

0883. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS SON-IN-LAW,¹ ST. GILGEN

Dearest, esteemed son!²

Salzb., 5th Oct., 1785

I feel pain in my soul that the opportunity to make a sale with the jewellery³ went so *mal a propos*.⁴ You had sent it without a pin and wrote that you would not let it go for a penny under 1200 florins: [5] accordingly, if I could not find a taker, I wanted to put it into safe keeping. I was already trying to sell the jewellery before the *auktion*, – there were offers of 900 florins – then 1000 florins: – finally I even got it up as far as 1050 florins. – Since my hands were tied, and then because I could not come down below the price of *exactly* 1200 florins on account of the instructions in the letter, it was all for nothing, [10] for no-one wanted to pay anything more. Now the deputy administrator's wife⁵ comes with the pin, and a letter explains the mistake. This is regrettable! I went to a great deal of trouble in vain. The Jews were of course still there yesterday, – I called on them, – but it was just as I thought: after the *auktion*, due to which, and due to other business on the side, they had parted with a lot of money, their eagerness had cooled. [15] They actually said they wanted to call on me this morning between 8 and 9 o'clock, but I did not see a single Jewish soul; indeed, I suspect it was an excuse and they have already left. – The silver has also been lying there so long, and the list of weights beside it, – but I still do not know to this very hour how much I can sell it for per loth⁶ and I am always being told to interest purchasers. [20] I now have a taker for the 4 candlesticks. – Should I let them out of my hands again? – I decided to part with them for 1 florin 27 kreuzers per loth if they are in good shape. Initially, I set a starting price around 30 kreuzers. Now I am waiting for a clear answer as what I can settle for in future, since, quite naturally, I always set the starting price higher anyway. [25]

I am sending the bonnets with this woman.

There was too little velvet, so I had her buy atlas satin; with all of this, the bonnet will not come to much more than 5 florins, which is in fact a fair enough price. – I am keen to see how we get the barrel for the cook out to you. [3] The bag for the peas etc. etc. is abominable and was wet through, it must be dried first.⁷ Little can be fitted into the 2 money-bags. – These things are astonishingly expensive because nothing has reached here from Austria and other places. What was left over after the thunder is being eaten by the people themselves. – Regarding a feather on the bonnet: – one wears it without feathers, or it is put on the left side next to the tassels. [35] The child,⁸ praise God, is well, *addio* I kiss you all from the heart.

Mozart mp⁹

¹ BD: Johann Baptist von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg (1736-1801), regional administrator in St. Gilgen; Mozart's brother-in-law. Nannerl was his third wife.

² BD: Leopold's customary form of address for his son-in-law.

³ BD: Cf. Nos. 0804/41; 0882/46-47.

⁴ = "amiss".

⁵ BD: "Amtmannin": cf. No. 0876/73. The wife of von Berchtold's second-in-command in the administration.

⁶ BD: Lot, loth = 1/30 of a "lb" (pound) or 16 2/3 g; approximately half an ounce.

⁷ BD: Leopold writes "er"; he presumably means "erst" ["first"].

⁸ BD: girl ("child nurse").

⁹ BD: Nannerl's son Leopold (born in Salzburg on 27th July, 1785) had remained with Leopold since the birth; Nannerl returned to St. Gilgen at the beginning of September.

⁹ mp = *manu propria* = in his own hand.