

1344. CONSTANZE MOZART¹ TO BREITKOPF & HÄRTEL,² LEIPZIG

P. P.³

[Vienna, 13th March, 1802]

In answering your letter⁴ of 22nd *Febr.*, I have the honour of replying once again that although everything you mention may be completely true, my view of my obligations towards *André* and myself [5] absolutely prevents me from responding to your well-intentioned suggestion:⁵ I owe you thanks for the trouble you have taken to persuade me of something which is to my advantage. I would therefore be in the position of possibly losing a not inconsiderable gain which kind *Baron* von Swieten wishes to bestow upon me. [10] Otherwise it may seem strange to you that I do not yield to reasoning which I do not fault, but you will not begrudge me that.

How is progress with the description of his life?⁶ You promised that I might read it while it was still in manuscript: more ideas associate themselves with more again, and so I will surely be able to supply you with contributions and corrections [15] which do not occur to me on my own. I thank you for the renewed promise of the continuation⁷ of your publication, and I am languishing for some parts of it. In particular, I am hoping to receive the 3 individual *Cahiers*⁸ of the *sonatas*, or the songs

Nos. 2, 5, and 6,

[20] which I have constantly requested and beg for again, since otherwise, as I wrote telling you, I will not even have a complete set of *copies* of the first 8 *Cahiers*, in particular not even the beautiful one with the songs.⁹ In order to obtain the 3 *Cahiers* mentioned, I would even renounce my claims to all other pieces if I had to (though I have no claim on anything anyway). [25]

Immediately on receiving your first letter, I spoke to Lange,¹⁰ and at once he took up the idea that I gave him about the *portrait*. He acknowledges that it is possible, and is inclined to carry it out.

[30]

Vienna, 13th March, 1802.

Your most devoted servant
Constance Mozart

¹ BD: Nissen's handwriting, Constanze's signature. Georg Nikolaus Nissen (1761-1826), secretary to the Holstein Legation in Regensburg and then to the Danish Legation in Vienna. Met Constanze at the end of 1797, was either her landlord or cohabitant. Nissen advised Constanze in all business matters from 1798 onwards, especially with the publishers Breitkopf & Härtel and André. The letters, often formulated by him and signed by Constanze, reveal an experienced, if cautious, businessman. Cf. note on No. 1224.

² BD: Founded as "Breitkopf" in 1719. On 1st November, 1795, Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf concluded a contract of partnership with Gottfried Christoph Härtel (1763-1827). This was followed in 1796 by a secret contract of sale in which the entire Breitkopf business was made over to Gottfried Christoph Härtel. The latter was also declared universal heir by Breitkopf shortly before his death in 1800.

³ Presumably "port paye" [= postage paid, on behalf of the receiver as well].

⁴ BD: No. 1342a, lost.

⁵ BD: Cf. Nos. 1342/3-11; 1348a/34. Van Swieten had Mozart's Handel arrangements and other works.

⁶ BD: The publisher had already announced his intention of publishing this in No. 1223/85 ff.

⁷ Cf. No. 1341/16.

⁸ *Cahier* = a volume of the complete works.

⁹ BD: Cf. No. 1341/11-12.

¹⁰ BD: No. 1342/16-20. It seems that this *en face* portrait was not done, although B & H enlisted the help of Mozart's son Franz Xaver Wolfgang in 1812 in negotiations with Lange.