

Salzb., 29th Decemb.
1780.

A blessedly happy New Year!

On the 28th I wrote to Msr. Canabich,¹ enclosed in an envelope to Herr Becke,² to give them both New Year's wishes. Although Msr. Becke wrote something to me about [5] Herr Raff's³ *aria*, I did not pay the least attention to this remark passed on to me in writing, since I considered this *aria* to be an aria di bravura, all the more so because he himself added that it was only included in order to bring in Herr Raff's favourite passages. Au contraire,⁴ I thought that it was well done, and was convinced that you could nevertheless not possibly fail to give the *aria* the right character, [10] since I had already imagined it to myself in advance as a brilliant *aria*. In short! I did not think about it for a moment, since I know that certain people, if they cannot trap an elephant, catch flies, for there has to be something to find fault with; whoever wishes to avoid all of this will depart from the world, and whoever expects the applause of all, [15] without the least dissent, is a fool.

All that Varesco⁵ has done must be printed, that is the one thing I must insist on. It amounts to only a few lines. In Telemaco,⁶ too, they printed everything, although in the music some lines of the *recitative* were left out. I wish we ourselves could take over the printing corrections here. [20] There is nothing more abominable than when so many printing errors, which often make the *sensum*⁷ incomprehensible, are to be found in a book. It would be a very good thing if you yourself could get hold of the 2nd or last correction before printing and read it through, even if it were on the printer's premises. I furthermore hope His *Excellency* Count Se[e]lau⁸ will make no objection to sending at least a dozen copies to these two men together.⁹ [25]

As far as the Vieni a rin vigorir is concerned, it is true that there are 5 i's, but it is also true that I consider I can pronounce it 20 times with the greatest ease and speed and without discomfort. In the very *aria* from Metastasio's¹⁰ Achille Sciro¹¹ which was sent as a model, [30] the endings, il peso alleggerir and lo vede rin fiorir, especially the last rinffiorir, are

¹ BD: (Johann) Christian (Innocenz Bonaventura) Cannabich (1731-1798). Joined the Mannheim court music at the age of 13. After the death of Toeschi (see above), he was sole music director to the Elector in Munich. The Cannabich family became particular friends of Mozart's in Mannheim in 1777/78. Cf. No. 0057/13. In 1777 Mozart dedicated the clavier sonata in C KV 309 (284b) to his daughter Rosa.

² BD: Cf. No. 0333/20 etc. Johann Baptist Becké (1743-1817), flautist in the court music in Munich, kept the Mozarts informed about developments there.

³ BD: Anton Raaff (1714-1797), son of a shepherd, originally intended for the priesthood, appeared as a singer in Bonn, Vienna, Paris, Lisbon, Madrid and Naples before a longer period of service in Mannheim and Munich. Cf. No. 0120/54. Sang the title role in *Idomeneo*.

⁴ BD: = "On the contrary".

⁵ BD: *Abbate* Giambattista Varesco (c. 1736-1805), court chaplain in Salzburg from 1766, wrote the texts for *Idomeneo* KV 366 and *L'oca del Cairo* KV 422. The latter was his response to Mozart's request for an opera buffa for Vienna.

⁶ BD: *Telemaco* by Paul Grua (cf. note on No. 0537/94), the Carnival opera in Munich in 1780.

⁷ BD: Leopold correctly uses the Latin *sensus* in the accusative.

⁸ BD: Josef Anton, Count [Graf] Seeau († 1799), from 1753 supervisor of the Palace Theatre [Residenztheater] in Munich. One of his relatives, Ferdinand, Count [Graf] Seeau, († 1768) was Senior Stable Master [Oberstallmeister] in Salzburg. Cf. No. 0300/11.

⁹ BD: Varesco and Schachtner writing the opera text and the German translation respectively.

¹⁰ BD: Pietro Metastasio (1698-1782). Came to the Vienna court in 1730; Apostolo Zenò (1668-1750) had suggested him as his own successor. He remained there until the end of its life. He met Mozart at least once, cf. No. 135/60-61. Mozart set several of his libretti (KV 118/74c; 126; 208; 362) and numerous arias (KV 21 (19c); 369; 23; 78 (73b); 79 (73d); 88 (73c); 71; 74b; 77 (73e); 82 (73 o); 83 (73p); 368; 440 (383h); 294; 512; 468a (295a); 432 (421a); 538; KV Anh. 2; KV⁶: 73 A (lost)).

¹¹ BD: *Achille in Sciro*, opera by Caldara celebrating the marriage of Maria Theresia and Franz of Lorraine.

certainly less comfortable because of the letter *r* at the beginning. *Basta!*¹² Whether unpleasant or not, the devil would like to change endlessly and then change again. *Sgr. Raff* is much too finicky. Concerning the *quartets* etc. I do not want to say anything, they call for declamation and acting [35] and no great vocal artistry or the eternal *Spianar la Voce*.¹³ They call for action and speaking.

God be praised that His Highness¹⁴ is satisfied with the first 2 acts and takes such great pleasure in them.

On stage, I suspect, you will still have many observations to make, especially in the 3rd act, where so much happens. [40] You will probably have low wind instruments to accompany the subterranean voice. How would it work if the instruments continued holding [more accurately began to hold]¹⁵ a *piano* after the short subterranean noise, then made a crescendo mounting to the terrifying, and the voice started to sing during the *decrecendo*? And a spine-chilling crescendo of this kind every time the voice pauses. [45] Due to the *noiso*,¹⁶ which has to be short and simply like the judder of an earthquake, due to the fact that the statue of *Neptune* moves, everyone will become attentive, and this attentiveness will be multiplied by the entry of the most terrifying harmony, starting quietly and sustained and then swelling and only reaching a climax when on top a voice joins in. It is as if I can see and hear it. [50]

Having the suit¹⁷ turned was a good idea. As we happen to be speaking about the suit, I will no doubt be able to spare myself the inconvenience of bringing suits with trim with me? – – you know that I am no longer a lover of finery anyway. Be so good as to answer me on this. [55] That was the first thing; now the second: – when the *opera* is performed for the first time: will it still be on the 20th January?¹⁸ – then thirdly: concerning setting up the heating stove. Can this be done? And will it not cost too much? That must be agreed on beforehand. For we are thinking of coming to the last staging rehearsal, if we can find out when it is: and you will surely be able to write briefly to tell us in 10 or 12 days. [60] Meanwhile pass on compliments everywhere from the two of us, who kiss you from the heart and I am as ever your sincere

father L. Mozart

Salzb., 30th *Decemb.*, 1780.

Yesterday, the 29th, eating at midday, the Archbishop¹⁹ cut his finger severely during the dessert, [65] *Gilowsky*²⁰ bandaged him at once, then he got up, went to his room to wash himself because everything was covered with blood, but all at once he sank into his chair in a faint and *Gilowsky* had a good quarter of an hour's work until he brought him to his senses again. He cannot stand seeing blood, and when he cut himself he did everything in his power to suppress the encroaching faint, stood up, went away – – then it came. – – Otherwise there was nothing more to it. – The Heavens be thanked! – –

¹² = "Enough".

¹³ BD: The phrase quoted from Raaff in No. 0570/50 – "To open up the voice" = "show it to good effect".

¹⁴ "S^c. Durchlaucht". BD: Karl Theodor (1724-1799). Studied in Leyden and Leuven. From 1742 Elector [Kurfürst] of the Palatinate, where he encouraged the arts in Mannheim, and from 30th December, 1777, Elector of Bavaria. Cf. No. 0363/30.

¹⁵ BD: These three words added subsequently in the margin.

¹⁶ Leopold combines the German *Lärm* (here "Lerm", = noise) with the Italian ending "o" to form "Lermo".

¹⁷ BD: Wolfgang had asked for a suit to be sent from Salzburg, cf. No. 0570/65-66.

¹⁸ BD: The first performance of *Idomeneo* finally took place on 29th January, 1781 (cf. No. 0577/4-5).

¹⁹ BD: Hieronymus Joseph Franz de Paula, Count [Graf] Colloredo (1732-1812), Prince-Archbishop [Fürst-Erzbischof] of Salzburg from 1772. Employer of Leopold and, for two periods, of Wolfgang. Cf. No. 0263/9. At one point he dismissed both Leopold and Wolfgang, although Leopold was later reinstated. Cf. No. 0328.

²⁰ BD: Wenzel Andreas Gilowsky von Urazowa (1716-1799), ante-chamber servant and court barber/surgeon. Father of "Katherl". In No. 0705 called the "Barber of Salzburg". Cf. No. 0034/17.

The Emperor is not ill,²¹ but the old Papa Colloredo is in great danger, otherwise the Archbishop would have left for Vienna. If he dies, he will not travel at all. – – That the Archbishop is to go to Munich: of that I have not heard a syllable. [75] We thought all the accounts were settled regarding the salt and in good order;²² salt was shipped by water without interruption on Sundays and feast-days until one could no longer move because of ice – payment came too, with a strong escort of *grenadiers* from Bavaria. Now I hear there is again some objection in recent days, for no money is coming.

MARIA ANNA (NANNERL) MOZART'S POSTSCRIPT:

[80] I wish you are blessedly happy New Year!, constant good health and well-being, and continue to keep me in your brotherly love; and I wish above everything else that your *opera*, when it goes *in scena*,²³ may receive general applause, and that you might obtain a truly great deal of honour and fame by it: in the time between I hope and wish it. I am writing to you with a contraption on my head,²⁴ [85] such that I am very worried about burning my hair, and the reason why the Mölks'²⁵ chambermaid did my hair is that I am sitting for the painter for the first time tomorrow.²⁶ Count Trautmanstorff²⁷ and his wife, a sister of the Archbishop, have arrived here, and with them Anton Molk,²⁸ who is his secretary, and because of these gentlemen and ladies from elsewhere I have heard that the first ball is already to take place on 7 January, [90] but I will save myself for Munich and leave our balls to the people of Salzburg, who know nothing of better entertainment. Keep well: New Year's wishes from me |: after the thousands from all friends, both gentlemen and ladies:|. I have passed on your compliments to the beautiful pupil, she asks me to commend to you in return.

²¹ BD: A possibility raised in No. 0570/37.

²² BD: Concerning the main export from Salzburg, salt.

²³ = "on stage".

²⁴ BD: Needed for the fashionable high hairstyles of the day.

²⁵ BD: Nannerl always needed help with her hairdressing. The maid here worked for Franz Felix Anton von Molk (1714-1776), Salzburg Court Chancellor [Hofkanzler].

²⁶ BD: A family portrait is being made, cf. No. 0537/87, 89. (Deutsch Bild No. 12)

²⁷ BD: Ferdinand, Count [Graf] (later Prince [Fürst]) Trauttmansdorff-Weinsberg (1749-1827), diplomat representing Bohemia in Regensburg, married to Caroline Colloredo, sister of the Archbishop of Salzburg.

²⁸ BD: Anton von Molk (1751-1805), in 1780 secretary to the Electoral Bohemian Comital Ambassador, Ferdinand, Count [Graf] Trautmannsdorff-Weinsberg.