

Monsieur!

À la Haye,³ le 12. Decem: 1765.

In order to free you immediately of any worries you may have, I tell you herewith that we are all, praise God, alive. – Yes, I can almost say that we are all well, for our dear Wolfgangerl has now, with God's help, [5] arisen from his terrible battle and is on the way to recovery.

Hardly a week had passed since my daughter had left her bed and learned to walk alone across the floor of the room, when on the 15th Novb. Wolfgangerl was taken with an illness which, within a period of 4 weeks, had reduced him to such miserable circumstances that he is not only absolutely unrecognisable, [10] but has nothing more than his delicate skin and little bones on him, and for 5 days now he has been assisted from his bed to an armchair every day. But yesterday and today we led him across the room a couple of times, so that he might gradually learn to move his feet again and also to stand up alone. You would like to know what was wrong with him? [15] God knows! I am tired of describing illnesses to you. It started with high temperatures. We had no more black powder⁴, we therefore gave him, as usual, some Margrave powder⁵ three times in succession, but this had no effect. It seemed to be some kind of fierce fever, and that is what it was. On the 17th, the *medicus* prescribed for him Infus: flor: Samb [20] ʒxx. Rob: Sambuci and Ribisior: ā ʒj. Stib. diaph: ☉ ablut. ʒj. Spir. nit: dulci ʒβ. This was then perhaps not enough for our esteemed *medical gentlemen*. On Monday the 10th, Professor Schwenke⁶ changed it to the following: Rp. Aqu: scrophul: ʒβ. Syr: Viol: ʒvi. Caphurae gr: ʒj aqu: hord: ʒvv. He had to be given a spoonful of this every 3 hours. [25] And the more this made him perspire, the more he should drink, namely water with bread and weak tea. On the 23rd he was given a *clysmā*, and our *medical gentlemen* were very anxious. On the 30th he was in great danger. On the 1st December, however, he was better and then lay for a week without speaking a word. Now the view was, of course, that the fever had abated entirely. [30] But now the wish was to see if it was possible to recover the strength he had lost. A mixture was to be of service here, namely: R. Extract: Cort: peruv: ʒiβ. Aqu: meliss: ʒiij aqu: naphae ʒij. Syr: vio: ʒvi. To drink: Rp: Sem: 4. Feig: mai: āā. ʒij. Sem. papav. alb: ʒβ. Fiat decoctum hord: S. A: Emulsio. Collaturae ʒxx. adde Syr. viol: ʒj aqu: naphae ʒβ. Afterwards, we gave him hartshorn jelly etc. [35] In short, after he had slept for almost a week, his spirits finally recovered strength somewhat. Then he spoke day and night without anyone knowing what he was saying. But now |: praise God :| things are going well. During his illness, one always had to take care of his tongue, which was as dry as wood most of the time and foul, and had to be cleaned often. [40] His lips lost their skin 3 times, and became hard and black. Our night vigils continued in the same vein as during my daughter's illness. It is thus a great grace of God that we, and especially my wife, have been able to withstand all this. Now, patience! Whatever God sends must be accepted. [45] Now I can do nothing other than long for the time when it pleases the Most High to give my Wolfgang so much strength that we can undertake such an important journey, and at such a time of year. No thought is to be given to the expense; let the cuckoo take the money as long as one can come out of it with the bag. By the way, I need not describe to you the other circumstances [50] in which we have found ourselves over the last 3 months and, if we had

¹ BD: Original lost. Copyist A; NissenB.

² BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Sometime landlord and friend to the Mozart family.

³ = At The Hague.

⁴ BD: pulvis epilepticus niger.

⁵ BD: pulvis Magnesia cum Rheo.

⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0103/53.

not had such an extraordinary grace of God, my children would not have been able to come through these severe illnesses, nor we through these severe vicissitudes.

Now I would ask you to have the following Holy Masses read immediately, [55] namely 3 at the Holy Child in Loreto, 1 at Maria Plain and 1 at Passau on the Maria Hilf mountain,⁷ 2 at Saint Anna's with the *Franciscan Fathers* in the parish church, 1 in honour of Saint Walburga, and 1 in honour of *Saint Vincent Ferrer*. That thus makes 9 Holy Masses.

My daughter is now so well that one no longer notices any signs of her illness. [60] I hope to God that our young Wolfgang will also recover in a few weeks, for the young can soon get back onto their feet again. I owe replies to the letters from Herr Adlgasser⁸ and Herr Spitzeder.⁹ I will pay in the coming days. My present circumstances will excuse me. Please give compliments from us all. My children's illnesses plunged not only us, [65] but also all our friends, into sorrow, especially the illness of our Wolfgang, for nobody here knows my daughter yet because she had already fallen ill on the day after our arrival. But I cannot tell you who my friends are here because one might consider it to be boasting.

[70] I thank Herr Weiser¹⁰ for his courteousness and commend myself to him. The engravings are always at his service. The poetry¹¹ has turned out very well. You have done very well in ordering a new bureau.¹² As far as the brass fittings are concerned, they must be fitted by a decorative metal worker, for things of that kind are nothing exceptional in London and all work is abominably expensive. [75] Only please do not have knobs but handles put on the drawers. And in general please see that everything is worked nicely level, low and straight, without, for example, any embossing or otherwise with a lot of notches and joins, but worked flat and low and consequently easy to clean, [80] for the English taste in such work really consists only of this: that it is good, flat and low, and on no account high and greatly convoluted. I am not so fastidious, you need not be anxious. Just make it according to your taste, for I know that we are of one opinion and *gusto*¹³ in these things.

[85] The best place for the bureau will be exactly where yours is standing, namely where the picture of Saint John Nepomuk is. The latter can then be moved, along with the little bureau, to just opposite, between the door to the little chamber and the living room door. Whatever is there will then certainly have another place found for it. I still have a lot to write to you on points of this kind in due time. [90] For example, where then will my daughter sleep? Where will Wolfgang set up his quarters? Where will I find a special place for him to practice and for his work, of which he will have a great variety? And where do I end up? My children and I should each have their place so that no-one hinders the other. [95] Can you then not have a few more rooms built on? But without using magic! – – What condition, then, is our *clavier* in? – – Have many strings broken? – – If not many strings are broken, it is not important. But, if many strings are broken, Herr Egedacher¹⁴ will have to be asked to come to string it, [100] but I would ask Herr Spitzeder or Herr Adlgasser to be present and to take care that strings of exactly the same thickness as the old ones are fitted, since the sound of the *clavier* will otherwise be weaker.

⁷ BD: Maria Hilf, a pilgrimage church above Passau town centre; the other churches are all in and around Salzburg. Cf. No. 0103/143 and *passim* for similar requests.

⁸ BD: Anton Cajetan Adlgasser (1729-1777), pupil of Eberlin. Salzburg court organist and composer.

⁹ BD: Franz Anton Spi(t)zeder (1735-1796), studied at Salzburg university, tenor in the Salzburg court music.

¹⁰ BD: Ignaz Anton (von) Weiser (1701-1785), Salzburg merchant, later mayor of the town.

¹¹ BD: This could be the text for the oratorio *Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots* KV 35, sent to Leopold by Hagenauer.

¹² BD: Cf. Nos. 0102/128 ff.; 0103/183.

¹³ = taste.

¹⁴ BD: Probably Johann Joseph Egedacher (†14th June, 1785), the royal organ builder and therefore also responsible for tuning and maintenance of the keyboard instruments; usually referred to in the letters as the "old Egedacher"; possibly his son.

N.B. But this is only in the event of so many strings being broken that it may endanger the *clavier*. I am glad that my chest from *London* has arrived. [105] Before our arrival, there will probably be something arriving in Salzburg from Holland and a couple of chests from *Paris*. And, with God's help, we will yet be able to load our coach with 2 cases and a large coat-bag. The stowage space and the seat trunk are always full anyway. I readily believe that you wish to see us soon, and our wish is the same. Our dear Frau Hagenauer |: to whom we all obediently commend ourselves :| must surely have prayed, along with your family, many an Our Father for us. We continue to commend ourselves to her devotions and, in the hope that we will – with God's help – see each other again in good health, I remain, sir, along with my wife, [115] who was imprisoned in one room for 3 months, and 2 children risen from the dead, yours as always.

I would have written to you sooner, sir, only I decided against writing to either *Paris*, *London* or Salzburg until I saw how things were with Wolfgang.

Please make the envelope and address it, I refrained from doing so because the letter would otherwise have become much too thick. [120]

Has *Mademoiselle Fesemayr*¹⁵ got back? – – I hope she is bringing honour to her name.

¹⁵ BD: Maria Anna Fesemay(e)r, received a scholarship to study singing in Italy; sang at the Salzburg court from 1765 onwards; married Adlgasser as his third wife.