

1439. CONSTANZE NISSEN TO FRIEDRICH SCHWAAN,¹ ROSTOCK

EXCERPT:

To / the Highborn / Gentleman² Fr. Schwaan, Music- / Teacher / in /
Rostock / in Mecklenburg

[Salzburg, 5th December, 1829]

. . . As far as I am concerned, I live with one of my dearest sisters³ [5] as happily as is possible, as much as my situation without Mozart and without Nissen allows. I had two great, distinguished husbands who loved and valued me, yes, I must say: worshipped me; both of them in turn were loved most tenderly by me, and I was therefore completely happy twice; and that is not to be in this temporal existence; [10] but, strengthened by divine religion, I accept my lot, and join with Haller⁴ in saying:

One day shall joy and gladness replace all sorrows past,
When our own eyes shall see God's plan revealed at last;
Though searching glances now we cast,
[15] Still blessed darkness hides it all. –

So much for me; and now to the biography.⁵ – It is an infinite joy to me that it meets with your approval too and, although I have so far not been able to make any profit from it for my sons, I am nevertheless glad that the world, and particularly those who venerate Mozart, have had a work placed in their hands which provides them with pleasure [20] . . .

¹ BD: Music teacher in Rostock.

² “den Wohlgeboren Herrn”.

³ BD: Sophie, Constanze's youngest sister, who moved to join her sister in Salzburg after the death of her husband Jakob Haibel in 1826.

⁴ BD: Albert Haller (1707-1777). This is one of the few known literary references made by Constanze; the other two are to Kotzebue in her diary entry of 17 September 1829. The poem has not however been found in any surviving editions of Haller's works. “Ein Blick in vorigs Leid wird künftig uns entzücken / Wenn unserm Auge sich der Schöpfung Plan wird entdecken / der itzt unsern kühnen Blicken / in seelig's Dunkel sich versteckt. [A glance at past suffering will in the future delight us / when our eye discovers the plan of Creation / which now, to our bold gaze, / is hidden in blessed darkness.”

⁵ BD: Nissen's Mozart biography.