

0897. LEOPOLD MOZART TO HIS DAUGHTER,¹ ST. GILGEN

À Madame / Madame de Sonnenbourg / à / St: Gilgen.

Salzb., 11th Novemb.,
1785

Little Leopold² is in fine fettle!

At last I have received a letter³ from your brother, dated the 2nd Novemb., running to all of 12 lines. [5] He asks for forgiveness because he has to finish the *opera*, *le Nozze di Figaro*, at breakneck speed. He thanks me and the two of you for the congratulations,⁴ and asks me to offer his excuses to you in particular and, along with his compliments, to inform you that he has no time to answer your letter right away; that he has arranged all his *teaching* for the afternoon etc. etc. so as to have the morning free for composing. [10] – I know the *play*,⁵ it is a very laborious piece, and the translation from the French has certainly has to be altered freely to make an *opera* if it is to be effective as an *opera*. May God grant that it turns out with good dramatic *action*; I have no doubt about the music. It will of course cost him much running around and disputing [15] until he gets the libretto made up as he wants it for his purposes: – and he will have been putting it off constantly and allowing himself plenty of time, as is his fine custom; now, all at once, he must apply himself to it earnestly because he is being pushed by Count Rosenberg.⁶

You will perhaps know that one soldier almost killed another in the *barracks* when he stabbed him twice while he slept. [20] Two days ago he was condemned to death and Capuchins were assigned to him. Because the wounded man did not die, the Archbishop⁷ has pardoned him, and tomorrow he will be led up and down between 200 men 10 times and tickled with rods.

Yesterday was Herr Hagenauer's⁸ 47th wedding anniversary. He is in passable health, [25] I called on him, – I only hope that he does not have a fit of apoplexy again and may yet get through the remaining 3 years after all. He was up, but he is a little pale. They say Herr von Andretter⁹ is in a critical condition again. You will have been constantly hoping for a letter from me since my last one, but no opportunity has presented itself and, since the old

¹ BD: Maria Anna Walburga Ignatia (“Nannerl”), née Mozart, (1751-1829). After her marriage in 1784 her name was Maria Anna von Berchtold zu Sonnenburg. In all letters to Nannerl after her marriage Leopold refers to her as “Frau Tochter” [madam daughter] and to his son-in-law as “Herr Sohn” [esteemed son].

² BD: Nannerl's son Leopold (born in Salzburg on 27th July, 1785) was to remain with Leopold from his birth until his grandfather's death in May, 1787; Nannerl returned to St. Gilgen at the beginning of September.

³ BD: No. 0894, lost.

⁴ BD: On his name-day: 31st October.

⁵ BD: Lorenzo da Ponte's libretto is based on the comedy *La folle journée ou Le Mariage de Figaro* (1778) by Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-1799). This was performed in Paris in 1784, and performance of a translation by Rautenstrauch (1746-1801) was banned in Vienna, where it was due to open on the 3rd February, 1785. It was performed in Salzburg in 1787 in a translation by L.F. Huber.

⁶ “Graf”. BD: Franz Xaver Wolf, Count [Graf] (later Prince [Fürst]) Orsini-Rosenberg (1723-1796), administrator in Vienna, later “General Director of Spectacles” in Vienna.

⁷ 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.

⁸ BD: Johann Lorenz Hagenauer (1712-1792), Salzburg merchant. Friend of the Mozarts, and their landlord 1747-1773. Cf. No. 0032. See No. 0895/25 on his apoplexy.

⁹ BD: Presumably Johann Ernst von Antretter Esquire [Edler] († 1792), Imperial Knight [Reichsritter], farmer, Chancellor of the Parliament of the Estates [Landschaftskanzler], Royal War Adviser [Hofkriegsrat].

Barisani was in Lauffen,¹⁰ [30] the young one¹¹ was not to be found the whole day, because he also had to visit his esteemed father's patients. And since St. Martin's feasting¹² and blood-letting came in amongst it all, he ate at St. Peter's¹³ – in the Nonnberg,¹⁴ – at Count Khünburg's,¹⁵ – etc. etc. In short: – never at home, and at night only came home late. The Archbishop came back from Lauffen yesterday at four o'clock in the afternoon. [35]

Now the messenger is arriving! – My thanks for the duck, – I bought myself one recently too, – what else, then, should one eat to make a change? – although they were now out hunting all the time, I could not get any wild game from the larder or from the hunt official;¹⁶ I repeatedly sent someone to ask. [40] My thanks to both of you for the congratulations on my and Leopold's name-day;¹⁷ what you sent him will certainly be put to good use. On his name-day he will make a splendid show for me and himself in a new bonnet of atlas silk trimmed with thin woollen cloth, his little coat which I had made for him, the little red shoes bordered with taffeta ribbons, with a band on which there hang a beautiful amulet [45] and a St. George medal¹⁸ which Miss Mitzerl¹⁹ gave him etc. – I should have sent you a little barrel of mustard, but none are to be had for 2 or even 3 weeks, namely until the innkeepers or the wine-wagons come from Austria. – and you supposedly cannot find any barrels of mustard from Mon[d]see, from Ischl, – from Gmundten?²⁰ – – – I will send chocolate and starch. [50] – regarding the Court Calender: I will enquire; what I do know is that otherwise the quartermaster²¹ printed them at his own expense and sold them à 30 kreuzers.²²

It may well be that I could have made a good newspaper reporter; but I do not find it difficult for a man who has seen the world, [55] knows the world and has studied it, but then also has time to write reflectively when it goes out to the public – – what I am writing to the two of you are only thoughts scribbled down in haste, to the effect that, as seems quite possible, nothing will come of the exchange²³ at the moment. At the moment they are only showing that there are no legal hindrances in the way of exchanging Bavaria. [60] – Should it however take place sooner or later, the Emperor²⁴ needs to keep at least 80000 men in readiness to be able to deploy them on all sides at once and in such a way that all the different kinds of troops can *support* each other, thus being able to prevent any peasant uprising or a *Sicilian Vespers*.²⁵ Yet it could be possible to some extent to detect whether they are inclined

¹⁰ BD: Dr. Silvester Barisani (1719-1810), personal physician to the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, member of an extensive Salzburg family. The Archbishop was currently in Laufen, 20 km north-west of Salzburg, cf. No. 0895/28.

¹¹ BD: Joseph Barisani (1756-1826), eldest son of Dr. Silvester Barisani.

¹² BD: The additional goose-eating on 11th November.

¹³ Old Benedictine monastery and church near the centre of the old town.

¹⁴ BD: A Benedictine nunnery founded in the south-east of Salzburg at the end of the seventh century.

¹⁵ “Gr.”. BD: Leopold Joseph Maria, Count [Graf] Kuenburg (1740-1812), Royal and Imperial Chamberlain, Privy Councillor, from 1764 Master-in-Chief of the Stables [Oberstallmeister] in Salzburg.

¹⁶ “Zwirchmeister”. BD: Member of the Senior Master of the Hunt's [Oberjägermeister] office responsible for distributing game meat.

¹⁷ BD: 15th November.

¹⁸ BD: A “St. Georgs-Taler”, from Mansfeld or Hungary in the 16th – 17th centuries and bearing a clear depiction of St. George.

¹⁹ “Jgf.”. BD: Maria Anna Raab, proprietor of a Salzburg dancing school.

²⁰ BD: Gmunden am Traunsee.

²¹ “Cammerfurier”.

²² 60 kreuzers = 1 florin.

²³ BD: Cf. No. 0885/64 ff. It had been suggested that the Emperor and the Elector of Bavaria could exchange territories in Bavaria and the Netherlands.

²⁴ “Kayser”. BD: Joseph II (1741-1790), Holy Roman Emperor [Kaiser] 1765-1790. Son of Maria Theresia.

²⁵ BD: Popular uprising in Sicily against the officials of Charles I of Anjou in 1282; it started in Palermo during vespers on Easter Monday.

to carry out this exchange now [65] by observing – if – and where the troops returning from the Netherlands are *marching*. – whether they are moving slowly? – whether they are taking many rest days? or even taking up quarters in the vicinity of the Bavarian Palatinate? – It is really a long time now since there was anything to be read about this march in the newspapers. [70] It seems to me they are deliberately using the snail-post. –

I have read out both your letters referring to your condition to the esteemed *Dr. Barisani*.²⁶ His opinion is that it is first of all an ebullition in the blood, which is out of order because you have too much blood, especially since it became noticeable on the 9th day. Secondly, there is flatulence too, which is pressing and rising; [75] whether it be wind or phlegm, it must be expelled gently. He believes you should have blood let, but not less than 5 or 6 ounces. – then 2 days after the blood-letting take one of the accompanying 4 powders in the morning and one towards the evening, then leave a day in between, and afterwards take the other 2 powders in the morning and the evening again, [80] and afterwards, perhaps around half or quarter of an hour after each powder, follow this with a drink of marshmallow and a little camomile tea etc. as otherwise. – and then after church light *chocolate*; but no coffee. He said that even if you were pregnant, it could not harm you; rather, this cleansing would prevent a *miscarriage*. The powders are harmless, [85] and nothing more than tartar, *rhubarb* and a very little castoreum. But the blood should be let when the *ordinary* menstruation is over, and according to my calculation, seeing that you wrote on 2nd November that it came back again today, which is the 9th day, this should be around the 20th of this month etc.; there would therefore still be time now to let blood: – [90] But if you wanted to try and take the powders now, leaving out one day before the second one, the blood-letting would have to be put off until the *ordinary* period is over again; you could write to me with the next messenger to tell me what effect the powders had, they will only cause bowel movement about a couple of times during the day. The fact that the *urine* is pale of no importance, here it is not inflammation in the blood, praise God, [95] but disorder in the cleansing of the womb. Otherwise the doctor recommends *exercise*, and after the evening meal not going to bed immediately, but walking to and fro a little, and not eating too much, he commends himself to both of you and asks me to tell you he is getting married in the month of Februari. It is only now that the heating ovens are being lit in the *apartments*.²⁷ [100] – Just today, Nandl's²⁸ sister has given birth to a boy: Nandl is not allowed to come into her house, and she also forbade her to pass on news about her confinement.

For a long time now, the so-called Naderers' Nannerl²⁹ has been in miserable circumstances with her swellings, and today she fell down dead in her room. [105] It was probably dropsy.

The little leggings will soon be right for Leopoldl to use, but we do not know what use to make of the 3 large old-fashioned nightcaps, they belong far too much to my father's generation. – Herr von *D'Ippold*³⁰ was just with me this afternoon; I cannot describe to you the joy and entertainment he had with Leopoldl, [110] he stayed with the child for over an hour, chatted, laughed, and played with him; and because he was a stranger to him, the child paid close attention to him, laughed, made all kinds of faces and mouths; – In short! Herr von *D'Ippold*, who commends himself to both of you, found he had pleasure on every side. – Yes, indeed, from time to time my heartfelt wish is that you might see him. [115] I can never see the child's right hand without being moved. The most skilled *keyboard* player cannot place

²⁶ BD: Dr. Silvester Barisani (1719-1810), personal physician to the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, member of an extensive Salzburg family.

²⁷ BD: In the wings of the Lodron palace opposite Leopold's apartment.

²⁸ BD: Maria Anna Pietschner (1732-1805), Leopold's servant girl ("child nurse").

²⁹ BD: Maria Anna Nader; cf. Nos. 0264/40; 0831/31.

³⁰ BD: Franz Armand d'Ippold: Imperial and Royal Captain, supervisor of page training in Salzburg. He added the "de" (in the Viennese style) himself. Sometime suitor of Nannerl.

his hand so beautifully on the *keys* as he always holds his hand. Whenever he does not move his fingers, his fingers and his little flexed hand are in the playing *position*, and when he sleeps he therefore holds his little hand as if the fingers were really on the *keys*, and then even with the best-*proportioned* stretching and bending the fingers. [120] In short! one can see nothing more beautiful: – I am often really sad when I see it, and would wish that he were at least 3 years old already, in which case I of course think he should be able to play immediately.³¹ Now I must go to bed! I kiss my esteemed son³² and yourself from the heart, send my greetings to the children and am eternally your sincere [125]

father Mozart mp³³

The starch is fully 2 flb. Chocolate 1 florins 15 kreuzers. I paid 20 kreuzers at the apothecary's for the powders. – I will enquire about the wafers or fans. Of the 2, for which I paid 12 kreuzers, one is a Chinese one, [130] which is very broad at the top with pierced guards, the 2nd a beautiful slender French one with fine piercing in the guards and also with pierced, long sticks and reddish bucolic painting. – I am also sending the watch along with it, and only paid 12 kreuzers. – I have received the pattern shoes, but we must see if I get them back from Katharin³⁴ by next week; [135] that is what he promised. There is no more talk about the Royal Apothecary³⁵ at all. Frau Zezi³⁶ in the Tradgasse is *managing* the entire household.

The morning of the 12th

The punishment has just been *inflicted* on the soldier,³⁷ so I had an astonishing concourse of people of all species in front of my window.

[140] The Zezis' Waberl³⁸ is in bed, ill with a very dangerous breast catarrh. She had blood let once again yesterday. They have all been generally ill for some time now.

It occurs to me that the driest walk left to you is up through the village on the made-up road, where one drives in, on the way to Reit, [145] and in God's name back the same way. And left at the church along the road towards the forest |: it will of course certainly be muddy :|, then there is a narrow stony path between the fields coming out at the Lugerstrasse. Then of course it will be wet enough again coming in by the deputy administrator's³⁹ house. It is truly sad if one does not go for any walks, – and now, on top of that, no good horse to drive. [150] – an air balloon⁴⁰ would be very advantageous for you.

Nandl and Tresel⁴¹ commend themselves. And I send my thanks to the children for the congratulations. My thanks also to Lennerl,⁴² Monica⁴³ and the cook, and I send them my greetings.

à proposito.⁴⁴ The Hubers' Nannerl asked me if it is true that the previous cook will be coming out to you again? [155] – there was nothing else I could say – than that I did not know

³¹ BD: Leopold's hopes were not to be fulfilled. "Leopoldl" became a bourgeois civil servant and died in 1840 as "k. k. Cameral-Gefälls-Verwaltungs-Oeconomats-Controllor" in Innsbruck.

³² BD: Leopold's customary form of address to his son-in-law.

³³ mp = *manu propria* = in his own hand.

³⁴ BD: Johann Kathrein, a Salzburg shoemaker.

³⁵ BD: Cf. No. 0848/73-74 for speculation about marriage plans.

³⁶ BD: Anna Maria Zezi, the wife of Christian Zezi in the "tradgasse" (= Getreidegasse).

³⁷ BD: Cf. line 19.

³⁸ BD: Barbara Zezi, the daughter of the couple mentioned in line 135 and one of Nannerl's pupils.

³⁹ "Amtman". BD: In St. Gilgen second in rank behind the administrator [Pfleger].

⁴⁰ BD: Cf. No. 0900/9-15 and note on No. 1027/5. Leopold had followed ballooning carefully since the Montgolfiers' successful flight in 1783.

⁴¹ BD: Therese Pänckl, servant in the Mozart household in Salzburg for many years.

⁴² BD: Magdalena, nursery maid at the Berchtolds.

⁴³ BD: Leopold's daily household help, on loan from the Berchtolds.

a thing about it. She is now with old Polis.⁴⁵ – The Hubers' Nannerl has great deal of work, she called on me yesterday, and put the little coat together, Nandl had sewn the darts with cotton.

⁴⁴ BD: Here: "*By the way*".

⁴⁵ BD: Lorenz Joseph Polis von Moulin.