

Berlin March 12 1911

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The principal event of the past month was my influenza. Was in bed six days. Every one has it in Berlin. As luck would have it I was sick just the week I was to play with the orchestra and had to call it off. Played at the rehearsal and caught cold in the chilly hall (was perspiring of course). I just grinned and bore it. If I am only well for my own concert.

[This is dated 1911 but must be 1912—that is when his concert took place. JEC]

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1912

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Am enclosing a couple of our trio pictures and ~~to~~ one taken with the Mendelssohn children skating back of their house. You probably recognize Heber on that one too. He is the middle one of the 3 heads. They gave me that one for my birthday. Have some magnificent ones of myself (alone) that I had taken for the 20th. Shall surely send them right after the concert. Am also enclosing a program. It is only a proof as you see by the way it is printed.

Am at Mendelssohn's to-night. Have been there for the last 3 Saturdays.

This is only a line I know, but after the concert I shall have much news and certainly more time. If I don't stop and go to the post office with this it may lie around for several days longer.

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Ed.

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Berlin April 8

Dear Folks,-

I have been wondering the last couple of days if it weren't better to send a cable saying 'nothing is the matter with me'. You will surely be worried at this long silence especially as I promised to write immediately after the concert. There is no use making excuses to the effect that I have been rushed to death, etc. It is simply the confounded habit I have gotten into of not writing to any one. You remember the last time I came home I wrote very irregularly for months beforehand and had as an excuse that I would soon be there in person so it didn't make much difference about the letters. Well I can say that now and before I tell you anything about the concert I want to tell you my plans. I shall sail about the middle of July (just as three years ago) so as to avoid the high prices. The high season begins here the first of August. I haven't arranged for passage as yet but shall very soon possibly this week. Many people have advised me to sail on the North German Lloyd claiming it is better than the Hamburg-American Line. I can hardly believe that but shall probably take the Lloyd (from Bremen) just for a change and also to become acquainted with both lines. I have quite a neat sum saved up and by the time I am ready to go shall have not only my fare but perhaps a little

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besides to tide me over the month of August which is rather a hard month to earn anything at home. So you needn't think I shall have to swim. As soon as I have picked out the steamer and the date I shall let you know.

Well I really don't know where to begin to tell you about the concert. I shall have lots to tell you when I get home so there is ~~no~~ need going into detail here. First of all it was a financial success. I cleared 30 Marks. Of course at our trio concert we cleared 150 but then there were three of us selling tickets. I don't suppose it happens once every season that a debutant in Berlin makes expenses. The criticisms were peculiar. I got magnificent ones and awful ones. But the good ones are all prominent papers while the bad ones are for the most part papers that aren't read so much. It is laughable how the critics contradicted each other. For instance, the musical journals: there are two in Berlin which are read a great deal. In one 'I had a good technique but was musically, not much account.' In the other one the man used me as an example to show that the Americans contrary to the ~~usual~~ belief, were temperamental and musical. So you see the opinions are divided (which is a good sign) and it's hard to know whom to believe.

I have got the criticisms together only now; they often appear several days or even a couple of weeks after the concert. I shan't be able to send them now as I want to have them translated for an eventual writing.

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in an American musical journal. I wasn't at all satisfied with the way I played part of the program. You see the critics came at the beginning and ~~staid~~ about a half hour ~~and~~ just hearing the worst things for I was pretty excited in the beginning and didn't do myself justice at all. Those who ~~staid~~ longer and heard the Brahms variations invariably wrote good notices. After the concert I was at a restaurant with Lesser and the Ganss. We wrote you a card, thank Heaven!, so you have not been without a line.

The whole pension came to the concert - everyone terribly excited. One American lady said she was a mess for several days beforehand and at dinner that day most of them couldn't eat anything through nervousness. I laughed at them and played the fearless one although inwardly I was terribly excited but ashamed to show it. In the artist's room just before the concert I felt miserable. The bell rang first once, then twice and finally three times. Then a man came in from Wolf's (concert agency) telling me to begin. The audience was very enthusiastic as, indeed, they were all my friends. The program was pretty long - too long in fact - it wasn't over until 10:15. My pictures were up in couple of windows so I am quite a big gun (among my friends). They came back from Wolf's yesterday so I shall send them immediately. You will like them except for the <sup>need</sup> mustache. Delia <sup>need</sup> have no fear - I shall have it

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shaved off going over on the boat. Delia's picture was fine; why she looks pretty on it! Kate sent Mr. Lesser and me Easter cards. Too bad I didn't remind you to do it. I feel so terrible about Mendelssohn's. You know I asked you to write some time ago. Did you? If not you must be ready to write just before I leave Berlin, thanking them profusely in mother's name. They are such ideal people and such great friends to me.

Am practicing with a vengeance now as if my life depended on it. I must get a lot of things ready for America next winter. Mr. Ganz advises me not to take a college position but to give private lessons in Chicago and be able to fill any concert engagements. There is no use planning for every thing turns out differently. I guess I shall be able to make a good living though, which is the most important thing for the present. Don't be worried if I don't write regularly - it seems I can't shake off the bad habit. It won't be long now until I shall be packing my duds ready to become an American again and ready to stay home for a while.

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Ed.

Berlin May 5.

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Have about given up the Paris idea so shall, in all probability, arrange for my passage on the North German Lloyd this week. Haven't seen a sailing list as yet so can't tell you the exact date of my arrival. I hope Mary and Annie won't arrange their vacations to suit me. The last time Ann took her vacation the first week I was home and had a fearfully dull time of it principally on account of me but also on account of the heat. Then if Mary should be in Minnesota she mustn't come home for that is just the worst time of the year in Joliet. Perhaps Ann could go to Kate's this summer.

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Mr. Ganz is leaving for Switzerland the first of June which will leave me without any lessons of whatever and the lounging I shall do then with the ocean trip will be enough vacation for me. So no Niagara Falls for yours truly. Then you don't need to make a fuss over me as though I were going to be home for only a short time like 3 years ago.

So many have advised me to go on the North German Lloyd that I have almost decided to but still it is hard to leave the Hamburg American Line. That is a distinctly German quality which I have acquired here, namely; when I have tried something and it proved satisfactory not to change it. The Americans are just the opposite; they want to try everything. Needless to say they were Americans who told me to go on the Lloyd 'in order to know both lines'. They say the Lloyd has the best cabin-passenger service. The Hamburg America handles more freight and emigrants.

Mrs. Ganz invited me to supper Tuesday Evening and I had a very interesting time. Josef Lhevinne, pianist and a certain Nora Drewett also a well known pianist were there and played the whole evening. Also a Mrs. Lakes from California a relative of Boguslavski! Do you remember Moses at the College? When this woman told me she was related to Bogus I near fell over. It was like a message from another world; my youth and the diamond-medal contests

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at the col. flashed across my mental vision! Bogie is teaching in Kansas City and has a big son so you see he has quite outgrown me. Perhaps I shall see him in ~~the~~ America this winter. Lhevinne is going to tour in America all next winter. He is a rather stupid fellow - the contrary to Ganz - and appears to me to be completely unmusical; but he has a tremendous technique and this brilliant style in his playing that is so liked in America. Mr. Ganz is going to arrive in September and start immediately on the coast. He is planning a recital for two pianos with me in Chicago which will be fine if it materializes.

Haven't heard anything from Kate concerning Schumann's coming to Europe. I should certainly enjoy going to Bayreuth especially if there would be any money in it, but I can't quite see how Schumann-Heink needs a pianist there. There are any number of experienced Wagner coaches there who know her roles from memory and would rehearse with her for practically nothing. They are often experienced conductors as well who go to Bayreuth for the festival and try to earn a little on the side by coaching the singers. I am afraid to have anything to do with Madame for to have anything to do with her means to fight with her and that wouldn't pay me.

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Was at Mr. Lesser's Sunday afternoon and played a Brahms Trio with Wittenberg (violinist) and Leimeister

(horn player from the royal orchestra). Lesser complained to me lately that I had been neglecting him, which was true. I promised to mend matters, especially as I am to be here for such a short time and don't know when I shall see him again. The reason for my forgetting him is due to my living in the pension. When I lived on Culmbacherstr. I had no company at all except for the few words I spoke to my landlady, so I often went to his house from sheer loneliness. Now that I am in the midst of a crowd of young people and have all the excitement I need, I forget my friends outside of the pension. Lesser told me how selfish it was to do that and I agreed with him. I am enclosing a letter a lady sent me the day after my concert. Her son is one of the best known among the younger pianists in Berlin as well as a teacher at the Hochschule. I think it was terribly nice of her to write that letter.

I wrote to Kate last week - hope she will answer some time. Heard from Mary this week. Did she say you had another dog? Hope Mrs. Collins is digging in her garden - there is nothing like it.

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Berlin May 27

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I wish I could make the contract with Schumann-Heink's manager and sign for a certain time and for a certain salary. Then I should be independent of Madame's whims and not be depending on her good graces. I can feel safe only when I do business with men.

Ganz leaves Berlin Thursday. They had a farewell tea yesterday to which I was invited but could not go on account of being at Lesser's. The latter showed me the letter from the Collins Family. He was delighted with it, as indeed, you hit him in the most delicate spot - his wisdom and foresight. Mendelssohn, by the way, also got your letter and told me to thank you and excuse him for not answering it. I told him not to think of answering it, you didn't expect it etc. Just imagine how busy he is with that big banking establishment and all his social and political duties!

The position at 'Our Lady of Sorrows' would be magnificent if it weren't for the outlook with Schumann Heink. If this latter doesn't materialize I shall surely look for an organ position when I come home.

This letter isn't very much but I might leave it lying around for several days if I waited to write more.

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Berlin. June 3 1912

Dear Kate, - your letter was like a display of fireworks. It will take me some time to recover from all the noise and dazzling lights. In plain English it was startling. You had often talked about Mme. to me and often wished and hoped she would do something for me, but this sudden turn of affairs came like a crash. Of course I don't believe it - why it is too good to be believed, too fairy like. In the first place Mme. is the last one to stand for any rivals and if I should have much success she would fire me on the spot. Then all the ways she could be insulted; I might say something which would offend her and again I would be requested to pack my trunk. Hasn't she a manager with whom I could sign a contract? I like to do business with men. Then she would let me appear only in small towns, I am sure.

Perhaps these are only my fears however it would be a fearful disgrace if anything of the kind should happen. Ganz is telling it all over so if it doesn't materialize I am down and out. Of course I realize what you are to Schumann-Heink and know that she would make a sacrifice to keep you. When you write (which I hope will be immediately) tell me all about the business side of it and the make up of the program. Am I to play twice etc.? What do you mean by Mme's wanting me to go to Bayreuth to work up her programs with her? If you are to play the accompaniments what do I need to practice with her for.

[This letter was written to Katherine Collins, EJC's sister]

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I hate this Bayreuth idea. Something might happen there that would knock the whole thing on the head before it was under way at all. Write me if there isn't any possible way of getting out of it. I have saved up enough money for my passage home but I haven't any left over so I couldn't think of going to any expense. By the way, I met your friend Harry Schürmann in a café the other night. He is singing opera some place in Germany. Sends his best regards to you. He yelled across the room at me; I recognized him right away but couldn't think of his name. He said I am so much fatter than ~~then~~ when he saw me last. I looked in the last Leader but didn't find anything.

Don't be afraid I am not working. The whole winter I let everything go except my piano and at the time of my concert everyone said my ~~th~~ technique was tremendous. Am working now regularly. At the last class lesson at Ganz's I played the Brahms D minor concerto. By the beginning of next season I shall have four others at the ends of my fingers: Beethoven E<sup>b</sup> and c min., Grieg and Liszt—outside of my solo pieces.

Mr. Lesser is delighted with the Schumann Heink idea and praised you up to the skies for the way you managed it. He appreciates everything so and wants to see me succeed.

I hate this Bayreuth idea. Something might happen there that would knock the whole thing on the head before it was under way at all. Write me if there isn't any possible way of getting out of it. I have saved up enough money for my passage home but I haven't any left over so I couldn't think of going to any expense. By the way, I met your friend Harry Schürmann in a café the other night. He is singing opera some place in Germany. Sends his best regards to you. He yelled across the room at me; I recognized him right away but couldn't think of his name. He said I am so much fatter than ~~the~~ when he saw me last. I looked in the last Leader but didn't find anything.

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Don't be disappointed that I have my doubts as to the genuineness of the whole affair; you know I was always inclined to be a little sceptic which is better than being over-enthusiastic.

About the money question: I have saved enough to pay my way home, as I said before, but haven't any over and above. If you could lend me \$10 I would feel safer—there are so many things that suddenly come up when one is traveling. Remember it isn't necessary but it is pleasant to have a little over on a long trip like that. I should hate to ask Mm for any money.

Please answer right away for I shall wait to hear from you before doing anything—arranging for my passage etc. I may leave here right after the first of July. Give my love to all and write by return mail.

Lovingly Ed.

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