

0869. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS DAUGHTER,¹ ST. GILGEN

À Madame / Madame de Sonnenbourg / à / St. Gilgen

Salzburg, 2nd Junii, 1785.

On 30th May, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, there was suddenly such a terrible stormy wind and a cloudburst that all the streets were under water in a moment, [5] but the wind chased the thunderstorm away over the town at great speed; but now the saddest reports have come in from the areas Lauffen and Seekirchen² etc. etc., where all the grain has been beaten to the ground by the showers, and since that time we have had heavy downpours, – snow in the mountains, and astonishingly cold weather, so people almost everywhere are heating their houses. [10] There is still nothing to be seen of esteemed cousin Pertl,³ – but I know he was still here a few days ago because I had enquiries made about him. Hubernannerl⁴ and her sister were also summoned to the town hall,⁵ given a good telling off and sent up to the Burgerstübl⁶ for one day, where they got more and more company during this time, [15] *N.B.* with more White Bonnets.⁷ Herr von Born⁸ arrived at the Schifwüth⁹ in the evening, was immediately called to the Prince,¹⁰ on the next day invited to eat, and after the meal the poet Herr Blumauer, who is travelling with him, was invited to *coffee* at court. They then set out at once for Gastein, and will only stay here on the return journey. Of course, esteemed *Baron Rehling*¹¹ was always at his side. [20] The *actors* played for the last time on Monday with illuminations in the theatre and a birthday *dedication*: the next day they all drove off at 8 o'clock in the morning. The most ridiculous thing was that in one dialogue, in which the talk was of godless people, these words occurred: They worked themselves up into such high spirits, and there was such noise as if it were the devil's birthday. [25] Wasn't that stupid? Shouldn't they have left that out, since the *play* was dedicated to the Prince on his birthday? – and the general public laughed astonishingly! The *play* itself had some good points, but on the whole it was poor, and the character of the president was betrayed as simple and stupid. In short! It was intolerable patchwork: [30] yet I must say that they made every effort to present it well. –

The 3rd June.

¹ BD: Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia (“Nannerl”), née Mozart, (1751-1829). After her marriage in 1784 her name was Maria Anna von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg. In all letters to Nannerl after her marriage Leopold refers to her as “Frau Tochter” [madam daughter] and to his son-in-law as “Herr Sohn” [esteemed son].

² BD: Laufen, a small town north-west of Salzburg; Seekirchen on the Wallersee, about 11 km north-east of Salzburg.

³ BD: Joseph Max Kajetan Pertl (†1788), a relative of Mozart's mother (Anna Maria, née Pertl), a court clerk in St. Gilgen and thus subordinate to Mozart's brother-in-law Berchtold.

⁴ BD: (Maria) Anna Huber, daughter of a Salzburg antechamber servant.

⁵ Cf. No. 0868/26, 55.

⁶ Leopold's “little room for the citizens” (“Burgerstübl”) may be a play on the word “Burgfrieden” (prison).

⁷ BD: White bonnets appear to have been the distinguishing mark of chambermaids.

⁸ BD: Ignaz von Born Esquire [Edler] (1724-1791), mineralogist, from 1779 Actual Court Councillor of the Court Chamber in Vienna in matters of coinage and mining, Grand Master of the Masonic lodge “Zur wahren Eintracht”, which Mozart attended as a guest. He stayed in Salzburg in June, 1785, on his way from treatment at Bad Gastein.

⁹ BD: Zum Goldenen Schiff” [“At the sign of the Golden Ship”], an inn in Salzburg.

¹⁰ “Fürsten”. BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for two periods, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9.

¹¹ BD: One of the twin brothers mentioned in No. 0950/63.

Yesterday I finally called on Herr von Treubach¹² to see his son's¹³ drawing and painting; the drawings are indeed outstanding for a young person who, besides the few lessons which he had from *Lorenzoni*,¹⁴ [35] works from pure *genius*, – and should he receive teaching and painting, colour mixing and attitude, something great can come of him. The playing of the beautiful young mistress¹⁵ is as beautiful as she is herself. – and as her teacher.¹⁶ The most pleasant and comfortable thing is that one can fit everything that she plays into whatever change of time signature one wishes. [40] At the end there came the same song and question about your confinement¹⁷ in Salzb., where she said to me that she had spoken to both of you about it; and both of them preached to me till I was out on the stairs. Because the procession could not go out yesterday, I was in the cathedral, and on leaving ran into the wife,¹⁸ who wanted to climb into her coach, – there I heard the same questions etc. [45] and calmed her by telling her that it will all be done and you will soon come into town again. The esteemed paymaster¹⁹ has finally found an opportunity to travel outside the principality of Salzburg for once. On Sunday he will accompany his brother to Munich in the post-coach and stay there for a week: I will give him letters to take. [50] When I sent someone to enquire about Herr Pertl²⁰ again, I was now obliged to hear that he was already gone. – I had of course always thought to myself that he will probably have enough to take out for his own needs and consequently not be able to take anything with him so easily.

Now the messenger is here with your letter. Heaven help us! What kind of uproar is this, as if the greatest starvation and misery were already at the door. [55] We know just as well as you do in St. Gilgen that a general famine does not, and never has resulted from one shower alone. The same God as ever is still alive! I will probably have to travel to St. Gilgen to preach a sermon of repentance about true trust in God. Besides, the uproar among the farmers is always greater than the business itself, [60] all the more so since they are now taking the opportunity to say that never in human memory was there such a shower as now because they no longer ring the bells for thunderstorms.²¹ In short! Whoever makes such noise because of every misfortune that God sends shows little trust in God, and does not weigh up or calculate the great favours that God causes to be sent to him each day against the little bit of misfortune which God occasionally allows to come upon him. [65] Oh, and the farming gentlemen draw their swords at once because of falling prices, and then the miller and the baker²² because of rising ones. – Now I must confess to you that I am in a very black mood, since you inform me in neither the first nor the second letter when you roughly think that my esteemed son²³ will drive you into town. [70] If I had been capable of guessing that nothing

¹² BD: Prof. Dr. Johann Philipp Steinhäuser (Stainhäuser) von Treuberg (1719-1179), professor of public law, dean of the faculty of law at Salzburg University, member of the Court Council.

¹³ BD: The person named “son” is in fact Gandolph Ernst (1766-1805), who later painted Beethoven and Salieri.

¹⁴ BD: Pietro Antonio Lorenzoni (c. 1721-1786), probably responsible for the paintings of Wolfgang and Nannerl in 1763.

¹⁵ BD: Sophie Steinhäuser (Stainhäuser) von Treuberg (c. 1771-1835), daughter of Prof. Dr. Johann Philipp Steinhäuser (Stainhäuser) von Treuberg (1719-1179).

¹⁶ BD: The “beauty” here is clearly ironic.

¹⁷ Leopold has previously reported reactions in Salzburg to preparations for the birth of Nannerl's baby.

¹⁸ “Obersthofmeisterin”. BD: Maximiliane, Countess [Gräfin] Firmian, née Komtesse Lodron, wife of the Royal High Steward [Obersthofmeister] Franz Lactanz, Count [Graf] Firmian (1712-1786).

¹⁹ “Herr Zahlmeister”. BD: Franz Vinzenz Lankmayr (1745-1823), mentioned in frequently in letters and notes as a friend of the Mozart family.

²⁰ BD: See line 10.

²¹ BD: Forbidden in Salzburg from 19th September, 1783. There had been debate about possible harm due to the practice, cf. J.N.Fisher's *Beweis, das das Glockenläuten bei Gewittern mehr schädlich als nützlich sey* [Proof that bell-ringing during thunderstorms is more damaging than useful], Munich, 1784.

²² “Baker” after the correction in BD VI, p. 234.

²³ BD: Leopold's customary form of address to his son-in-law.

would come in this letter either, I would have written not to you, but to my esteemed son. One hope I hold onto firmly is that he will spend his name-day here at my house. But this is not until the 24th, and bringing you into town as late as that would be much too risky, since everyone tells me that one can never calculate so accurately the first time, [75] and usually the confinement starts earlier: I would therefore come out sooner, if he agrees, and drive in with you, then we will have the pleasure of seeing my esteemed son here on his name-day and of being at his service with some music. I hope for an answer to this on the next messenger-day, since I am thinking of coming out to you on the 13th or 14th in any case and causing my esteemed son inconvenience.²⁴ [80] Now I heartily kiss my dear son and yourself, as well as the children, and am eternally your sincere father

Mozart mp²⁵

²⁴ BD: Ironic.

²⁵ mp = *manu propria* = in his own hand.