

Strasbourg, 26th Oct.,
1778.*Mon Très cher Père!*¹

I am still here, as you see, in fact on the advice of the esteemed Herr Franck² and other Strasbourg heroes – but tomorrow I will set off; – [5] in the last letter,³ which you have hopefully received safely, I wrote⁴ to you saying that I would give something approximating to a little model of a concert on Saturday the 17th, because giving concerts here is even worse than in Salzburg; that is of course now past; – I played entirely alone – took no *musicians* with me at all so that I would on no account make a loss – [10] in short, my takings were all of 3 *louis d'or*;⁵ – the main part however consisted of the cries of *Bravo* and *Bravissimo* which winged their way to me from all sides – and Prince Max von Zweybrücken,⁶ no less, also honoured the room with his presence – I need not tell you that all were satisfied; – thereafter I wanted to leave at once, but I was advised I should stay on until the next Saturday⁷ [15] and give a grand concert in the theatre; – then I had the same takings, to the astonishment and vexation and shame of all Strasburgers; the *Directeur*, *M.^{sr} Villeneuve*,⁸ cursed over the inhabitants of this truly abominable town in a truly stylish manner; – I would of course have earned a little more, but the expenses of the musicians |: who are very bad, but ask to be paid very well |: [20] the lighting, guards, printing, the crowd of people at the entrances etc. amounted to a large *summa*; yet I must tell you that my ears hurt so much from the applause and the hand-clapping as if the whole theatre had been full; – all who were there decried their own fellow citizens publicly and loudly; – [25] and I said to all of them that if I had been able to imagine, on the basis of healthy powers of reason, that so few people would come, I would quite happily have given the concert *gratis*, simply to have the pleasure of seeing the theatre full – and indeed I would have preferred it, for, by my honour, there is nothing sadder than a large, T-shaped table set with 80 places and only 3 persons dining; – [30] and then it was so cold! – But I certainly warmed myself up and in order to show the worthy Strassburgers that I attach no importance to it, I played a great deal for my own amusement – played one *concerto* more than I had promised – and finally for a long time as it came into my head; – now it is over – at least I have brought honour and fame to myself; – [35] I took out⁹ 8 *louis d'or*¹⁰ from Herr Schertz,¹¹ simply as a precaution, since one can never know what one may encounter on the journey, and I have is always better than I would have had; –

I read the letter¹² full of true, fatherly good intentions which you wrote to *M.^{sr} Franck* when you were so worried about me; – [40] you could not of course have known what I did not know myself at the time when I wrote to you from *Nancy*, namely that I

¹ = “My very dear father!”

² BD: Cf. No. 0493/18-19. One of the Frank brothers, Strasbourg agents for the Salzburg merchants Sigmund Haffner the Elder (1699-1772) and Younger (1756-1787). Cf. note on No. 0500/8, 70, 105.

³ BD: No. 0496.

⁴ BD: Cf. No. 0496/80 ff.

⁵ BD: = 33 florins.

⁶ BD: Maximilian Joseph von Pfalz-Zweibrücken-Birkenfeld (1756-1825), succeeded Karl Theodor as Elector of Bavaria in 1799. In 1781 he was among the subscribers for *Idomeneo*, cf. No. 0617/62 f.

⁷ BD: 24th September, 1778.

⁸ BD: Not identified.

⁹ BD: A possibility mentioned in No. 0496/87-88.

¹⁰ BD: = 88 florins.

¹¹ BD: Johann Georg Schertz, Strasbourg correspondent for the Salzburg mercantile firm Haffner, cf. No. 0490/56-57, 68, 70.

¹² BD: No. 0492, lost. Cf. No. 0500/103 ff.

would have to wait so long for a good opportunity; – regarding the merchant¹³ who is travelling with me, you can rest completely unworried; – he is the most honest man in the world; takes more care of me than of himself; – is going to Augsburg and Munich as a favour to me, [45] and perhaps even to Salzburg; we always weep together when we think that we must part sometime; he is not a learned man – but a man of experience; – we live together like children; – when he thinks about his wife and children, whom he has left behind in *Paris*, I have to console him; if I think about my people, he gives me words of comfort, – [50] The 2nd Nov.^{bre}. On the 31st *oct.^{bre}*, on that High Feast, my name-day, I amused myself for a couple of hours – or, better, I amused the others; after so much begging from the gentlemen *Franck, de Beyer*¹⁴ etc., I gave a *concert*¹⁵ again, which, after paying the additional costs |: which were not great this time |: , actually brought in for me one *louis d’or*;¹⁶ there you see what Strassburg is! – [55] I told you above that I will leave on the 27th or 28th – but that was impossible because they were suddenly flooded out here with water which has caused a great deal of damage; – you will surely read of it in the newspapers – it was therefore not possible – and that was also the only thing that brought me to the decision to accept the proposition to give a further concert [60] – because I had to wait anyway; – I am travelling tomorrow with the *diligence*;¹⁷ – via Mannheim¹⁸ – do not take fright; – in foreign countries one must follow the advice of people who know better from experience; – most strangers who travel to Stuttgart |: N.B. by *diligence* |: disregard the 8 hour detour because the road is better and the post-coach is better [65] – now nothing is left to me, dearest, best of fathers, than to *congratulate* you from the bottom of my heart on the coming celebration of your name-day;¹⁹ –

Best of fathers! – I wish you wholeheartedly everything – that a son who properly values his dear father and truly loves him is capable of wishing – I thank God Almighty for allowing you once again to experience this day in the best of health, [70] and ask Him only this one favour, that I can congratulate you all through my life, every year – |: of which I intend to see many :| – Peculiar and perhaps even laughable as this wish may appear to you, it is equally true and well intended – of that I assure you; –

[75] I hope you will have received my last letter²⁰ from Strassburg of, I believe, the 15th *Oct.^{bre}*; – I will not continue to detract from *M.^{sr} Grimm*²¹ – yet I can find no way round saying that he, because of his simple thinking with hurrying me off, is the reason that my sonatas²² have not yet been engraved – that is, not yet published – or quite simply, at least, that I do not have them yet [80] – and when I do get them, perhaps find them full of errors; – if I had only stayed in *Paris* 3 days longer, I would have been able to correct them myself and take with me! – The engraver was desperate when I said to him that I cannot correct

¹³ BD: The unidentified merchant travelling with Wolfgang, cf. No. 0494/36 ff.; 0500/74 ff.

¹⁴ BD: Not identified.

¹⁵ BD: No programmes are known for the concerts of 17th, 24th and 31st October, 1778. The two last took place in the theatre in Strasbourg, cf. Deutsch Dok p. 160.

¹⁶ BD: 11 florins.

¹⁷ BD: Large coach used on scheduled mail routes and also offering places for passengers.

¹⁸ BD: Counter to Leopold's instructions, cf. No. 0491/76.

¹⁹ BD: 15th November.

²⁰ BD: No. 0496.

²¹ BD: Friedrich Melchior von Grimm (1723-1807), 1748 private secretary to the Saxon Count [Graf] Friese, with whom he moved to Paris, where he was in contact with the Encyclopaedists. Various publications, one of which, in 1763, mentioned the Mozart children. He was living with the Marquise d’Epinay just mentioned. His relationship with Mozart broke down in 1778 during the latter’s stay in Paris. After his mother’s death, Mozart moved into accommodation in the house shared by Grimm and Madame d’Epinay. Cf. lines 97; No. 0462/40.

²² BD: The clavier/violin sonatas KV 301 (293a); 302 (293b); 303 (293c); 304 (300c); 305 (293d); 306 (300l), dedicated to Electress Elizabeth Maria Aloysia Auguste (1721-1794). Married Karl Theodor (Elector of Mannheim, then of Bavaria), her cousin, in 1742. Cf. No. 0363/84-85.

them myself, but have to *commission* someone else to do it; – why? – because *M.^{sr}* – ²³ when I told him [85] |: because I could not stay in his house 3 days longer |: that I wished to lodge with Count von Sickingen²⁴ because of the *sonatas*, answered me, with eyes flashing with rage – Listen, sir; – if you go out of my house without leaving *Paris*, I will never look at you again as long as I live – you may no longer enter my sight – I am your fiercest enemy²⁵ – Yes, calmness was necessary there; – [90] if I had not been concerned about you, who are uninformed about the whole matter, I would quite certainly have said this; – Then so be it; – be my enemy; – that is just what you are; – otherwise you would not hinder me from putting my affairs in order here – from keeping every promise I have made – and thus from maintaining my honour and reputation – from making money – [95] and perhaps even my fortune; – for if I come to Munich to present my *sonatas* to the Electress²⁶ himself, I will thus keep my word – receive a present – or perhaps even make my fortune. – But as it was, I did nothing other than bow and went away without saying a word; – before I left, however, I did tell him – but he answered me like a man devoid of reason [100] – or like an ill-willed person who sometimes will not show any; – I have already written to *M^{sr} Heina*²⁷ twice and received no answer; – it was at the end of *Sep.^{bre}* that they should have appeared – and *M.^{sr} Grimm* should have sent the promised copies on to me; – I thought I would find everything waiting for me in Strasbourg – *M.^{sr} Grimm* writes²⁸ to me [105] that he hears and sees nothing of them – as soon as he gets them, he will send them to me – I hope I will receive them soon; – *Strassburg* can hardly do without me! – You could not believe the honour I am held in here and how popular I am – the people say everything I do is so noble – I am apparently so composed – and courteous – and have such good comportment; – [110] everyone knows me – as soon as they heard the name, the two gentlemen Silbermann²⁹ and Hepp³⁰ |: organist |: came to me straight away; – music director Richter³¹ as well; – he is now very impaired – instead of 40 *bouteilles*³² of wine he now downs perhaps only 20 a day; – I have played in public on the 2 best organs here by *Silbermann*, in the Lutheran churches; – [115] in the Neukirche and *Thomaskirche* – if the Cardinal³³ |: who was very ill when I arrived |: had died, I would have been well positioned – for Herr Richter is 78 years old; – Now life go very well for you indeed – stay in the best of spirits and be carefree; bear in mind that your son, praise and thanks be to God, is hale and hearty – and is content because he is coming ever closer to his happiness; – [120] to all good

²³ BD: Grimm.

²⁴ “graf v: Sickingen”. BD: Karl Heinrich Joseph, Count [Graf] Sickingen zu Sickingen, Palatine Ambassador (1777-1791) and patron of music in Paris. Cf. Nos. 0439/14; 0462/117-118.

²⁵ BD: There is no other quotation mark in this passage.

²⁶ “Churfürstin”. BD: Electress Elisabeth Auguste, see note on “sonatas” in line 78.

²⁷ BD: Probably Franz Joseph (François-Joseph) Haina (1720-1780), born near Prague, husband of the music publisher Gertrude Haina, nee Brockmüller: they were the first publishers of KV 179 (189a); 180 (173c); 254; 309 (284b); 310 (300d); 311 (284c); 354 (299a), cf. No. 617/66-68. Horn player to Baron Bagge, later trumpeter in royal service. Friend of Mozart in Paris in 1778, especially during the last days of his mother's life. Cf. No. 0084/18.

²⁸ BD: No. 0502, lost.

²⁹ BD: The sons Johann Andreas (1712-1783) and Johann Heinrich (1727-1799) of Andreas Silbermann (1678-1734), who renovated the organ in Strasbourg Minster.

³⁰ BD: Sixtus Hepp (1732-1806), organist and composer.

³¹ BD: Franz Xaver Richter (1709-1789), born in Moravia, composer of the older Mannheim School. Entered service in Mannheim in 1747 as a singer and violinist, later Electoral Chamber Composer [kurfürstlicher Kammerkompositeur]. In charge of cathedral music in Strasbourg from 1769, also responsible for the concerts at the bishop's court. Met Leopold in Munich in 1769, cf. No. 0936/20-21.

³² = “bottles”.

³³ BD: Louis Constantin de Rohan (1697-1779), uncle of the “Prince Louis de Rohan” mentioned in No. 0417/157, the Bishop of Strasbourg in 1756, Cardinal from 1761.

friends my compliments, especially to Herr *Bullinger*³⁴ – I embrace my dearest sister with my whole heart and I kiss your hands 1000 times and am, sir, your most obedient son, Last Sunday³⁵ in the Minster I heard a new Mass by Herr Richter, which is written [125] *charmingly* – Wolfgang Mozart

³⁴ BD: Abbé Franz Joseph Johann Nepomuk Bullinger (1744-1810), Jesuit, private tutor, friend of the Mozart family in Salzburg, where he seems to have arrived between 1774 and 1776. House tutor to Count [Graf] Leopold Ferdinand Arco, later to Count [Graf] Sigmund (“Sigerl”) Lodron. Amateur viola player. Mozart called him “his best of all friends” (cf. Nos. 0331/5; 0459/1).

³⁵ BD: Presumably the 25th October, not 1st November.