. When I met my first Grade six music class they asked me if I were their new music teacher. Then followed a chant, softly at first, then deafeningly louder and louder, "We hate music. We hate music." I felt in a state of shock. I thought of my classes of Indian students and wondered why there should be such a difference.

The permissive society was here. If it meant rudeness, disrespect, no desire to learn, or for excellence I did not want it. Seeing my country and these children "through my new eyes" I thought we were in danger of losing the eternal values without which any society, as history has proven, will destroy itself.

I received my first salary cheque the end of September. I needed a car. I found myself planning how much I could save each month for its purchase. I also, at the same time, lost the expectancy and adventure of living I had found in India and never wanted to lose, which is a daily decision. I prayed about it and listened. The thought came, "You are slipping back into your old ways of planning for yourself. Take no thought for a car. Raise one thousand dollars for India before Christmas." Raising money for anything was not in my line. I had never done it. But when I finally decided to do so the strategy and know-how came in quiet. I decided to have a sale of some of my possessions. I was surprised how many of my friends, and their friends too, were interested and eager to contribute and help. I

had some lovely gifts I had brought back from India. I did not need them all. I thought also of some antiques handed down to me from my great grandmother and other relatives. True, I never used these things and seldom saw them. They were on a top shelf or packed away in a trunk. They had sentimental value and I did not find it easy to part with them.

Before Christmas I had raised one thousand, five hundred dollars. I sent it to Asia Plateau, Panchgani. I, too, could share and have a part in an investment for the future, the reconciliation of nations. It was a good feeling.

Early one morning, a few days later, the telephone rang. It was my friend, a few doors down the street, who had just finished her early morning hour of quiet. She had a thought for me. It was that she was meant to share her car with me. I would have it during the day when she did not use it and we could work out the evenings and week-ends together. I found words difficult and I wondered if I had had a car would I share it with another?

"If everybody cares enough and everybody shares enough, everybody will have enough," came back to me. I had cared for India and now someone was caring for me.

We shared the car for two years and never once had an argument about it. I cared for it as though it were my own.

One person who through a friend received my newsletters from India was an elderly man in Florida whom I had never seen or met. He asked if I would continue to write to him on my return to Edmonton. I did not write often but thought he would be interested in my sales for India and in my friend sharing her car. He asked if I knew when I was getting a car of my own. I did not. He said he wanted me to have his car which he no longer used, and would arrange to have it sent. He died soon after I received the car. Had I planned and saved I could never have owned such a car as I received as a gift. Once again, I had experienced the care and provision that comes from a Wisdom greater than one's own when one listens to and obeys the whisperings of the Inner Voice.

The next few years passed happily. School continued to be interesting, stimulating and challenging. Friends, near and abroad, enriched life. Then, one day, I was not well and needed medical attention. Nineteen years before I had had major surgery for breast cancer, and now, although I did not know it, cancer had struck again.

## **CANCER STRIKES AGAIN**

The next part of my story is in the following letter written to my friends in March 1978.

Apt. 1205 Jasper House,  
12021 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
T5K 0P2  
March 1978

Dear Friends,

I do thank you for the many letters from different countries with all your love and thought and care and your concern for me. They have come and continue to come during my illness of the last two years. I could never begin to put into words how very much every single card and letter, and the words of encouragement, wisdom, thought and prayer that you have each written have meant to me. My deepest thanks to each one of you. How much I would like to answer each one personally! However, since I can no longer do that, I am sending a form letter. My good friend, Ruth Freebury, has kindly offered to write at my dictation, and Margaret Best to do the typing. I am grateful.

In all your letters there is a similarity of questions, asking about my health, experiences and news. The question in your letters most asked of me is "How do you find that closer walk with God? I have not found it yet. I long to find it and to pass it on to others."

Why do my friends ask this question? I will tell you.

I was seriously thinking of retiring from teaching in a few years and accepting invitations to Australia, and other countries, and I hoped to see once again beloved India. But this was not to be.

Christmas 1975 found me with a chest cough, shortness of breath, and a nagging pain in my right arm. I didn't think too much about the way I was feeling for my health has always been good except for a few set-backs. I accepted an invitation to Montreal for the holiday. My friends there expressed concern about my health, but I returned to school as usual in January. I found steps more and more difficult to climb and breathing increasingly difficult. Finally at the end of February I telephoned for a teacher substitute, little realizing that this would be the last day that I would ever enter a classroom.

When a bed became available in hospital, March 15th, 1976, my doctor suggested a thorough medical examination. After numerous test and x-rays, it was discovered that I had lung cancer, and my lungs were full of fluid. Sometimes as much as twelve quarts at a time were drained from them. This was a frequent process as the fluid usually returned within twenty-four hours.

Even yet the doctors have not discovered the primary source of my cancer. My doctors experimented over a period of three months with drugs which they hoped would be effective, but none proved to be so. My condition worsened, I lost more than thirty pounds and became perfectly helpless, unable to walk, to lie down at night, or to do anything for myself.

My many friends came frequently to visit and care for me. It was not difficult to notice the concern on their faces and the anxiety in their eyes. One day, a very dear friend came to see me. I asked her, "What do my doctors and friends say? Do they think I will get better and be able to go back to teaching?" She replied, "No, Jean, you are very ill. You will never go back to teaching, and you do not have long to live." I was grateful for her loving honesty, but I was deeply concerned because I am an only child with no family. I had not made a satisfactory Will, I had an apartment full of furniture, and personal things which I had collected over the years of school.

As a child I had a very happy home life. My parents taught me about God, and how to pray, and we went to church together as a family. When I met Moral Re-Armament I learned that as well as praying to God, I could also be quiet and listen to the thoughts God put into my mind which gave direction to my daily living.

I told God that I did not want to depart this world leaving burdens and decisions for others, and could He possibly give

me time to straighten out all my affairs. No thoughts came to me that night, but I felt at peace, and that my problems were in higher hands than mine.

The next morning I had the clear thought that I was meant to be at home in my apartment, and to tell this to my doctor. His mouth fell open and he gazed at me in utter amazement, me completely helpless and with no one at home to care for me! He said, "I cannot possibly let you go home, You need expert nursing care."



*Gwen McLean (left) and Jean.*

Now I must tell you about Gwen McLean. I had met Gwen only casually on three occasions. She was now in Kenya, and had just accepted an invitation to remain a third year. Some years ago, Gwen had given her life to God. She sought daily His wisdom and plan as to where she was meant to be, and what she was meant to do.

It was during this time that someone wrote Gwen and told her of my illness. We had never corresponded, but Gwen wrote to me wishing me well, and telling me many interesting things about her life in Kenya.

One morning she had the clear and startling thought that she was not meant to remain in Kenya a third year, but to return soon to Canada. What could this mean? She had no idea. It was the time when Canadian Indians near Calgary, Alberta had invited the musical 'Song of Asia' which had toured many Asian and European countries, to come to Canada. Gwen wondered if they needed a nurse, that it might be that she was meant to travel with them. With tears and emotion she told her conviction to the people concerned in Kenya, and that she could not remain a third year. They understood, and much as they would miss her, knew that she must do what in her heart she felt was right.

Soon after when Gwen arrived in Montreal, she was told by friends in Moral Re-Armament there, of the seriousness of my illness and that I had not much longer to live, perhaps a month. They prayed together and listened to God. Gwen's clear thought, and also the thoughts of others, was that she should come to care for me. She had always believed and still believes, that whenever possible, a patient is better cared for at home. Of course I knew nothing of this.

Gwen telephoned to Edmonton to say that she was coming, and to please give her message to me in hospital. It was the evening of the same day that I had told my doctor I was meant to be in my own home that Gwen telephoned. She arrived in a few days, came to the hospital, and had a private talk with my doctor. He came to me and said, "You are indeed fortunate to have such a friend and highly qualified nurse. I will be happy for you to return home under her care."

When Gwen walked into my hospital room she walked into my heart, and God said to me, "Gwen is my gift to you." That was twenty-one months ago, and I have been in my own apartment, and experienced expert, tender loving nursing care.

I could never have thought of, planned for or known about, care such as can come only from a person whose life and will and heart are fully given to the service of Jesus. My gratitude I can never express in words or in action or in any other way, but it is everlasting.

Soon with the help of Gwen and friends I returned to my two-bedroom apartment. It was so good to be at home, to have the windows open, to breathe fresh air, to see the beautiful river valley from my bedroom window. All the things I had taken for granted seemed to take on new meaning, each new day was not to be taken for granted, but as a day to cherish and for which to be grateful. I was still helpless and unable to walk, and now it was time for my cancer specialists to have another consultation on my case to see what treatment I should have.

Chemotherapy was advised. This is such a powerful drug that only a doctor is allowed to administer it. It is given by injections into the veins. As well as attacking cancer cells, it also destroys normal cells, bone marrow is affected, the heart and blood count must be closely watched, frequent attacks of nausea occur, and one loses all one's hair. A patient, faced with taking chemotherapy, must decide for himself or herself whether or not to take it. When I found out all I possibly could about the drug, I prayed about it, and asked God to tell me what I should do. This thought came to me, "If your body can be used to help someone else in the cancer research being done with chemotherapy, you will be of service to future humanity. Take chemotherapy." For eleven months the chemotherapy treatments continued and all the side effects were there. My veins became sore and began to collapse, but I was replying well to the treatment. Fluid became less and less in my right lung, I could once more lie down in bed at night. I no longer needed a wheelchair.

I was still in constant pain, muscle knots seemed to form in my back, and Gwen's massage gave instant relief. I have never needed Gwen during the night nor called her at any time. She is a sound sleeper and her bedroom is at the other end of the apartment from mine. One night about three a.m. I woke with excruciating pain. I took medication but this did not seem to help me very much. All of a sudden a sleepy Gwen appeared and said, "Did you call me, Jean? Are you all right?" "No," I did not call you, but I am in great pain." Gwen said, "Somebody called me." She quickly went to work on my back,

got rid of the knots causing the muscle spasms, refilled my hot water bottle and tucked me in. Both Gwen and I went peacefully back to sleep. I believe that it was God who awakened Gwen and told her to come to me.

It was about this time that I received a letter from a Swiss friend, telling me of the Lukas Klinik in Switzerland where cancer research is being done which is proving of great benefit to many cancer patients. Gwen and I read all the material she sent to us, invited some of our trusted friends who also practice listening to God each day to help us think through whether it would be right for us to go to this Klinik. Our decision was a unanimous "yes".

Gwen and I left in early April. Due to a mix-up on the plane in Edmonton, we were put into first class at no extra charge. We had a wonderful restful trip over the broad Atlantic. We stopped first in London to attend John Bocock's and Jenny Austin's wedding. Jenny had a beautiful wedding bouquet, and as she and John were leaving, she presented it to me. I was deeply moved and it was hard to keep back the tears.

During the latter part of April and most of May, I was a patient in the Lukas Klinik. It was an experience I would not have missed, and will never forget. I was still having constant pain, and was given Iscador injections, which had proven effective in relieving pain in cancer patients, with no side effects. (Iscador is not available in Canada, so I continue to receive supplies of it from Switzerland.)

We arrived home the end of May. My doctors agreed that the treatment in Switzerland had helped me, that the tumor in my right lung was still there but not active, and that I need not continue with chemotherapy at the moment.

In August, Gwen went home to Regina for a holiday. I stayed in Edmonton with friends. When Gwen returned the end of August, she did not think I looked well. My appetite was poor, and I had lost ten pounds. Soon I saw my cancer specialist again. He discovered that cancer was beginning in the left lung. He decided to watch it closely and prescribed no treatment at that time.

Day by day I grew weaker with little energy. When it came time for my next appointment at the clinic, I told God that if they wanted me to take chemotherapy I did not think I could go through with it again. I asked God what He thought I should do. These thoughts came to me, "Chemotherapy will not do you

any good. You must not take it. Tell your doctor your convictions."

My doctor, after examining further chest x-rays, told me cancer was spreading rapidly in the left lung especially, and prescribed chemotherapy. He did not agree with my convictions. He thought I could have another good response. He said he would leave me for five minutes to rethink my convictions. Again, I asked God what to do. The thought came, "If your doctor prescribes chemotherapy for you, take it. Leave the decision to him. But tell him your convictions are still the same." My doctor decided to give me chemotherapy but first of all, a blood count had to be taken, and also an E.C.G. (heart test). The heart test showed that the chemotherapy I had previously taken, had given me muscle heart damage and a mild heart attack. Therefore I could never again take chemotherapy to help combat cancer.

When I first met my cancer specialist two years ago, he told me one question I must never ask him, no matter how ill I became was "How long did he expect me to live?" He would never answer nor predict.

When I first knew that cancer was spreading in my left lung, I told God that more than anything, I wanted to go to sleep and not wake up in this world. I guess all human beings have longings deep in their hearts. There was a time when I longed for material things like a new car. My greatest desire now was to enter the next world in my sleep. This became a dominant passion with me for several days. Visitors came and went, but I had nothing really to talk to them about or to give to them. Gwen could not even tempt my appetite with attractive and dainty food. God seemed far away, and I was out of touch with Him. Freedom left me, and I felt bound by the desire for what I wanted most for myself.

Several days later, I decided to open my heart to God again. I told Him I was sorry, asked His forgiveness and once again gave Him my life and my will. It was wonderful to feel free once more, to be able to pray again, and to listen to what God had to say to me. I visualized a moving screen with people walking to and fro, some of them I knew, some I did not. God said, "There are still days for you to live, there are still things for you to do. Before you leave this world, I want you to experience My greatest gift of freedom, that of wanting nothing for yourself." I knew nothing about wanting nothing for myself. All my life I

have known what I wanted and deliberately set out to get it. I have so much to learn, and each day I open my heart to God and ask Him to teach me more about this great freedom. The other day this thought came to me, "To want nothing for oneself is very simple. It is to be daily led of God in all things and decisions, and to do everything for Jesus' sake, even such things as dusting or washing the dishes." This does not make a person soft, a goody-goody, inferior, or holier than thou. Rather, to want nothing for oneself frees one to follow God's plan for one's life, to be as God intended with no false pretenses. A sense of well-being comes into one's heart, worries and frustrations disappear, security of heart, mind and spirit, yes, and physical well-being too are ours. A sense of real purpose for living comes into our lives. We see things and people with new eyes. Every person becomes important. Enemies turn into friends, wrong and unhappy situations change at home, at work, in our community and in society. Life becomes a great and satisfying adventure.

I know that many people have been praying for my physical healing, for they have written and told me so. One morning I had the thought, "There are many different kinds of healing — healing from bitterness, heartbreak, resentment and self-righteousness — the list is endless. Perhaps God's plan for my physical healing is not to go on living in this body, but to enter into a new world where pain and suffering do not exist."

I told this to my doctor. I told him I had no fear of death, that I wanted no one to feel sad, but rather rejoice with me. I looked upon death as something that God has planned at some time for each one of us, and I see it as **THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS ADVENTURE**. Then I dared to ask my doctor the question he had told me never to ask: "In view of what I have just told you, what in your medical opinion is your view?" He looked at me with great compassion, and said, "All indications are that it will not be much longer."

I told him of my extreme weakness; for instance, if I wanted a book from another room I would think twice about getting it, and decide I didn't have the energy, so would do without it. My doctor said, "I would like to prescribe prednisone." I have now been on this drug for a month; the response has been positive. It does not do anything for the disease, but it gives one a sense of well-being and a feeling of energy; it makes one more alert, so that I am now able to do small tasks about the apartment and

sort things out. I no longer have that sense of extreme weakness. Prednisone does have some side effects, and my doctor does not know how long I shall be able to take it. He cannot predict my life span in terms of months or even a year. That lies in God's Hands alone.

My own hair has now grown back, thick and strong.

Now to answer the question most asked by all of you: How does one find this close walk with God? What does it mean, and how does one pass it on to others?

I write only of my own experience. I have had opportunities of travel, of meeting and knowing people of different races, colors and creeds. In all of these people it was easy to detect those who had chosen this daily close walk with God. It was equally easy to detect the lack of this decision in people who had chosen otherwise. Some choose early in life; some put off the decision until it is almost too late; some decide never to make this decision.

I have known about this close walk with God for a long time, but I deliberately did not choose it because I wanted both God's gifts and the gifts of this world at the same time, which often are opposed to each other. The result was that my friends who had chosen this close walk with God did not trust my motives, and my other friends did not want what I did not have. My greatest regret is that I did not long ago, while I was active in this busy world, choose this close walk with God.

Choosing to have this close walk with God gives one an independent faith when one stands alone with God, decides never to turn back, does not lose his peace with God, no matter what the circumstances are or how other people react or what they do. It means never feeding off the faith of other people. We all need this independent faith which strengthens and deepens one another's faith and which builds a strong force of remakers of the world as Frank\* taught us. One can have one's God, one's religion, Moral Re-Armament or whatever and yet still miss this close walk with God.

I did not find it difficult to be honest with my doctors, nurses and my friends when they asked about my illness, but I had the strong conviction never to burden others with it and never to complain but to accept it and go to Jesus for the answers I needed. In this way, constantly turning to God, often

\*Frank N. D. Buchman, initiator of Moral Re-Armament

minute by minute, I began to notice a difference in my life and this was the beginning of experiencing a close walk with God. Jesus was always there and becoming my best friend moment by moment in a way I had not experienced before. It was thrilling and exciting. I began to thank God for all the gifts of the Spirit He was revealing to me, and that perhaps I would never have known had it not been for my illness. God put the thought clearly in my mind that He wanted to use my illness to deepen my own faith and also the faith of others. Each new day became a day not to be taken for granted but to cherish with much to learn. This turning to God instead of to people and walking closely with Him became the greatest adventure of my life and more precious than life itself.

When under sedation, and pain was still a constant companion, I sometimes felt bodily lifted through it, and I knew a Higher Power was undergirding me.

When going through long and tedious tests, and under large x-ray machines I would seek God's plan. The thought would be, "Begin with one country and pray as I guide you for all the people you know in that country. Then go on to another country and do the same. I prayed for the world's trouble spots, but the tests were always over before I could finish my prayer list. I prayed for my doctors, my nurses and my friends and we had many deep and stimulating talks together. I felt superbly cared for in experiencing God's wondrous care and that of many friends. And that is how I learned to walk closely with God, hand in hand, moment by moment.

I remembered Ma Mi (the Burmese school teacher who died of cancer of the liver while I was in India). One day she sent a request to see me. Her first question was: "Do you consider yourself as a school teacher?" I said "Yes." "Well, you must not," said Ma Mi "because if you pigeon-hole yourself everyone else will pigeon-hole you too. You must think of yourself as a remaker of the world. Then you will give your best to your students and bring out the best in them. Don't aim to change people; that is too small an aim. Aim only to do what God says, nothing more, nothing less; then you will affect men and nations. Ask God what to do first, then say, 'What next, Lord' and so on."

I think this close walk with God is something each person must choose and experience for himself. Just as we need fresh food every day, so do we need a fresh experience of God every

day — to give one's life and will to God first thing every morning, and decide to walk hand in hand with Him.

These last months have been the richest of my life. The spiritual gifts and that close walk with God far surpass the discomforts of illness. The lessons learned I could never have learned perhaps in any other way. I am deeply grateful.

This brings so many happy remembrances of each and every one of you. Knowing you has enriched my life. I am the one who has gained. I send you best wishes.

*Friends*

O precious friends, who hold me up  
In prayer, I could not drain my cup,  
I could not walk this thorny road  
Did you not plead for me to God!  
How sweet and strange this gift of prayer!  
You know my need and voice my care  
And speak for me before His throne;  
He reaches down, that Holy One,  
To smooth the road before my feet;  
And thus the circle is complete!  
Dear friends of mine, I never knew  
That I would owe so much to you!

Martha Snell Nicholson

May God abundantly bless and care for you.

With love and everlasting gratitude,

Jean

## EPILOGUE

It was a privilege to have cared for Jean Twiss for almost 2½ years, after she came out of hospital.

Along with Jean, I had adjustments to make. I had just returned from two years in East Africa, where I had been working as a nursing sister, with 130 lively boys ages 6 to 13 years in a private boarding school.

Commitment to seek and obey God's will had always been the basis of both Jean's and my life, and it continued to be the basis of our life together.

Speaking of his experience in Nazi prison camps in his book "Man's Search for Meaning", Victor Frankl said: —

"Those who have a *why* to live for can bear with almost any *how*."

What a privilege it was to care for a terminally ill person who had a *why* to live for! The *how* did not pull Jean down — the *why* was so strong; she fought on with tremendous God-given strength. As her physical strength lessened, she grew spiritually stronger.

The star in Jean's life was God Almighty. She made a decision to give all to God — to live to obey Him which meant death to self.

During my time with Jean, God was teaching me to die to self. In retrospect I know I was not loving towards Jean at times. But I had a clear thought that Jean understood what I was going through, just as I am understanding and appreciating more what Jean went through in her Pilgrimage to God.

Gwen McLean  
Regina, Saskatchewan

## APPENDIX

Jean was given three more years to continue her battle for souls on this earth.

A few months before she died on February 7th, 1981, she wrote these words:

*I Choose*

My life is mine to give or withhold —  
My hopes, my passions, my joys, my fears,  
I can choose victory or defeat,  
I can choose resurrection or death.  
I can so easily give little or nothing to people  
According to the way I think people treat me.  
The people with the least love in their hearts  
Need the most care from me.  
I can choose to run away from life, or I can choose to  
live life to the full.  
I can choose to be moody or sullen,  
I can choose to withdraw and feel hurt,  
I can choose to feel bitter, to bury the hurts  
Deep down in my heart  
(And I have often chosen this way),  
But the hurts never stay buried:  
They keep cropping up at the most unexpected times.  
I once heard someone say that those who have  
suffered most  
Have the most to give.  
When Jesus heals the suffering, and teaches how to  
use it  
To free humanity,  
The hurts then vanish forever as hurts turn into  
weapons  
To help another as Jesus directs.

I can choose to think my lot in life is not so attractive  
As that of another.  
All my life long, since I was a tiny child,  
I have been the one to choose.  
The words of speech, the actions in every situation —  
That is a common gift — the gift to choose.  
God has given to each of his creatures —  
Not more, not less, but equal;  
Therefore, I alone am responsible for lessons learned,  
Lessons not learned, how I shall feel or not feel,  
I have chosen, always.  
I cannot allow another to choose for me,  
And another never has.  
I have chosen. I am responsible.  
God is my Judge.  
I know that I will some day stand before Him  
All alone,  
And He will know,  
And He will judge,  
That much I know.

There could be no more fitting words to conclude this most eloquent testament of Jean's search for "the pearl of great price" than those of Henry Drummond: —

"And this great instrument for finding out God's will, this instrument which can penetrate where reason cannot go, where observation has not been before, and memory is helpless, and the guiding hand of circumstance has failed, has a name which is seldom associated with any end so great, a name which every child may understand . . . Obedience."

Jean was my friend for twenty years. I was always rather in awe of her and one day I told her that I kept her up on a pedestal.

“Worst place in the world to be, Margie,” she replied with a smile.

Jean’s love of music and of her pupils (who became part of her extended family) and her long, courageous battle with cancer, will warm your heart.

— M.F.B.