Mr. Coates was born in Russia of English parents and was educated in England. He first intended to become a scientist and for four years studied at Liverpool University under Sir Oliver Lodge. He then entered his father's office in Petrograd.

When he turned 20 he decided on a musical career and went to the Leipzig Conservatoire, where he took piano and 'cello lessons. He joined Nikisch's class for conductors, and became his assistant in the Leipzig Opera. It was Nikisch who told him "Born conductors are few, but you certainly are one".

In 1906 he was made Director of the Opera at Elberfeld and for four years later conducted opera in Dresden and Mannheim. The following year he went to Petrograd as Senior Conductor of the Imperial Opera, having under his baton an orchestra of 128, a chorus of the same number, a Corps de Ballet of 170 and costumes and scenery for 120 operas, to say nothing of a reserve chorus of 250 men and boys.

Two years later he was offered the Directorship of the Vienna Opera but remained in Russia with the additional post of Artistic Director.

When the Czar's Intendant resigned after the first 1917 revolution Albert Coates was appointed to succeed him and was confirmed in his post by the authorities. Illness however compelled him to leave Russia, but he gained further fame in England and America conducting many famous orchestras.

In 1926 he accepted an invitation to resume his work in Russia and directed the great Moscow Opera House. In 1933 he was put in charge of all the Philharmonic orchestras in Russia in addition to conducting in Moscow.

Mr. Coates was the first Englishman to conduct the Berlin Opera after the first World War and was hailed as Musical Ambassador. His first opera, "Samuel Pepys," was produced in Munich in 1929 and was received with
Albert Coates (contd.)

enthusiasm. He has produced a number of other works, among them the opera
"Pickwick" performed for the first time in Covent Garden in 1936: "The
Defence of Guenevere" - a symphony for dramatic voice and orchestra, and
first performed in Stockholm, then London, Vienna and America: The Suite
"Slav" performed in London 1945: and the opera "Gainsborough's Duchess".
He is now working on a new opera "The Boy David" by James Barrie, a third
symphony and another Suite Ancienne, all of which incidentally he came to
South Africa to complete.

Mr. Coates' thorough mastery of orchestral effects, perfect control
of the players and tireless rhythmic energy has placed him among the greatest
conductors of the present day.