

The Chatham Daily Planet.

(MAGAZINE AND EDITORIAL SECTION.)

CHATHAM, ONT., SATURDAY, APRIL 23 1904.

(PAGES NINE TO TWELVE)

Letter From Germany

Mrs. E. J. McIntyre Writes Another Interesting Letter to the Planet—Hears Some Excellent Music.

Believe me some sort of a promise made by me when concluding at last, I know a very strong letter to break it possesses me now. No doubt you will think a very strange admission—it is, as yet, a blank one—but I have as yet, sufficiently recovered the very close embrace to which I subjected me, to understand the difficult task I assigned myself. I hope you will therefore not yet to fulfill it—and accept as good a grace as possible the letter offered. For although it is to be anything but brilliant, I perfectly sure, at the present moment, to carry to a successful finish my former idea.

I will remember, perhaps, meeting you some time ago, the people to have the privilege of a hearing this winter, the little child, Franz von Vecsey. Nevertheless, we did not dream of re-appearance under such unusual circumstances as those which attended themselves last night, at the Philharmonic, the largest and most concert hall in the German capital, was the scene of his repeated triumph, an overwhelming one it certainly was. The entertainment was given by the little lad, under the name of her Imperial Majesty, Queen of Prussia, for the benefit of the many homeless children in Berlin in which attendance and care of poor, ill, neglected or homeless children is continuously given by the many dearest, who have devoted their entire lives to this noble service.

It was the first time the little fellow had played with orchestral accompaniment before a Berlin audience and it was really touching to the looks of interest and pride beamed upon him by the warden of the orphanage, himself a new acquisition, Mr. Rebeck, the old and honored doctor, having retired a couple of years ago, on account of ill health, before telling you how this interesting little genius again delighted his hearers, and of how childishly natural he carried himself under the wealth of honours showered upon him. I must mention of two very desirable prizes he received during his very first visit to this city. I intended to go when I wrote of him before, but was afraid of making my letter too lengthy.

A well known banker, Robert von Mecklenburg, by name, had been kept bed for many weeks by illness, and was not yet able to leave his room, was very anxious however, to make acquaintance of the clever musician, and also to hear him play. After was accordingly dispatched to the parents of little Franz, offering reward of two thousand marks if he would play in the temporary private of the banker. An answer was quickly received, stating they would permit their son to play in private circles for any remuneration but could be pleased to allow him the pleasure of giving a few happy moments to von Mecklenburg. The little artist went and played. A few days later he received from the monarch a genuine Stradivarius.

The second was a beautiful floral robe presented by one of his numerous public worshippers. It consisted of the dearest and prettiest of silks, called from the choicest strains of the goddess Flora, woven to a tiny, though faultless model, his beloved violin. Upon this richly perfumed and delicate instrument, lay an exquisite bow, perfect in strength, flexibility and shape.

The musical heart of the little lad was now filled to overflowing. He played Stradivarius and a matinee of which which to caress its tumbles and strings and bid them carol forth the wildest melody or tender softening strains, till one fancies the soul of the composer is singing with heaven joy his now glorified work. In very truth, when little Franz treats his violin to voice its sweetest notes, he sings the "Dreams of Schumann" we can but exclaim with the poet, "I have heard a strain of music, so mighty, so pure, so clear, that my very soul was silent, and my heart stood still to hear; it rose in harmonious numbers, of sounds more perfect than speech, farther than sight can follow, farther than soul can reach."

Upon the night in question, the 18th of March, when our little hero again played, he played before one of the largest audiences ever assembled in the city. Every seat in the spacious hall was occupied; every available inch of standing room accommodated itself to those to whom a torn pocket book had been assigned by the fates. These unlucky children of fortune, numbering over a thousand, a great many of whom were students, paid a half dollar for the privilege of standing a full hour outside the outer doors, in order to rush into the hall the moment these were opened.

As each individual was, naturally, desirous of obtaining the best position, each upon which to firmly set foot, in this case, his seat of possession, the reader will no doubt, be

far better able to imagine this mad rush, than I to describe it.

I was one myself, when I attended a public rehearsal of one of the Nibelung concerts, though, in the latter case, a seat awaited the early comer when once inside the music room. I fancy the order of entrance to the Vecsey concert was no improvement upon that of the former. Now, these who occupied "Steppplatz," as we say in Germany, had the pleasure of testing the endurance of their limbs another hour before the concert began, as it only lasted till eleven o'clock, their patient limbs secured a five hour privilege for a very reasonable sum.

The young musician was at his best, and again and again responded to the demands of the audience, until, at last, the impression, in sheer desperation, held the little artist fast and refused to allow him to test his strength further.

Ovation after ovation greeted the childish ears of the young lad during the progress of the evening. Immediately after one of his outbursts of applause, a huge laurel wreath, tied with the united colors of Germany and Austria-Hungary was brought in, who presented it to the youthful violinist. This pleasing feature was the happy conception of the Empress, who chose this method of publicly thanking the young artist for his kindness, in devoting his talented services to the benefit of her poor subjects. The colors were suitably inscribed in gilt, and the wreath will be a lasting tribute from his royal friend.

The Empress was not present in person, but the royal box was occupied by several members of royalty. Her Majesty being represented by her sister, Princess Frederick Leopold. Little Franz and his mother were summoned to the royal box during the intermission of the programme, the former being kissed and greeted by the Princess, who privately expressed in the name of the Empress, her thanks for his kindness.

On Friday, March 25th, he again played to a crowded house, and some, who attended every concert the young artist gave in Berlin, said he had never played better than upon this night, when his violin was voicing his heart's farewell. Be this as it may, the people were very loth to say good-bye, and continually gave utterance to the cry "wiederkommen," "wiederkommen," this word being equivalent to our English ones, come again. Many, who had been privileged to make the young lad's acquaintance, crowded around him for a final handshake, and an "aufwiedersehen," while it seemed as if the whole audience eventually surrounded the carriage awaiting him, so great were the deafening cheers that fell upon the silence of the night as he was driven away; cheers that bespoke the hearty interest, and well wishes of the Berlin musical world, for this favored child of nature.

He has toured Austria and Russia, since he gave his first concert in Berlin, and his every appearance upon a concert stage was a veritable triumph. I hope he will shortly tour America, and play in some city near you. For I should like every lover of fine music in my own city to hear his wonderful playing.

I learn from some topics of The Planet sent me that residents of the Maple City have been, through the efforts of local talent, permitted to enjoy the performances of two charming operas. It has also been our privilege to hear some of the Wagnerian operas during this last month, when the Ring of the Nibelungs has been given. Three times during the operatic season is this celebrated ring, consisting of four different operas, presented to the Berlin public; so popular is it that it is very difficult to secure seats. Let me tell you what a delightful method of obtaining tickets is in vogue here. I am sure the opera house management in your own city will be petitioned at once to adopt it.

The Royal Opera House in the German capital, the one in which operas are best given, was built in the reign of Frederick the Great. It has a seating capacity of 1546 persons. Now, do not credit me with having made a mistake in figures. I copied these from a plan of the building, so I am quite certain they are correct.

The lover of fine opera has his choice, conditionally, to be sure, of five different divisions. A choice of any particular seat is seldom allotted him; he is very thankful if the fates allow him one at all.

An nine o'clock a. m., the day each opera is given, the plan for such is first opened. The cheapest seats are 75 cents, the most expensive \$3 each; most students, both sexes inclusive, usually aiming to secure one of the former. As many other citizens aim to do likewise, it is a genuine case of where the early bird catches the worm. There are never sufficient for all.

The arrivals at the opera house line up before the door, two abreast, each in his turn, the first comer often arriving as early as five o'clock. By the time one's watch signifies the

doors are about to open, the building is usually half surrounded, each hopeful, though often unexpected. A couple of policemen see that order is maintained; no attempt is made to usurp another's place; one can go off to a neighboring cafe, get his breakfast, return and find no one has sought to repair the break in the line his temporary absence has made. The greater number, however, break fast before venturing out, or do so after the ordeal is over, while a few eat a lunch as they stand and wait. Perhaps the weather may be inclement, but one never heeds that if one's object is the purchase of an opera ticket. The whole line is well provided with umbrellas, each individual bringing his own. Under this sheltering protection one reads his book, studies his neighbor, or diverts his mind with the early morning sights of a sleepless city.

The doors are at last opened, the policemen allowing a hundred shivering or drenched persons to enter at a time. Another guardian of the law on duty inside marshals the victims forward, one by one. After a long wait of from two to four hours, the cheerful intelligence proclaiming the fourth gallery, the cheapest seats, to be all sold out long before the first purchaser's mind, and suggests other than pleasant thoughts. This was the case the morning I sought to establish my fame as an early riser, the same fate overtaking the third rank also before it came my turn to purchase. Now, notwithstanding I was in line by half-past six, I was obliged to take seats in the second balcony, paying therefore \$3.50 for two, as I was not at all inclined to content myself with the simple exercise

of the standing privilege, though many only secured the latter. Each individual is allowed to become the possessor of five tickets, many thus accommodating a circle of five friends, each taking his coveted turn in the pleasure seeking line.

This system of selling tickets is supposed to be a great improvement on that practiced when we first arrived in the city. Then, these were sold for a whole week, one could buy as many as one wished, the standing in line and making the purchases being done on Sunday morning. The ticket-handlers or speculators bought up so many, however, re-selling only at so great a profit, much fault was at once found with this the opportunity of grading the line became a daily instead of a weekly one, and it also lessened the price of the tickets, for the handlers soon decreased, not finding their restricted limitations very profitable. Of course, if one feels inclined to pay \$3 for each seat, one need not fall in line, but can buy these at offices where the plan is open, a day or two before the opera is given.

However, we had good places, the operas were grand, the singing very fine, the scenery and staging perfect. The love of the Germans for Wagnerian opera is not at all surprising. It is not simply because these operas are so thoroughly impregnated with German sentiment that makes them so popular with the nation, but because the music is so grand, so noble, so lofty and inspiring, worthy only of the master mind to whom the musical world is so deeply indebted.

L. A. MacINTYRE.
Berlin, March 29th, 1904.



Plume colored panne is the material used for this costume. The skirt has wide double tucks on either side of the front, and falls in flares about the feet. The waist has an Eton front, with a vest of white velvet striped with bands of ribbon velvet finished with silk ornaments. The sleeves are cut into a square puff below the elbow and gathered into a band of velvet embroidered in white and dull gold threads.

The Days of Auld Lang Syne

Interesting Events of Ye Olden Times Gathered From The Planet's Issues of Half a Century Ago.

From Planet files, July 9, 1859, to August 4, 1859.

R. J. Earl advertises his grocery business.

The rate of assessment for Chatham for 1859 was 15 cents on the dollar.

Birth—At Harwich Corners, on the 22nd July, the wife of Mr. John Little, of a son.

Died—At his residence, in Chatham North, Mr. Donald McKerrall, aged 72 years.

The Duchess of Kent, mother of Queen Victoria, is suffering from internal cancer.

From a parliamentary paper it appeared that the duty on cards and dice in England amounted to £15,046 12s. etc.

Died—In this town, July 28th, Charles James Sheriff, infant son of Mr. James Sheriff, aged 8 mos. and 4 days.

On Saturday last the young son of

Mr. Charles Smith, of this town, aged about 13 years, was kicked by a horse and killed.

The Headquarters Saloon, under Rankin's building, corner King and Fourth Sts., was managed by C. F. Jubenville.

Married—At the City of St. Clair, on Sunday, July 24th, by Rev. F. J. Joslin, Mr. Thomas H. Verrall, of the town of Chatham, to Miss Olive E. Herrington, of St. Clair.

The first of August passed off quietly in Chatham. A meeting was held in McGregor's grove, where several speakers delivered addresses. A big celebration was held at Sandwich, at which 7,000 colored persons were present.

The local representative of the London Free Press has been shown by Mr. Reuben Read, farmer, London Township, a bunch of peas, of an extraordinary character. There were no fewer than 17 branches and 120 pods. The pea is of the white Canadian sort.

In The Land of Death.

Startling Adventure of a Traveller in Canada and Mexico, Who Traversed the Rockies 2,000 Miles.

Nov. 1, 1899, crossed Mexican boundary, so runs my diary. I had ridden down from Canada, following the Rocky Mountains, a distance of 2,000 miles. So far I had squeezed through many difficulties, and was grateful for much success on a lone venture. But now I had another 1,500 miles to go if I would reach the City of Mexico, in a country where the water holes were said to be more than a day's march apart, where the people rode straight across the grass, leaving no permanent trails, and where, not knowing Spanish, I must get on as best I could without direction. I had a map, neatly filled in all over with assorted geographical features, the places which really existed being always set within forty miles or so of their true position.

I was anxious to get on, but the customs house at La Morita demanded 100 per cent. duty on my two horses and saddle. If I went without payment I should be captured by the Mexican Frontier Guards, and they usually shoot their prisoners. Moreover, there was a little border war in progress between the Frontier Guards and the American cowboys. As I was dressed as a cowboy, I was a game animal, and in season. Indeed, my dress was apt to make me specially unpopular, while these very butts of La Morita were full of wounded Mexicans, groaning and screaming under the surgeon's knife. The people were already suffering from too much cowboy.

On the whole it was very awkward. Always bashful with strangers, I was shy of meeting with any Frontier Guards, and yet so grave was the peril of death by thirst that I dared not venture southward. It seemed wiser on the whole to follow the boundary eastward across the Rocky Mountains, and gain the Atlantic slope where I might find more water. Without that I should never reach the City of Mexico.

Riding back to the United States I followed the line of boundary monuments, and 46 miles brought me to a rancho astride of the line, where I traded my fat American ponies for a pair of Mexican scarecrows. Now I was safe from arrest by the Frontier Guards. My host, John Slaughter, had for his best neighbors the Wilcox gang of outlaws, 40 miles to the northeast, but there were also the Frontier Guards, some border ruffians and a few stray Apache Indians on the lookout for scalps. Being a Texan, and a dead shot, Mr. Slaughter was able to protect the ladies of his household, and he was reputed to have taken 27 lives in self-defence. This gentleman treated me very kindly, and found a Mexican to guide me across the Rocky Mountains.

This great mother range, although the backbone of the continent, is not a single ridge of mountains, but the crown of a high plateau on which there are many ranges of Alps. Here on the Mexican border there are no mountains at all, but the plateau is laced all over with a skein of hills. Any rivers which rise in this broken country would flow on the one side to the Pacific, on the other to the Atlantic, but for the fact that as soon as they leave the hills they are swallowed up in the heat of the burning desert.

My guide led me up out of the desert into pleasant rock-walled canyons, where there were standing trees and running waters. We saw deer, and a bear or two, and halted for dinner at a mud cabin where a Mexican family was busy distilling spirits from the juice of the monster cactus on the hills.

By the time of the following day, and by sundown came to the eastern edge of the hills, where we camped with the water in our canteens. So far my guide had loafed, making excuses for short marches and wearisome halts; indeed, in two days we had covered but 28 miles. On the third morning I was determined to make him travel, yet we had scarcely entered the desert levels when, sighting deer, he galloped off in chase. By the time he had shot a doe and a young buck the sun was high in heaven, and to make amends for the delay I would not stop for a noon camp when we reached a water hole. Neither would I fill my canteens. "Travel," I said, "or you'll get no water." I think it was then that he decided upon my death, by way of vengeance, because I slighted him, but still he was courteous, friendly, cheerful and I suspected no evil.

Rounding the end of a chain of hills, we followed a trail to the southward, a clear strong wagon track. By the signs I read that it had not been used for at least twelve months by any traveler. In Spanish, asked out with the sign language, my guide explained that this led direct to the Rancho San Francisco, and I was content. But now the man began to lag behind, complaining that his horse was played out, unable to travel further, suggesting that I could find my way alone. The track was plain enough, and having no water I dared not lag at a walking pace, suffering as I did already from raging thirst.

By signs the man explained that I should reach the San Francisco rancho at sundown, and I believed him. I believed him. I paid him off, let him go, cut short his courtly regrets, farewells and compliments—and rode on. He watched me set off alone on that dead trail which had no water within eight miles. "May you ride," he cried, "with God!"

A couple hours further on the grass faded suddenly and I knew by the tracks of the cattle, bears and deer that there was water within five miles ahead. In two miles I reached a water hole, a trampled waste of black mire, frosted with white alkali, and in the midst of it the last remains of a puddle. My horse was afraid to drink the stuff, the smell of it sickened me and I went on.

Now the trail had gone plain and direct to this tract of trampled mud, but on the further side there was no sign of it. Perhaps the grass fires of successive years had burned the tracks away; in any case, it could not have led to any inhabited place. I scouted in widening circles until the sun went down, but found no sign of man. Night fell, and I camped, doubtful whether the thirsty horses would stay with me until dawn. I knew that 20 years ago the entire population of this country for many hundreds of miles had been massacred by the Apache Indians, the men burned, the women I cannot say that, the little children dashed against stone walls. Still there were stray Apaches on the range and to light a fire was almost suicide. I made a big fire, hoping it might be seen from the nearest rancho, and sipped on half a cup of cold tea which I had saved at breakfast.

Day broke, and I saddled, but while I was loading my pack horse, he smelt the blood in my hands from the deer I had belated to skin the day before. The smell made him frantic, and I was badly kicked on the knee. Knowing that I must perish if I failed to get into the saddle, somehow I scrambled up, then, half crazed with pain and suffering agonies of thirst, set out to scout for water. From the hilltop I looked out through quivering heat mist over the immensities of the bright golden grass to where a violet blur of hills fringed the horizon, and in that space I knew by unfailing signs there was no water.

Yesterday where my guide had headed me southward on the dead trail I had noticed a living trail with quite recent tracks which led due east. Now I had to lay my plans well, because within a few hours more, I should be delirious. I resolved to strike N.W., and see if I could cut the live trail, which must lead within a day's march to water. I do not know how far I traveled, on a level plain at first, then over hills, crossing a number of deep gulches. Late in the afternoon I found the live trail, and there were tracks upon it, not an hour old, going eastward.

I had traveled some miles when the track led through a gate in a fence, and just beyond that I seemed to see in a dream an American cowboy, who rode out from behind a clump of cactus and swung abreast of me. I spoke to him and he answered. He was real, and we talked. "Did you see a fire last night—S.S.W., yonder?" "Yon lit a fire!" he said.

"To attract attention—I was lonesome."

"Oh, I thought maybe you done it to scare away Apaches. They got a man on our doorstep here a few months ago."

"Have we far to go?"

"Quite a piece. There's a bunch of us camped yonder, hunting bear. Say, partner, what's the matter with you? I can't hear you speak."

"Why, here's a canteen full of water!"

That was the end of my troubles. Three days later I set off once more for the City of Mexico.—Robert Pocock.

A SONG OF THE CENTURY.

Who has time for idle sighing
When the morning lights turn gray,
The pregnant hours are flying
And we cannot bid them stay.
Every certain chance is lying
In the keeping of to-day.

Let the weak heart stop and listen
To the philosophic head;
There is breath in the to-morrow
But the yesterday is dead;
There are new words to be uttered
But the old ones all are said.

If we cannot grasp the lily,
We can often gain the rose;
If we lose the mystic morning
We have still days' dewy close.
This is life—for the hereafter
Is there anyone who knows?

Away with idle scorning
And away with useless tears,
Let the spirit of the morning
Rout the night's unreal fears.
Rise and march—the ranks adorning
Onward, upward, with the years.

A debt of gratitude is generally
the hardest kind to collect.

Continued On Page 10.