

*Monsieur!**Paris, le 1 April, 1764*

Wherever you are, the clowns are simply mindless. In Paris, superstition has otherwise to all appearances been eliminated. Indeed, it does not disturb them to regard some church commandments as matters of superstition [5] and, low and behold, an eclipse can become the subject of a general furore in Paris! For 14 days now, the glaziers in Paris have been gathering together all their old fragments of broken glass and, sometimes in the form of an octave page, sometimes according to the glass fragment itself, they coat them blue, or, more accurately, black, [10] bind the edges with gold, and not only put them in their shops for sale, but also send them out with vendors shouting in every street. As a result, yesterday one already saw everyone looking at the sun through these glasses and trying them out. Now, this is not superstition. – – But that the people hurried to the churches early in the day in order to be safe from the poisoning of the air that would result from this eclipse, [15] that everyone said and believed that the last Mass would be at 9 o'clock and that all the churches would then be closed, that this eclipse would be so severe that we must fear a plague as a consequence, that it would be so dark for the whole of the 3 hours that we would have to use lights, and a hundred other things: [20] these are of course the superstition of the rabble. – – And do you know that the clerics |: perhaps innocently |: are even partly to blame? From all pulpits it was announced that on the 1st of April, because of the eclipse, High Mass and the ensuing normal choral divine office, which is otherwise between 10 o'clock and 11:30, would be at 8 o'clock, but the real reason was not given; [25] only the following was added: to avoid any disorder. The rabble got hold of this, since it was obviously implied by the clergy themselves – the latter, even in the monasteries, do not allow themselves to be confined as in Germany, and some ran to the famous observatory built by Louis XIV *anno* 1667 in order to watch the eclipse, [30] others saw it from home or elsewhere – that there would be resulting total disorder. Now, in order to make things comfortable for all these gentlemen, the choral office and the High Mass were brought forward. – – – *parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus*.³ The glaziers did not make their glasses in vain, but the purchasers parted with their money for nothing. [35] There was heavy rain, and yet it was not darker than, for example, when evening approaches.

We are – unending thanks be to God – all well; and now I have the pleasure of telling you that I hope to hand over, in the next few days, 200 louis d'or⁴ to the bankers *Turton et Baur* in order to put the sum into safe hands for the meantime [40] and to transfer it to Salzburg in due time. On the 9th *Aprilis*⁵ I have to brace myself once again for a shock of the same kind as on the 10th *Martii*. Yet I doubt very much whether the shock will be at all as great as the first one, in which I took in 112 *louis d'or* at the concert on the 10th *Martii*. But 50 or 60 *louis d'or* are not to be despised and, [45] if it is more, one stuffs it into the bag. Not a penny is paid at the entrance to the *concert*, but anyone who without a ticket is not admitted, no matter who he is. My friends distribute the tickets 8 days before, each for a wreath or feather thaler, 4 of which make a *louis d'or*, and receive the money for them. But most of the tickets are given in lots of 12 or 24 to ladies, [50] who have an easier time distributing the tickets because, out of politeness, one cannot refuse to take one. *Est modus in rebus*⁶ or, in

¹ BD: Original lost. Copyist A; NissenB.

² BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Friend of the Mozarts and their landlord 1747-1773.

³ BD: “The mountains were in labour, a ridiculous mouse was born.”

⁴ BD: ≈ 2200 florins.

⁵ BD: These were the dates of the two concerts given by the children. One of the concerts involved the singer Clementine Piccinelli, whom Leopold and Wolfgang met again in Milan in 1770, cf. Nos. 0158/53-54; 0166/18.

⁶ BD: “There is a right moderation in all things.”

plain language, our French ladies and gentlemen want to be taken in. On the ticket |: which is written on a piece of card, and on which my hand stamp also appears :| there is nothing apart from the words: [55] Au Théâtre de Msr. Felix. Rue et Porte St. Honoré, ce Lundi 9 April à six heures du soir.⁷ This is a room in the house of a refined gentleman with a small stage in it, where the nobility often act roles amongst themselves and put on theatre, and it was through *Madame de Clermont*, who lives in the house, that I obtained this venue. But the permission to hold the 2nd concert is something quite special,[60] and runs directly contrary to the privilege given by the King to the *opéra*, the *Concert Spirituel* and the French and Italian theatres, and this permission had to be given by *Msr. de Sartine, Lieutenant General of the police*, [65] after letters were sent with personal statements by the *Duke of Chartres*, the *Duke of Duras*, the *Count of Tessé*⁸ and many of the most prominent ladies. – – Now to something different.

I request you, beginning on the 12th, for the 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th Aprilis, namely for 8 days in a row, to have a Holy Mass read for us. You can distribute these as you please, in whatever church and at whatever altar. As long as 4 of them can be read at the Holy Child in Loreto and 4 at an altar to Our Lady. [70] This can be in the parish church, or anywhere else; wherever it might be convenient for Frau Hagenauer to perhaps desire to contribute something through her reverent presence. Only I ask you to make sure that they are read on these 8 days, from the 12th to the 19th inclusive. But if the letter should only arrive, contrary to expectations, after the 12th April, [75] I ask you to have them start immediately on the next day; there are important reasons for this.⁹ Now it is time to tell you something about my two friends from Saxony, Barons von Hopfgarten and von Bose. They departed for Italy from here about 2 months ago in order to reach Vienna either via Carinthia or via Salzburg. [80] I gave them a simple letter for you in which I refer to what I am just writing to you about. If, now, they do pass via Salzburg, I would ask you to accompany them not only so that they see everything that is to be seen, but also to try to have all honours shown to them at court, since I myself am an eyewitness of the great honours that these men [85] have received at the tables and courts of the Elector of Bavaria, then in Ludwigsburg, at the Palatine court in Schwezingen, at Maynz,¹⁰ in Brussels with Prince Charles,¹¹ and here in *Versailles*. They have been our faithful travelling companions. One time we would organise lodgings for them, the next they for us. Here you will see 2 men who have everything that an honest man in this world should have, [90] and, although they are both Lutheran, yet they are a completely different kind of Lutheran, and people by whom I have often been edified. At their departure, Baron von Rose gave Wolfgang as a keep-sake a beautiful book with spiritual meditations¹² in rhyme, and prefaced it with the following:

[95] Take, oh little Orpheus of 7 years, this book from the hand of your admirer and friend! Read it often, – – and feel its divine melodies, and lend to them |: in these blessed hours of sensibility :| your irresistible harmonies, so that the unfeeling spurner of religion may read – – and awaken! – – so that he may hear them – – and fall down and worship God.

⁷ = “At Msr. Felix’ theatre, St. Honoré street and gate, this Monday, 9th April, at six o’clock in the evening”.

⁸ “Duc de Chartres, Duc de Duras, Comte de Tessé”. BD: Cf. Nos. 0076/15-16; 0074/39; 0076/15-16.

⁹ BD: The "important reasons" have not been identified. They are perhaps those suggested in No. 0081/59-60.

¹⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0074/15. Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Graf Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Subsequently employed by the Crown Prince of Saxony-Gotha as personal reader; he then entered the service of the Duke of Orleans; represented the Imperial city of Frankfurt in Paris; ambassador to Saxony-Gotha; in 1795 he returned to the court in Saxony-Gotha with the title of minister of the Russian court. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. He initially supported them, but his relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter’s stay in Paris.

¹¹ “Prinz Carl”. BD: Cf. No. 0067/169, 176.

¹² BD: Probably Christian Fürchtegott Gellert’s *Geistliche Oden und Lieder*, Leipzig, 1758. Cf. No. 0158/10-12.

These 2 gentlemen can tell you a hundred things about our journey, and your contact with them will bring you a thousand pleasures. If they come, it will be after the *Ascensa*¹³ of Venice. The taller one is Baron von Hopfgarten and the shorter Baron von Bose.

[105] To Frau Hagenauer I send, with my compliments, the request to keep the cuffs or sleeves which I left in her keeping if they have not been sold or whatever she still has, for I will shred my sleeves so thoroughly on the journey so that I will need them myself.

[110] Now we are acquainted with all the ambassadors of the foreign powers. The English ambassador, my *Lord Bedford*,¹⁴ and his son are both very favourably inclined towards us, and the Russian ambassador, *Prince Gallitzin*,¹⁵ loves us like his own children. In a few days, the *sonatas*¹⁶ which Herr Wolfgang dedicated to *M.^{me} la Comtesse de Tessé* will be ready. They would have been ready earlier, but the Countess was not at all prepared to accept the dedication [115] which our best friend, *Msr. Grimm*, had written. Changes had to be made and, since she is mostly at *Versailles*, one has to wait the whole time for the answer from there. It is a pity that no permission was given for this dedication to be engraved, but the Countess does not wish to be praised, [120] and in this piece of writing she and my boy are both depicted very vividly. But now you should be informed what kind of man this is, this great friend of mine, from whom I have received everything here, *Msr. Grimm*.¹⁷ He is the secretary of the *Duc d'Orleans*, a learned man and a great philanthropist. All the other letters and recommendations I had were worth nothing – yes indeed, the French Ambassador in Vienna, [125] yes indeed, the Imperial Ambassador in *Paris*, and all the letters of recommendation from the minister in *Brussels*, Count von Cobenzl,¹⁸ yes indeed, *Prince Conti*, the *Duchesse d'Aiguillon* etc. etc. and all others, of whom I could write out a whole *litany*. *Msr. Grimm* alone, to whom I had a letter from the wife of a merchant in Frankfurt, has done everything. [130] He raised the matter at court; he arranged the first *concert*, and he paid me 80 *louis d'or*¹⁹ himself, correspondingly acquiring 320 tickets, and even paid for the lighting in wax, as over 60 single table candles were lit. Now it was due to this *Msr. Grimm* that permission was given for the *concert*, and he will also take care of the second one, for which over 100 tickets have been distributed. [135] You see what a man of reason and a good heart can do. He is from Regensburg, but has already been in *Paris* for more than 15 years, and knows how to steer everything onto the right path so that it has to turn out the way he wants it. I have already written to you recently that you should send letters to me in *Paris* at his address, namely:

[140] *Chez Msr. Grimm, Secrétaire de S.A. le Duc d'Orleans. Rue Neuve de Luxembourg. À Paris.*²⁰

But if perchance you have not already written before receiving this letter, then wait for another letter from me. In the meantime, think about what I have to do to bring the money back to Salzburg advantageously. [145] I will lay down the sum of 200 *louis d'or* in cash and in the meantime have a confirmation made out for it. But I wish I might have the *louis d'or* in Salzburg in solid form, perhaps I could profit a little to the tune of over 11 florins per coin. – – Perhaps even in Augsburg? – – Perhaps I could make a payment for someone here. [150]

¹³ BD: “Ascension”. The climax of the theatre season in Venice around Ascension Day.

¹⁴ BD: John Russell (1710-1771), 4th Duke of Bedford (from 1732). Conducted peace negotiations in Paris 1762/63 as English ambassador; cf. No. 0073/49.

¹⁵ BD: Dmitriy Alekseevich, Prince Golicyn (1720-1794), Russian ambassador in Paris 1763-1768.

¹⁶ BD: Cf. No. 0075/12.

¹⁷ Mainz and Schwetzingen, two important courts at that time.

¹⁸ “Graf v Cobenzl”. BD: Johann Karl Philipp, Graf Cobenzl (1712-1770), from 1753 plenipotentiary minister in the Austrian Netherlands.

¹⁹ BD: = 880 florins.

²⁰ c/o Msr. Grimm, Secretary to His Highness the Duke d'Orleans. Rue Neuve de Luxembourg. In Paris.

Please correspond with Augsburg on this matter. Herr *Provino* and Herr *Perrinet*²¹ also offered their services to me in Paris. The page is becoming too small. I commend myself to you and all Salzburg and am as always your servant.

ON THE INSIDE OF THE ENVELOPE:

My children commend themselves, along with my wife, to all and sundry.

Msr. de Mechel, a copper engraver, is working at breakneck speed to engrave our portraits, [150] which were done by Herr *Carmontelle* |: an amateur :|. Wolfgang is playing the *clavier*, I am standing behind his chair playing the *violin*, and Nannerl is leaning on the *clavecin*²² with one arm.²³ With the other hand she holds sheets of music as if she were singing.

²¹ BD: Provino (cf. No. 0053/9) and Philibert Anton Perinet (husband of the “Madame Berinet” mentioned in No. 0053/10) were both Augsburg merchants.

²² = “harpsichord”.

²³ BD: Although the letter names Christian von Mechel as the engraver, the engraving bears the signum “Delafosse sculp 1764”. At the moment there is no explanation for this divergence. Nannerl writes (No. 1212/84-85) that the engraving was done immediately after their arrival in Paris.