
The Family Letters of Richard Wagner

By Carl Friedrich Glasenapp

Translated by William Ashton Ellis



The Wagner Library

Edition 1.1

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About this Title

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Translator's Preface

SOMEWHERE I have recently seen this collection of "Family Letters" referred to by a well-wishing journalist in advance of its integral English publication—a few of the letters or portions thereof having been elsewhere translated by me before—as "a supplement to Wagner's Autobiography." Upon the assumption that we yet may be given a reliable translation of *Mein Leben*, to some extent I can accept that description, as all the intimate expressions of a great man's personality may be said to supplement each other in a sense. But the true counterpart of these letters of Richard Wagner's to his blood-relatives and connections is to be found, of course, in those to his first wife "Minna," at the end of my preface to which I breathed the hope, now more than two years since, that they might "soon be supplemented by an English rendering of the delightful *Familienbriefe*"; and in fact it is by the barest chance that the latter rendering did not then take first place, as was my own desire when the two collections made almost simultaneous appearance in their original vernacular, winter 1907-8.

For my own part, as between the three works just named, in the matter of self—portraiture I should give decided preference—and should have even before seeing any of them—to the one which displays to us the author in the most levelling of all human relations, that of the member of a large family conclave, and youngest but one of a numerous middle-class brood. Here no possible suspicion of attitudinising can arise in the mind of the most inveterate carper; if I may be allowed to appeal to personal experience of a similar quiverful, elder brothers and sisters knock all that sort of thing out of their juniors mighty soon. And so we get a picture of the naked human spirit in the driest and most neutral of lights, even the letters addressed to a younger generation, those to two or three adoring nieces, being sobered by the certainty that they will be shewn to the girls' parents. Yet what letters they are, the majority of those to his nieces! Take No. 65, for instance, with its "I court the affection of nobody, and leave people to think what they like of me; but . . . if but a finger of true unconditional love is held out to me from anywhere, I snatch at the whole hand as possessed, draw the whole mortal to me by it if I can, and give him, an' it may be, just such a thorough hearty kiss as I should like to give yourself to-day." As pendant to which I may cite that to his brother-in-law Eduard of almost ten years earlier "I know no first nor last midst those my heart belongs to; I've only *one* heart, and whoever dwells there is its tenant from bottom to top" (p. 56).

After reading the above pair of extracts, and comparing them with the letters to Uhlig or Liszt, one may be pretty sure that if *this* collection is not ten times its present size, the fault largely lies at the recipients' door; either in that lack of responsiveness so common among large families, particularly when most of the grown-ups have young progeny of their own to attend to, or in simple neglect to treasure up a store whose future value was not realised (*cf.* p. 278). Yes, and—as my friend Herr Glasenapp informs us in his thumbnail sketch at this volume's end—it is to the *half*-sister, Cecilie Avenarius, her famous brother's only junior, that we owe the conservation of the main bulk of those family—letters we do possess; just as it was to her and her husband that by far the chief constituents of its first half were addressed. On the other hand, I cannot quite share the belief my friend expresses, that a want of such care and forethought on the part of other members of the family has deprived us of very many fellows to these documents; themselves they offer too much indication that at various periods in their author's life, e.g. that directly preceding and succeeding his first marriage, all ordinary correspondence with his kinsfolk was suspended for a good long while, as so often is the case with less uncommon individuals in like circumstances. Nevertheless, it is tolerably certain that letters passed between Richard Wagner and his sister Ottilie Brockhaus or her husband in the summer of 1837 concerning the divorcement of Minna then actively contemplated (*cf.* "R.

to *M. Wagner*," p. 502), whilst sister Clara Wolfram's long Zurich visit of the late summer and early autumn 1856 must have entailed at least one letter from her host himself before and after it, to say nothing of his arranging for Minna's visit to her two years previously. So that there still is faint hope of just a few emerging from some secretive purchaser's portfolio in course of time,

Turning to another aspect of our collection as it stands, one of its distinctive features is that—setting aside a few applications to music-publishers—it presents us with the earliest of Richard Wagner's private missives as yet discoverable; though in that respect it is run pretty close by the "*Letters to Apel*" quite lately contributed by me to *The English Review*, which in their turn richly supplement our rather scanty record for the 'thirties. The 'forties, on the contrary, here shew a harvest more abundant than in any other volume of the master's letters; whilst the total time-span bridges nearly all his adult life, little more than its eight last years being unaccounted for besides those earlier gaps.

Regarding the technique of the present edition a very few words will suffice. With the exception of eight letters to Minna included by Herr Glasenapp in the original edition before it was decided to issue the whole of that extensive group apart, nothing whatever has been consciously omitted by me in this Englishing of a correspondence transcribed by my friend and colleague from the autographs themselves; similarly, all the un-signed footnotes are mere reproductions from his. On the other hand, for internal reasons I have transposed the sequence of two or three undated letters, added one of Albert Wagner's narrating the Mother's death (pp. 141-5), and furnished the least possible dressing of what I may term connective tissue,—all such additions of mine being indicated by *square* brackets, as my colleague has restricted himself to curved. Having experimented in the "*Minna*" volumes with "Thy" for the signature where Wagner employs the second person singular throughout a letter, and having found the experiment successful—so far as can be judged from its provoking no adverse comment in any quarter—I have continued it here, as stamping a degree of intimacy for which our own colder nation has no symbol in general use.

In conclusion, I have just one appeal to address to the reader: an appeal of a practical nature on both sides. Feeling that what has greatly militated against a truer knowledge of R. Wagner's character as man has been a limitation of the sale of kindred volumes by their comparatively high cost, I have persuaded my present publishers to issue this one at a price within the means of all who crowd the cheaper sections of the house at performances of his dramatic works, or take the most modest of parts in their representation. With them and their numberless friends it must rest, alike to justify our present, and to shape our future policy. For at least one more volume of letters is ready for printing in the event of a cordial reception of this.

WM. ASHTON ELLIS.

BRIGHTON, July 1911.

[1]

Family Letters of Richard Wagner

1. To Sister Ottilie (01)

LEIPZIG, the 3rd March (1832).

MY DEAR GOOD OTTILIE—So it is my turn at last to send a few lines to your far-away Denmark, after not having seen you for so long that it has become a positive need to me to have another talk with you, at least on paper. But really there's *so much* I should like to tell you of the year gone by, such a decisive one for me, that I fear this sheet of paper would never hold it; so I must just make shift with what lies nearest to my heart.

How much it grieved me, that I was unable to take leave of you when you made your departure from here! That is the chief sorrow that has befallen me in your entire absence, and I felt quite mopish when I stayed in the same hotel at Culm where, (02) Mother told me, you bade your last [2] farewell. However, I suppose it won't be much longer before I see you once more; for, no matter how you may be enjoying yourself at present, I do hope you will also be longing to get back to us some day, if you sympathise with us else.

And now let me narrate you a little bit about myself; which perhaps will be just what you would like, since you shewed such great concern about me in one of your last letters.

Ah, how it grieves me to have to tell you that I, no doubt, was quite unruly for a while, and had been so turned from my goal through keeping company with students, that it caused dear Mother very much anxiety and pain. But I pulled myself together in the end, and have now been so confirmed in my improvement by my new teacher, that already I stand on a point whence I may view my higher course of life as firmly entered. For you must know that for over the past half-year I have been the pupil of our Cantor Weinlig, whom one may rightly call the *greatest contrapuntist now alive*; added to which, he's such an excellent man that I'm as fond of him as of a father. He has brought me on with such affection that, to employ his own expression, I may already regard my 'prenticeship as ended, and now he simply stands towards me as advising friend. How fond he is of me himself, you may judge by this: when Mother asked him to name his fee, after half a year's tuition, he said it would be unreasonable of him to accept payment for the delight of having taught me, my industry and his hopes of me were quite enough reward.

[3]

Well, you may easily imagine that all this has borne fruit. Last Christmas an overture of mine was performed at the theatre, (03) and actually one at the *Grand concert* last week; (04) and I would have you know that this latter is no trifle, since before anything is accepted for these concerts from a young composer, his work must be found worthy by all the connoisseurs on the committee; so my overture's acceptance in itself may prove to you there's something in it. But I now must tell you about the evening of performance, of such moment to me, for sure. Rosalie and Luise [eldest and next eldest sisters] were present. In no case could I expect anything like a rousing success, as in the first place overtures are seldom applauded at these concerts, and in the second, two new overtures by MARSCHNER and LINDPAINNER had been given a short time previously without setting a single hand in motion;—nevertheless my suspense was tremendous, and I almost fainted for fright (oh, had you only been there!). So you may guess my joyful surprise when, at my overture's finish, the whole roomful began to applaud just as if they had been hearing the greatest masterpiece I

hardly knew how to contain myself—I can assure you!—and Luise was so affected by it, that she wept. How I did wish you had been present; I'm certain it would have given you a little pleasure too!

Enough of that. Now for another piece of [4] news: a pianoforte sonata of mine, dedicated to my Weinlig, has appeared in print this week; I received a 20 thaler note for it. I would gladly forward you a copy, if I didn't reflect that the carriage would almost exceed the price you can get it for in Copenhagen yourself; so just go to any music-shop and order it from Leipzig, under the title: "Sonata for the pianoforte by Richard Wagner, op. I, Breitkopf und Haertel, Leipzig." It isn't very hard, but in case you can't play it yourself straight away, just ask Fräulein Lottchen, in my name, to play it to you;—I should be so delighted if it pleased you. Quite recently also [Feb. 3] I composed an overture to *König Enzo*, a new tragedy by Raupach, which is performed at the theatre each time the piece is played; it pleases every one.

And now no more about my products; as soon as you are back among us, it will give me infinite joy, my dear sister, to shew you everything.

The 21st March.

See what a time I have been without ending my letter! Meanwhile we have received your last, and as Rosalie herself is answering it, and these lines will be a mere enclosure, it would be needless to present you with our news when Rosalie's letter is sure to tell you quite enough about us all.

How particularly delighted I was to see by your last letter that you are getting a regular longing to be back with us; it is certain to expedite your journey home. O come right soon, that when Rosalie departs [for Prague] I may not [5] be left with no one who is kin to me through music also! For which matter, during the break in this letter I've written yet another overture, (05) which I am going to conduct at the Musical Union [Euterpe] myself; perhaps I may manage to promote it to the Grand Concerts as well. Good goodness, there I go starting again about my compositions; to put a stop to that old song, I shall wind up this letter at once. The only thing I'll add to my farewell is: Don't stay away much longer, and God grant that when you do return, you may have kept me thoroughly at heart. Enjoy your final days in Copenhagen as you may, I am sure you will like being here again. Adieu, Adieu. Thy
RICHARD W.

[Between this and the next letter young Richard, still a minor, has made his first launch on the world, starting in January 1833 to join his eldest brother, Albert—singer, actor, and stage-manager—at Wurzburg; where he soon obtained the post of operatic Chorus-master, and presently commenced his first completed opera, *Die Feen*.—TR.]

2. To Sister Rosalie

WURZBURG, the 11th December 33.

I must confess to you, my only Rosalie, that your letter made a profound impression on me, coming, as it did, at a time when the sole reason for my silence toward you all had been a certain bashfulness as to how I was to step before you. [6] Almost I had to assume that, after the sacrifices you dear ones had made for me, it would be extremely disagreeable to you to see their object unattained, and perhaps you might be angry with me even for the mode in which I gave you notice of the failure of that expectation. (06) Ah, I felt so strangely depressed when I thought of you all, and believed I guessed how you must picture to yourselves the reason for my staying on here, as to whose upshot you could not form the smallest notion yet. I cannot possibly describe to you how much that sort of apprehension tortured me, the greater its contrast with the feelings woken in me by my daily occupation with my opera. God, or rather yourself, be thanked! your letter—how shall I call it?—your

wonder-working letter delivered me from many discomposures of the kind, although it caused me fresh disturbance on the other side; for, after once reading it, I couldn't work for two or three days. I meant to answer you right away—but—I was still short of my opera's last finale: the day before yesterday I finished it, and therewith my whole opera; it was exactly noon, and the bells in all the steeples rang 12 as I wrote *Finis* beneath it,—how much that pleased me!

So, dearest, the *composition* of my opera is finished, and I have only its last act left to instrument now! It is my somewhat pedantic mode of writing out my score as tidily as possible from the outset, that has most delayed me in the instrumenting of my work;—if I am nice and industrious, [7] however, I expect to have got through even this last stage of work at my opera in something like 3 weeks, and so be able to depart from here in about a month.

But how shall I describe to you the mood I've been working in of late? How I thought of you all with well-nigh every note—ah, of yourself!—and it was a feeling which often spurred me on indeed, but often also overwhelmed me so, that I had to stop work and seek the open air. That happened to me oft, but ever did I hold it for a glad presentiment; and how it has delighted me to find your letter bearing witness to an equal sympathy! Oh, God grant I don't deceive your joyful expectations! But that, that cannot be,—everything has flowed so from my inmost soul,—and they say a thing like that, you know, must likewise pass into the souls of others.

To-morrow there's to be a concert, for which I have been asked to give a couple of numbers from my opera. An amateur with a fine voice will sing Ada's grand aria [act ii.], and then a terzet from it will be rendered by her, Albert, and a young basso. The latter [terzet] joins on to the introduction of the 2nd act, and is the situation where Arindal returns to his kingdom with Morald and is welcomed by his sister Lora. The Chorus greets him as its King with cheers, which he checks, however, with exclamations of sorrow: "O cease these sounds of joy! They beat on me with fearsome omen; alas, the mantle of my royal pomp is woven from my father's shroud!" He has been wafted from the dreams of Fairyland, [8] finds his kingdom laid waste and in havoc, everything recalls his father's death through grieving for him, and added to it all is Ada's warning of the horrors still awaiting him this day,—thus bridging a path for the mood in which he will encounter Ada in the [act's] finale. Lora and Morald, on the contrary, feel uplifted by Arindal's return, and look forward to a happy issue of the battle. This mood is characterised by the new theme of the Allegro [con brio], the exultation of which moved Albert so at the rehearsal, as he assured me, that he let 16 bars pass by before he could go on singing. That miss was more agreeable to me, than if he had come in all right. Yet this is one of my least important numbers, to tell the truth; for instance, I have a terzet in the 3rd act where Arindal is aroused from his madness and comes to feel that it has vanished through his wife's appeal for help; where he is emboldened by the two fairies to set Ada free, till at last he picks up arms and rushes off in highest ecstasy to his wife's deliverance;—from that I count on something more!

But why do I speak of all these things? 'Tis nothing but the yearning to inform you of just everything. My God, the time is not so distant now,—I shall soon be with you all—with yourself. I mustn't give way to the thought so entirely, though, or I shall be unable to write another word,—and I've such a lot still to tell you, if I could only get it all in trim! I'm in such an agitated state all day now,—last night again I got no sleep;—but ah! what am I saying? I had to give up [9] hope of restful nights long since; I'm thinking of you all the time—and—immodest fellow!—of my opera. . .—Of late I've dreamt a deal of all of you, of my arrival with you, and how I should be received by you all. Strange! my dreams of this sort have resembled one continuous climax :—in the first my reception among you was no great shakes—quite coldly casual,—later it already grew more genial—heartier;—and now it's fashioned in my dreams exactly as I'd wish it in reality. I hope it doesn't mean anything ;—surely you all will be good to me, even though I have little deserved it at present.

What you write me about the acceptance and [proposed] representation of my opera at Leipzig completely suits me, and I thank you for your pains and forethought. I really think it will all work out,—nay, I don't merely think,—I hope it, and should be greatly frightened at an undeception of my hopes! But tell me, among other things you write me that *Hans Heiling* is taking so well, and goes on filling the house ;—I must confess, this news has been extremely disagreeable to me, in a certain sense. We have given that opera here as well, and by all means I find the music very pretty too, especially the single pieces; but in no other opera of Marschner's have I met so entire a dearth of total effect. I can't make it out, but he has let the best effects pass unexploited what sort of things are those for act-ends;—what unmelodiousness in the choruses! In the 2nd finale he treats the culminating point of the whole: "He springs from the realm of gnomes and dwarfs, and is the [10] mountain-spirits' prince!" so slovenly, and brings off so little climax, that one would imagine some thing of no sort of consequence was going on. In short, not a single number is arresting,—which, I must admit, might almost betray me into vain hopes for my own opera!

It is distressing that things should be like that with your lady singers,—I much need a reliable voice and emotional acting,—something after the Devrient pattern wouldn't come amiss. From what I know of the Gerhardt as yet, her voice might doubtless prove too weak,—though her having been good as Alice [*Robert*], as you say, has given me hope. Above all, it will be necessary that Eichberger should remain, for the tenor has indisputably the biggest, and certainly also a grateful part;—if he were to leave, it would be of infinite harm to me! Albert is very fond of this part, and would be bound to excel in it;—perhaps [that may happen], should he take a starring turn at Leipzig.

Upon the other things you tell me, dearest Rosalie, let me be silent for the present;—it all affected me too disagreeably, and has wounded me too acutely, for me to be able to discuss much of that sort with you yet; I shall soon be with you all, and pride myself upon a certain gift now which at least will lighten some of your forebodings, and rob good Mother of many a—crotchet! Yet I thank you for those communications,—the source they flowed from, your loving trust, honours me much!——

How is Mother, and how are you all ?—Ah, [11] but I shall soon see all of you again! Really, I'm a thorough spoilt child; every instant pains me, when I'm absent from your fold! I hope we two, my Rosalie, may be a *deal* together in this life yet! Do you agree? For the rest, I'm infinitely glad that everything is standing well with all of you,—give the others my best love, and don't let them dread my arrival. It will be about a year, I've been away from you;—God grant it may have borne good interest!

—I perceive I'm winding up my letter most irregularly; ascribe it to the perpetual unrest and agitation which possess me now, particularly when I think of you all and my future! Everything is mixing itself up before my senses, and it's highest time my opera were ended, or my objectivity would have a poor look-out. God willing, however, I shall have finished in 3 to 4 weeks,—then forth to you!

Albert is writing also,—how glad I am that he is relieving me of a duty I can only think of with alarm! I can do no more than beg you all most sincerely for your kindness and indulgence in every way! Good Lord, I'm only 20 years of age as yet!——

—Remembrances to all once more, and heartiest of all to my good Mother; and tell them a lot about their Richard, who gives them so much care and trouble. But yourself—you remain my good angel, my only Rosalie; remain it aye!—Thy RICHARD.

[The beginning of 1834 Richard returns to the family fold, where he spends the next few months in vain [12] attempts to get *Die Feen* mounted by the Leipzig manager, one F. S. Ringelhardt. Early in June, however, he sets out on a pleasure-trip, as guest of his well-to-do chum, T. Apel.—TR.]

3. To the Same

PRAGUE, the 3rd July (1834).

MY DEAR ROSALIE—Merely a brief report—what would be the use of a long letter? I shall be back quite soon, you see, and then say more by mouth!

Not until Monday did we leave Teplitz for Prague, after having stayed there a fortnight on account of the baths in particular, which Theodor took seriously, and I rather for amusement. That visit enraptured me, and I shall remember the Milleschauer all the rest of my life. Prague, too, seems quite another city to me now; I can see now what a dull and cheerless oaf I was, when I roamed about it last. (07) We have unimpeachably fine weather, and at the present lovely season of the year that makes everything gay and bright to me. I was delighted with the R's.; (08) they're both quite well. Jenny has a little gone off; Auguste is handsomer than ever; Apel has lost his head. The legatee business has turned out greatly to the girls' advantage; the house belongs to them, and each receives 10,000 fl. Vienna currency from the [13] Pravonin estate. Altogether, people set them down at 30,000 fl. ord. curr. apiece. What has much helped them, is the favourable relation with Karl Pachta, who has travelled hither from Milan. He is behaving extremely well to them. I should like to beat that animal, the old woman, whenever I set eyes on her; the girls have a capital chance now,—if they profit by it to get free, they may pull themselves out of the affair quite nicely;—if not, they can mix with clever people and enjoy themselves: good again!

We have been too short a time here, and I have gone about too little yet, to be able to give you folk much other news. Only to-day am I calling on Gerle, Kinsky, [Dionys] Weber, and above all, Stöger, to whom I've been presented already. He seems to me a splendid chap; his theatre has a most distinguished footing. The handsomeness of the scenery and costumes transforms the stage here into something so different, that I don't recognise it at all. The Opera is excellent; among others, the Lutzer has come on, so that she will replace the Devrient for us some day. I'm enraptured with her;—quite the new young school,—thoroughly dramatic,—a few steps more, and she will be perfect. I shall make up to her,—she'll be a capital Ada. I have copied my text-book out sprucely and neatly, and shall give it to Stöger this very day.

We are having disgracefully good luck;—yesterday Löwe commenced his starring here, as Garrick: a heavenly treat. But all the rest are good, too,—and they haven't all assembled yet,— [14] Stöger is still waiting for much, among other things the filling up of his Ballet. Prague must be going to become one of the first-class theatres! But the audience is worth it, too.

I'm glad you tell me such grand tales of Ringelhardt;—he'll be in fine feather, for sure. (09) I am writing him to-day, also to the Gerhard; ah, and it makes me quite anxious and timid. Are the happy days I'm now enjoying about to venge themselves on me, perhaps? That question gives me a cold shudder from time to time, and then I often feel what I cannot describe, I am certain to be going to face a medley of cross-purposes, for which I must clothe myself in steel, to conquer them featly and firmly. Dear God, pray leave me my few remaining happy days; for with this coming winter the chill of life will seize me too, and my fortune's sun will need to send me of its warmest rays, if everything's to prosper. A torturing unrest on that account now often grips me, spurring me home with all speed; I feel as if something were awaiting me there which I must confront with all my might. Your letter, the very mention of my opera, has made me most restless, and nothing but the power of the moment's happiness can stave that feeling off.

Probably nothing will come of Vienna, we've been too long already; and that exactly suits me. We shall travel back by Carlsbad. So, if you haven't forwarded the *notes* yet [score of his symphony or an overture ?], please let that be.—

[15]

How are you all? I'm glad Mother has enjoyed herself. How are things standing with Laube? I keep thinking of him, and am much afraid for his sake [political arrest]. You say nothing of Marcus! If he hasn't let himself be heard of any more, he is a miserable poltroon,—and I hope we shall have no difficulty in persuading Caecilie to give him up. My best love to her. Love, too, to Brockhaus [Friedrich] and Luise,—please deliver my message,—I'm taking kindly to him now.

Farewell, my Rosalie, and don't go crying in your bedroom again when you come home at night and undress; I was in your sitting-room, and heard you. Farewell!—Thy RICHARD.

Many greetings from Theodor,—he affords me great hope. Give Mother my sincerest love once more.

How much I wish Julius could make this journey too; he would be bound to return from it *well*. I feel more and more what a glorious blessing Health is; luckily, though, since I am in possession of it, and have no need to long for it,— but I wish it Julius with all my heart!

Please send the [*Feen*] scores to Ringelhardt together with the letter.

[Now just of age, Richard soon became musical conductor at the Magdeburg theatre. At the end of his first season he paid his relations a visit, when he had rather a dismal tale to tell of his manager's impecuniosity; a tale which seems to have met with little sympathy from his brother-in-law, Friedrich Brockhaus, for his mother writes him some months later: "You must not think [16] the family bear a grudge against you, I cannot blame you for avoiding Fritz at present—after what occurred between you and him, it is better that the grass should grow over it and you should have time to give yourself a position in his eyes. He is finding just the same fault with his brother Hermann now, who isn't working hard enough [to please him] and doesn't think enough of money-making; and the brothers [Fr. and Heinrich B.] have a horror of giving." It would also appear that Richard had been looking out for a fresh berth, though he ended by returning to that at Magdeburg for another season, and letter 4 finds him on a tour of inspection on behalf of his manager, H. Bethmann. It is worthy of note that, albeit the young man had already met and fallen in love with his future wife, Minna, between Nos. 3 and 4—she being engaged as actress at the same theatre—her name is mentioned neither in this No. 4 nor in either of its two successors.—TR.]

4. To his Mother (10)

CARLSBAD, the 25th July :35.

Only of yourself, dearest Mother, can I think with the sincerest love and profoundest emotion. Brothers and sisters, I know it, must go their own way,—each has an eye to himself, to his future, and the surroundings connected with both. So it is, and I feel it myself: there comes a time when roads part of themselves,—when our mutual relations are governed solely from the standpoint of external life; we become mere nodding diplomats to one another, keeping silence where silence seems politic, and speaking where our view [17] of an affair demands; and when we're at a distance from each other, we speak the most. But ah, how high a mother's love is poised above all that!

No doubt I, too, belong to those who cannot always speak out at the moment as their heart dictates,—or you might often have come to know me from a much more melting side. But my sentiments remain the same,—and see, Mother—now I have left you, the feeling of thanks for that grand love of yours towards your child, which you displayed to him so warmly and so tenderly again the other day, so overpowers me that I fain would write, nay, tell you of it in accents soft as of a lover to his sweetheart. Yes, and still softer,—for is not a mother's love far more—far more untainted than all other?

Nay, here I won't philosophise,—I simply want to thank you, and again, to thank you,—and how gladly would I count up all the separate proofs of love for which I thank,—were there not too many of them. O yes, I know full well that no heart yearns after me now with so great an inner sympathy or such solicitude, as yours; yes, that perhaps it is the only one that watches o'er my every step,—and not, forsooth, coldly to criticise it,—no, to include it in your prayers. Have you not ever been the only one to stay unalterably true to me when others, judging by mere outward results, turned philosophically away? It would indeed be exacting beyond measure, were I to ask a like affection from them all; I even know it is not possible,—I know it from myself: but with *you* all issues from the heart, that dear good [18] heart I pray God e'er to keep inclined to me,—for I know that, should all else forsake me, 'twould still remain my last, my fondest refuge. O Mother, what if you should prematurely die, ere I had fully proved to you that it was to a worthy son, of boundless gratitude, you shewed so great a love! But no, that cannot be; you still must taste abundant fruits. Ah, the remembrance of that latest week with you; it is a perfect feast to me, a cordial, to call before my soul each several token of your loving care! My dear, dear Mother,—what a wretch were I, if I could ever cool towards thee!

For the future I shall tell the family but little of my doings,—they judge by the outward results, and will learn those without my assistance. In whatever fashion it has come about, I'm independent now, and mean to stay so. O that humbling before Brockhaus is graven deep into my heart, and the bitterest self—reproaches torture me, that I should have given into his hands a right to humble me. I shall get even with him in time, but never, never at one with him; and should that be wrong of me, I prefer to bear that wrong into the grave with me: I withdraw from them entirely. Each side cannot be right, and I was wrong;—yet I will never admit it—to *them*, but place myself in such a situation that I've nothing to admit to them,—whereas my recent great fault was having played into their hands, given them the very smallest right against me. For that matter, we stand so far from one another, that it would be absurd of me to want to be at one with [19] him. Yet, how I do rejoice at this catastrophe, which has brought me full recognition that I have nothing to expect from anybody in this world, but must stand on my own pair of feet! I feel independent at last, It was this feeling I lacked, and that lack which made me negligent and easy-going;—I had a certain vague reliance on some backer, which foolishly did not restrict itself to Apel, but also took other fantastic directions that almost make me laugh at my stupidity. Now I'm undeceived about all that, and very glad to be. My softness needed these experiences,—which will profit me in every way. Only, I straightway beg them to deny me any sympathy,—'twould irk me;—yourself, your heart, your love shall be my only stand-by, my refuge and hope in every trouble of my coming life. Maternal love requires no reasons,—all other seeks to fathom why it loves, and therefore turns to nothing but regard.

I have been to Teplitz and Prague, and found nothing there beyond the confirmation of my plan not to go to Vienna, and advice to pursue the direction I already have struck. (11) Moritz was in Prague, and gave me many a hint in this respect. From Prague I wrote to all the individuals I have my eye on, so as to know beforehand where I stand with them, and take no road in vain. I am expecting their answers at Nuremberg, whither I go to-morrow or the next day, as I'm only waiting for a letter from Magdeburg to conclude my [20] business here. I shall make a halt at Nuremberg; when a company is being disbanded, one easily picks something up;—moreover, the Wolframs can give me a deal of information, so that their opinion, perhaps, will save me a journey or two.

My dear, dear Mother,—my good angel,—fare heartily well, and don't fret;—you have a grateful son who never, never will forget what you are to him.—With the tenderest remembrances, Thy RICHARD.

[On his way back to duties at Magdeburg he paid a flying visit to Leipzig again,

temporarily exchanging his trunk there for Rosalie's hand-bag, as may be judged from the end of No. 5. Now in the possession of Wagner's nephew, F. Avenarius, this No.5—so Glasenapp informs us—is in a most dilapidated condition, much blotted with a corrosive ink which has made the paper so brittle that some of the ends of the lines have dropped away.—TR.]

5. To Sister Rosalie

MAGDEBURG, the 3rd September :35.

MY DEAR ROSALIE—I will just give you in brief the needful news you wish for. In any event Wolframs are firmly engaged here, (12) and urgently expected; but their travelling money—50 thaler, not 100—unfortunately went off to them from here only the day before yesterday. So, if they had started already, they won't have received it; if they have managed to pull through as far as here, though, they'll receive it *here*, since [21] it will be returned here if it didn't catch them at Nuremberg. It therefore is merely a question whether *both* the Wolframs have left Nuremberg together. Cläre wrote you, you know, that she would be starting this week in any case;—consequently it might be that *Cläre* has arrived alone, and Wolfram stayed behind;—if so, please tell her that, in receipt of the travelling money, Wolfram would follow her now. In any event don't let her waste a single minute,—they're counting on her here already as on their daily bread. So, if they both left Nuremberg together, and have pulled through so far, they'll receive the money here. Cläre mustn't think of accepting any other offer,—but both must come here very, *very* quick.

Please go this instant and enquire at both the Letter and the Parcel Post whether a poste—restante letter with Friedrichs d'or for me is lying there. Bethmann has shewn me the certificate; it was despatched to Frankfort, and, according to orders I left there, will either have been forwarded to Leipzig—or if not, it will return here to-day or to-morrow. I will write you to-morrow if Freimüller [tenor] turns up,—no doubt... [dropped away]. For that matter, things are quite passable here [ditto] our people are getting their pay. I saw the . . [ditto] *of Women* yesterday, which was really quite charmingly played, at the least just as well as with you. I believe we shall have a great success with the Opera here; every one is [looking forward to] Wolframs;—mind they come.

[22]

You'll get your travelling-bag back by the same [messenger] who is to fetch away my trunk.

Love to all—most hearty love, and excuse this hurried scrawl.—Thy RICHARD W.

[Owing to Bethmann's insolvency, this Magdeburg operatic season came to a premature end with a disastrously scrambled production of Wagner's only just completed *Liebesverbot*, March 29, 1836. After hanging on there another few weeks, meantime opening vain negotiations with Leipzig Ringelhardt for acceptance of that second opera in default of his shelved first, the already-affianced proceeds to try his luck with it about the middle of May in big Berlin itself.—TR.]

6. To his Mother (13)

BERLIN, the 31st May. 36.

DEAREST MOTHER—You must have been expecting a letter from me for some time, especially after your being here and our not meeting. Not until the evening after your departure, did I learn from Eichberger that you had been here. I had heard from the Gerhardt before, that you were here with Mad. Berthold;—but I didn't quite believe it, and thought that

if you really were here, you would surely have informed Laube of it, as you couldn't well know where I was lodging. I went to Laube,—but he knew nothing about it, and doubted it as much as I,—and—so I was quite thunderstruck when I learnt it at last, but too late, from Eichberger. So far as I made out from him, moreover, my letter from Magdeburg [23] didn't catch you at Leipzig; and that was doubly disagreeable to me, since you didn't even know that I intended going to Berlin. Ill-luck and misfortune, however, has been my constant lot of late; my flesh creeps still when I think of it all.

My Berlin expedition has turned my evil star at last a little. I and Cerf (14) are the most intimate friends in the world, embracing as often as ever we meet. I pleased the fellow, and he promptly regretted having signed a contract with his musikdir. Kugler for another year. For the present, only thus much :—Kapellmeister Gläser has a long leave this summer, and during his absence I'm temporarily to step into his shoes and pay. While I thus have the reins in my hand for a time, I shall get up my opera here, and produce it; and when Glaser returns, I shall descend from my perch again. To be sure, I shall have to accept a fresh engagement for a while then, but hope to have my next year's contract with Cerf in hand by then as alternating Capellmeister; and in the worst event I shall be winning myself renommée here, when I can retire with a better face. Laube and his literary retainers, such as Glasbrenner, are making a terrible fuss of me as the foremost genius in the world;—but you'll be equally able to read in the *Konversationsblatt* the printed announcement of all that I've told you above. There's nothing else for it, I'm [24] bound to make my fortune here, and that's just what I lacked;—I couldn't have come to Leipzig, the air is not good for me there [Mendelssohn ?]. I hope this will ease your mind a little, should it require it.

So Cläre is staying with you,—the dear good creature! But how are things going with her husband? In my direst want and desperation I wrote him once from Magdeburg,—but got no answer. Wohlbrück from Riga is here;—a new theatre is being built there, and will be opened this autumn. Perhaps I may go there; but I want to make my name here first.

Excuse me, I must be off to my good friend Spontini, or the man will be dropping in here; he is beside himself that *he* can't give my opera;—but why did he apply so late? I cannot oblige him! My good friend the *King* has offered me Spontini's post; but what good would that be to me? At this moment six writers are craving an audience of me ;—there's a regular rush for me,—I can't stand it much longer,—particularly as *I haven't a farthing* in my pocket. My good friend—Theodor Apel—also sent me a very pretty *unfranked* letter to Magdeburg, in which he told me they were rebuilding at Ermlitz, and so there'd be no room for me;—I maintain that's another new joke from his latest comedy. Quite frankly, dear Mother, I have even a mite of suspicion that it was you who set this gentleman a little on to me as well; I have my grounds. (15)

[25]

There you see how splendidly your son is faring. Cerf, among other things, can't control his affection for me; he's sure to strike his children from his will and put me there instead,—often he quietly beweeps upon my breast the woes of his directorate. He's just as much a blackguard, as of use to anybody who can manage him. My whole policy, just now, is to pack Gläser off to the baths as quickly as possible;—he must catch a thorough chill there,—for I don't believe he is intemperate. God grant me His assistance! Till then fare right heartily well. Love to Cläre and the whole family a thousand times from Thy RICHARD W.

[After kicking his heels for two months in Berlin to no purpose, Wagner followed Minna Planer to Königsberg, on the chance of an appointment there, which he did not actually obtain until the theatre was on the eve of bankruptcy. Meanwhile he married her, November 24, 1836; but his wife ran away from him just half a year later, and did not rejoin him till some few weeks after his installation as Kapellmeister at Riga, September 1837, where he began the composition of *Rienzi*. Ousted from his post through the intrigues of a false friend, Heinrich

Dorn, he leaves Russia the end of June 1839, and, after a perilous sea-voyage of over three weeks, reaches London with his wife and dog the beginning of August, *en route* for that imagined El Dorado, Paris.—TR.]

[26]

7. To Eduard Avenarius (16)

BOULOGNE, the 23rd August 1839.

MOST ESTEEMED SIR AND FRIEND—Please let me call you by that intimate name at once, Since for my own part I already feel so prepossessed by all that I have heard about the amiability and uprightness of your character, that I shall do everything I can to earn the corresponding rights and title of a friend. Forestalling that, I have repeatedly troubled you before through my good sister Cäcilie; and the readiness with which you undertook a fairly difficult transaction for me is warrant that I shall not completely put my foot in it with the request that forms this letter's chief occasion. No doubt you have already been made acquainted by Cäcilie that my present somewhat daring, nay, haply adventurous object is Paris; how far I am prepared to face that mass of obstacles undaunted, you will judge for yourself when you have had the obligingness to lend ear in Paris to what I think of and propose; a matter in which I also reckon mainly on your good advice, for whose bestowal I beg you in advance most keenly.

After a ghastly and very perilous voyage of nearly 4 weeks, I arrived in London on a sailing ship about 12 days ago, and was forced to spend a week of gold-fraught days on its expensive pavement through the muddling of my captain, [27] who had played silly tricks with my luggage. On the 20th I came by steamer to Boulogne, where I made haste to take as cheap a lodging as I could get for a few weeks in the country, that is to say a little under half an hour's walk from the town, I chose this halt for several reasons: 1°, I believe I am unlikely to find sundry persons of weight for my project in Paris just yet; 2°, I have still a few weeks' work ahead of me on what I should like to bring to Paris *finished*, in order to begin my machinations there immediately after arrival; 3°, I really wished to be able to rest off some of the jolting I have gone through, before plunging afresh into such a hurly-burly as the Parisian is certain to be.

Might I therefore beg you in the meantime to find me a lodging in Paris, kindly observing the following :—An ordinary room with an alcove is fully sufficient, of course, for myself and my wife; a larger room *without one* would also do at a pinch. It will have to be furnished in fact, though we possess our own bedding and linen, table-gear, candlesticks, utensils, as we have brought almost our whole small outfit with us, and merely sold the most untransportable in Russia. My wife will do the housekeeping herself *i.e.*, buy our victuals, cook, and so on; therefore needs no other service than of a charwoman to assist her in the roughest work. Naturally, I can only hire the lodging by the month, and as I don't quite know the price one has to pay for such a thing in Paris, I won't name any fixed one, but leave it to necessity and your own obliging nous. I hardly need assure you [28] that in every respect I should prefer not to live too far away from you. So, would you have the kindness to look around you in a leisure hour for what I ask, and report to me hither thereon, Boulogne poste restante? In that case I would write you again before my departure from here, telling you the exact day of my arrival in Paris, so that you might be so good as to engage the apartment from that day, and spare us having to alight at an inn.

I know I am begging no trifling favour of you, but nevertheless nurse the perhaps impudent trust that, of all people, you are in a position to make me the sacrifice. At the same time I also beseech you to write me how your and Cäcilie's affairs are standing now. It would very much

rejoice me to hear something joyful in that regard, more especially as I unfortunately have been unable to get any tidings from home for ever so long. If I might hope to see good Cécilie in Paris soon, all my hopes of a favourable issue to my future endeavours would really become the fonder and more precious in no small degree. God give his blessing, and let all honest folk prosper!

Looking joyfully forward to a letter from you, I commend myself to your regard with all the cordiality of which my heart is capable.—Yours most sincerely, RICHARD WAGNER (17)

[29]

8. To the Same (18)

BOULOGNE, 13th Sept: 39.

MY MOST VALUED SIR—If I am so late in answering your very kind and attentive letter, it is because *this* letter of mine was at the same time to inform you definitely of the day of my arrival in Paris; which on various grounds, in turn, has only become possible to-day. For the self-same reason I am also writing but a few lines now, as I hope to be very soon able to greet you in person and discuss everything by word of mouth; for I leave here by diligence Monday, the 16th of this month, and shall therefore reach Paris quite early on Tuesday. So, to come to one of the main points straight off, I will avail myself of your not sufficiently to be acknowledged kindness, and beg you to hire a room big enough for myself and my wife in a *hôtel garni* to begin with, according to your own suggestion, and for the present *by the week*. What you say about my plan of a lodging to manage oneself is perfectly right, and that is a point you will permit me to discuss by mouth with you and quite clear up. You write me, one can get a very decent chamber in a *hôtel garni* for as little as 30 francs a month, and I must confess that I hadn't supposed one could do it so cheap; consequently, if you will engage that sort of thing for me, I beg you not to be afraid even if the rent should amount to 40 or 50 francs; I had set [30] down that much for this purpose in advance. Naturally, however—the cheaper the better. But as I shall in any case be arriving in Paris *very early Tuesday*, and should really not care to alight at an inn, you would infinitely oblige me if you would give yourself the great trouble to write a couple of lines with the address of the *hôtel garni* in which you had engaged my room, and leave them at the *Barrière St. Denis*, which we shall pass on our way from Boulogne, so that I may find them on my arrival, and be able accordingly to drive to my refuge at once.

That is the chief thing I wanted to ask you beforehand. Only don't let it alarm you; I mean to moderate my future claims as much as possible.

Once again I reserve for oral conversation whatever else may be worth the telling now. Only thus much about my affairs: in no case should I have remained at Boulogne so long, with these English prices to pay, if a lucky chance had not ordained that I was to meet Meierbeer here; who may be of incalculable weight for my project, and with whom I already have struck up as much friendship as possible. But upon that too—by mouth, as also concerning all your news about my family.

That I really am *sincerely* looking forward to making your personal acquaintance, I scarcely need assure you. With that presumption I most heartily commend myself and wife to your friendship and favour.—Yours very sincerely, RICHARD WAGNER.

[31]

9. To the Same (19)

4.30. [Autumn 1839.]

MOST ESTIMABLE FRIEND—Tired and done up as hardly ever before, I have this instant come home after knocking around at the Garcia's, Joly's, Dumersan's, Meyerbeer's, etc., since 10 o'clock; so I must heartily thank you for your offer to take me to the Italian Opera to-night, but hoard it for another time. For which matter, in the Garcia I have made the acquaintance to-day of a most amiable and obliging creature, who has volunteered to assist me in everything I ask of her,—consequently I am hoping she'll also be able to procure me tickets for the Opera, etc., from time to time.

I'm as tired as a dog! Heartily wishing you much enjoyment—though without me, Yours sincerely, RICHARD WAGNER.

In great haste, and knocked to pieces.

10. To the Same

[End of 1839?]

[same address.]

MOST VALUED FRIEND—My wife very, very warmly entreats you to be so kind as to send her 10,000 francs per bearer;—should that be impossible in such a jiffy, at least she implores 12 hours of your excellent coffee-mill, which you shall receive back to-morrow morning.

I am invited to dinner at Dumersan's to-day.

—Till death Your RICHARD WAGNER.

[32]

11. To the Same

[PARIS, 4th Jan. 1840.]

[same address.]

MY VALUED FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR—Please answer me quite simply, Yes or No, whether it stands in your power—(would to God it were only your will!)—to increase the sum of my indebtedness to you by another fifty francs; which would make that sum exactly round, or rather, square. No doubt, with the present complexion of the debt itself I feel that this request of mine almost borders on effrontery ;—nevertheless Want not only teaches importunity, but also a certain grade of impudence, which *you*, however, will perhaps excuse more readily than any other man. To pay my rent, etc., I visited the pawn-shop yesterday with the last things we could spare, yet without being able to raise sufficient; so, as it is a matter of no more than exactly fifty francs cash, I am having recourse to yourself again (and for the *last* time). If you are able to round off an affirmative answer with the actual *nervus rerum*, you may easily imagine how welcome it will be to me.—Your RICHARD W.

I found it impossible to bring this query past my lips yesterday. (20)

[33]

12. To the Same

[same address.]

DEAR VALUED FRIEND—You will have been unable to explain to yourself why you

didn't receive that letter of my wife's for kind despatch to Cécilie long ago. She begs you herewith to excuse this delay, since I *myself*, or rather, my illness has been cause of the lengthy postponement. You will remember that a sudden toothache seized me, the last evening we spent together. That was the beginning of it: a couple of days later I nearly went mad with neuralgia; after which I got fever, and had to keep my bed; now I'm merely suffering from a stiff neck, but daren't go out yet. My wife accordingly has not felt fit to write a fluent letter till to-day, as you may well conceive. Voilà tout! Heartiest thanks once more. Regards from both of us. Your RICHARD WAGNER.

13. To the Same (21)

PARIS, 29 April 1840.

MY MOST HONOURED FRIEND AND BROTHER-IN-LAW—I enclose a letter for Fr[au] Dr. Laube, whom I am asking to combine with my sister Luise and send you as quickly as possible the needful authority, or whatever else is required, to advance me 200 francs, I beg you, in the first place, to be so kind as to forward this letter with your [Leipzig] budget of to-day.

[34]

To be sure, my dearest Avenarius, it would be a shorter and far less circuitous method of arriving at the same result, if you could make it possible to advance me this *extra* 200 fr. for a month yourself, and recoup yourself out of the money I have to receive on the 1st of June. For I hereby declare that it's only a question of another 200 *fr.* which I must have at once to cover my requisite outgoings; since, fully recognising that I should be unable to sustain my life much longer this way, I have already taken steps of such a kind that, beyond these instantly lacking 200 frs, I shall need to make no more appeals on that side. I beg you not to treat this as bombast, but rest assured that if I don't at once *inform* you whence this extra assistance is coming to me (22) —I feel pledged to that course. Merely I repeat that you now may set your mind entirely at ease about my future, and I shall be provided with everything needful till the time I begin getting returns.

To confirm you in that belief; I cannot tell you how much I should have wished not even to need to beg of you these 200 frs themselves. Rest assured that I am only turning to you now because I've tried *all* other ways of obtaining what I need for the moment *in vain*. I therefore confess that I feel greatly humbled at being compelled to turn to you once more, after I already had promised to leave you henceforth at peace with that sort of thing.—But—the time was *too* short, and my instant [35] demands are too pressing, for me not to enquire once again in the likeliest quarter, namely of you who have done me the service of intervening to procure me a stipend, and charged yourself with its disbursement to me.—

This, dearest Avenarius, was all I meant, too, when I remarked to you the other day that "You were my nearest resource," Your answer shewed me that you somewhat misunderstood me, and I therefore repeat that I merely viewed you as the "nearest" for *so* long as you still should have donations to disburse or my support.

For the very reason which engendered that misunderstanding the other day,—or rather, to avoid it,—I prefer writing, to speaking to you about this last money—matter between us; more especially as it is difficult to get a word with you alone, and I don't care to discuss that kind of subject with you before Cécilie.

Once more, then, the last plea of its sort :—If it is *possible* to you, would you have the kindness to advance me 200 frs, in return for which I hereby formally make over to you what you would be paying me the 1st of June on behalf of Fr. Dr. Laube and Luise. In that case I would beg you not to forward the enclosed letter to Frau Laube, but to keep it back, as it

would only give rise to a needless confusion.—If you don't care to, or cannot do this, please have the kindness to send that letter off to-day. But as an answer can't arrive so quickly as I need the money for my maintenance, I would beg you, in perfect confidence that the authorisation to take this step [36] will reach you ere long, to try and procure me the 200 frs in advance. Should none of this come off, it would really be the first time that anybody who had something falling due to him—and moreover, who in a few weeks will be placed in the position of seeing his future ensured him—should have to go hungry for those same few weeks!

How much and sincerely I deplore, dear Avenarius, your having reaped nothing but disturbances of this kind from your acquaintance with me so far,—please be convinced; for I know they form the very greatest upset to the regulated life of a business man; moreover, I already have seen how estranging has been their effect on two couples who otherwise, perhaps, would be standing in the frankest and most sociable intercourse. But as no one feels this more than I, whilst no one more heartily wishes that intercourse to become what it unfortunately is *not* at present,—so I hereby beg you once again to be fully assured that it isn't empty boasting when I tell you that this shall have been my last relation with you in the pecuniary line—at least of an unpleasant nature—and with the ceasing of those relations I cordially look forward to entering a closer and more intimate communion with you both, which at least shall be interrupted no more by invasions of this sort: a thing, I'm aware, that will only be possible when those questions shall never re-arise between us which really have hitherto troubled our intercourse more than is fit. Adieu, dearest Avenarius! Your faithful brother-in-law

RICHARD WAGNER.

[37]

14. To the Same

PARIS, the 22nd Feb. [1841].

(23)

DEAREST AVENARIUS—Do you know, you could do me a very great favour: to wit, if the state of your affairs permitted you to advance me five-hundred francs till Easter. Schlesinger, for whom I've undertaken work to the tune of threethousand fr.—namely, complete arrangements of two operas, the Favorite and Guitarrero—has already paid me the half, fifteen-hundred fr. cash; but, as I'm only just about to commence the second opera, I fear, and with very good reason, I shall be unable to obtain another lump payment quite so soon; whilst I have various personal grounds for much preferring to have no need to dun him for money again till I've completed everything and can demand the whole. The beginning of April I shall have finished Guitarrero also, and thus be able to dispose of such a tidy sum in the course of that month that I can firmly promise repayment of what I ask to-day by Easter; in fact, despite my recently—acquired distaste for notes of hand, I even might offer to draw you one up with good conscience.

To repeat: if it could be done without a certain sacrifice on your part, you would render me a very great service by granting my request, a service I should be only too eager to return you [38] some day;—for, however far I may have pulled myself out of my horrible fix already, there's enough of it left still to shew me a threatening look. Let me remove that instanter, and if possible without having to sound Schlesinger for another advance,—to avoid which I've a thousand present reasons,—among them I will merely mention this: only to-day have I learnt

that Schlesinger is accustomed to pay nearly half as much again for some arrangements I shall also have to make;—I should like to make use of this knowledge to speak seriously to him about raising my fee, and that will be impossible if I go and ask him for a big advance.

So, if it is possible, please try and render me this friendly service, whereby you may gain me a profit of 300 to 400 *fr.* in the happy event of my drumming my representations into Schlesinger's head.

Well, you will see what you can manage, and be sure of my thanks in advance. Begging for a couple of lines in reply, Your faithful brother-in-law

RICHARD

WAGNER.

25, RUE DU HELDER. (24)

[39]

15. To his Mother (25)

MEUDON, 12th Sept: 1841.

MY BEST LITTLE MOTHER—It is *my* turn at length to be able to offer you an equally joyful and hearty congratulation on your birthday! Please do not think I have ever forgotten you, even when I was silent and let nothing be heard of me. Ah, I believe I've told you once before, there have been times when I really avoided arousing your interest anew in my fortunes. Then I prayed God in silence to preserve your life and health, since I hoped in time to reap a reward from even my endeavour that should make it more gratifying to me to shew you my face again. Let those who don't know me say: "He should have acted so—he ought to have done this or that," as much as they like,—they all are wrong! So long as it comports with one's inner sense of right and wrong, every man who would attain to true inner and outer independence ought decidedly to strike the path his own more serious inclination and a certain irresistible inner impulse bid. Without needing to be particularly magnanimous, the world may very well forgive him the sufferings he thus draws down upon himself; only who would fain relieve those sufferings, has the right to tender him advice,—but whoever is *unable* to relieve them notwithstanding, must eke put up with seeing his advice not followed after all. I'm sure I am none of your headstrong, [40] unbendable characters: on the contrary, I am rightly accused of too feminine an inner mobility; but I have quite enough staying power to keep me from abandoning a road once struck, before I have convinced myself of all its bearings. And that's what has happened to me with Paris:—

I have won the firm conviction that for at least as long as I can only wage the contest with my personal powers, it is absolutely impossible for me to prevail here. To those who predicted me pretty much the same, I reply that their mere forecast on hearsay could have carried no weight with me. When such a man as Meyerbeer, on the contrary, emboldened me to rush into the fray, hardly any one will be surprised that a young man like myself preferred trying—to turning tail without a stroke. And Meyerbeer was right; the qualifications I lacked—renown and money—might be very well made good to me by others, and he offered to lend a helping hand himself through his considerable influence. Meyerbeer's having been obliged to keep away precisely all this time from Paris, *that* was the misfortune in store for me; for operations at a distance count for nothing in Paris,—the personage is everything.

Consequently I had soon to see myself constrained to prosecute with my own powers a battle I had undertaken in reliance on the aid of others. And *that* attempt I had to venture also. Had I been one of those frivolous creatures of the present *mode*, had I any sort of flashy talent for the salon, it would doubtless have been possible to push my way into this or that coterie which perhaps would [41] have given me a lift at length, even without intrinsic merit.—Well

may I say Thank God I'm *not* cut out for that! I have been bound to despise whomever I have seen succeed in that way; such an indomitable disgust has seized me at these good-for-nothings, that I really account myself lucky not to have taken their taste at all.—So, what is left me with Paris, is to devote to my frugal subsistence the resources of an arduous métier I have opened for myself here with a music-publisher, and calmly thus abide the time when luck and chance shall help me whither I would go. Moreover, that is what I shall be compelled to fall back upon, provided the good- fortune now presenting itself to me from another quarter should not attain complete fulfilment.—

That good-fortune is the definitive acceptance of my opera for Dresden. In my last letter I made you all acquainted with the position of my Dresden affairs, at the same time informing you of the steps I had taken toward the success of my enterprise. Those steps, my dear Mother, it heartily rejoices me to be able to tell you,—have completely succeeded. As early as the beginning of July I received LÜTTICHAU 's letter, announcing to me in the most flattering terms that, after mature examination of its text and score, my opera "Rienzi" had been accepted for representation in Dresden, and would be produced the beginning of next year at latest.—

Even in this announcement, best Mother, I have to recognise an extraordinary piece of great [42] good luck. If one reflects that I still am without any name as composer, and considers of what a genre my opera is, one will understand what I mean: a point I've already dwelt on in my last letter. Winkler has assured me they would do everything with my opera to shew off the new theatre in all its glory; so, if they meet my requirements, they'll have enormous expenses; since the *first* production of an opera like this, which I strictly had reckoned for Paris, must be attended with all possible luxury. But nowhere—not even at Berlin or Vienna—could I find a more excellent cast, than in Dresden, for the leading rôles of my Rienzi :—the DEVRIENT and TICHATSCHEK—I surely need say no more.—In short, if God disposes all things happily, this may prove the lucky turning in my life.—

I have made up my mind to start for Dresden about a fortnight before the performance; so I shall see you again, my good motherkin, at last—at last!—You may imagine the delight this thought, this certainty affords me!—Heaven will grant me to find you quite safe and sound; and if a down right fine success is reserved for me at Dresden in addition,—I fancy such wishes may form my best congratulation to you even to-day.—How many, many years have I waited, fought and struggled. to be able to rejoice you with a piece of news like this. It gives me a positive shudder, to think that, at my next glimpse of you, almost *six* years will have flown since I parted from you last: great God, who would ever have thought it! I shall [43] find you all again—except dear Rosalie!! Ah, it had always been so fond a thought to me to make precisely *her*, who had watched the throes of my development at such close quarters and often with such painful feelings, a witness also of the happier issues of my frantic efforts,——and now I must approach her grave!——God, God but keep my darling Mother in good health, and grant her still the strength to revel in her children's prospering!

We shall not come to harm! Even Albert won't, shan't, and cannot! Let Fortune only smile on one of us,—the good luck of one is the other's also. Perhaps Heaven may even make my self the channel, and prepare me an engagement in which I can push Albert's best wishes!—I don't want to look ridiculous through speaking out what I am thinking, what I hope,—for what are thoughts and hopes ?—but things *must* mend, and he is worthiest to taste good luck, who comes home from out the storm with all the teachings of misfortune I——

Best love to each and all! We soon shall meet again, and let things around us figure as they may,—our hearts will have remained the old ones, and— —everything's *bound* to come right! Preserve thee, dear Motherkin, for Thy faithful son

RICHARD.

16. To Eduard Avenarius (26)

MOST VALUED FRIEND AND BROTHER-IN-LAW—A couple of words in confirmation and reinforcement [44] of faith! The overtures you made to me yesterday re your possible intervention in the matter of my furniture-selling are of the greatest moment to me. As I build on them the solitary valid hope of a prosperous answer to the question discussed, please do not take it ill of me if I'm writing you thereon again to-day,—since time pressed for my departure yesterday, and I should like to leave Paris untrod for the nonce both to-day and to-morrow; whilst on the other hand, this business weighs too much upon me. So listen, dearest friend :—If, as Hr: Vieweg gave me to understand, Hr: v. Rochow wants to buy furniture from me to the tune of 300 fr. net,—further, if you would have the kindness to undertake disbursement of that sum yourself directly the bargain is struck; and lastly, if it suits Hr: v. Rochow for you to advance him this money on his receipts,—*I shall be completely helped over the stile*. For, with these 300 frs I can pay what I owe at my flat,—therefore can insist on immediate release,—which—as the concierge assures me—can't be refused me in case I'm placed in that position before the 15th inst. Purchasers have also been proposed to me for other single articles; so that I may even hope to be able to stop my cabinetmaker's mouth with something,—when I shall move the remnant of my furniture to a small apartment, and transfer it to the cabinet maker in part payment when I leave for good,—and everything would be fairly quits.

This would be the best and most desirable expedient in all respects; for, if I can only get rid of that fatal flat at once, I'm *certain* of a great [45] economy.—Yourself alone could make this possible through intervention,—wherefore, if your good will succeeds in it, you'll pledge me to the greatest thanks.—Best love to Cäcilie and Max from me and Minna, Yours.

RICHARD WAGNER.

MEUDON, 2 Octobre 1841.

17. To the Same (27)

O MY CHERISHED BROTHER-IN-LAW—Couldn't you carry out the proposal once made me, and forward this letter for Meyerbeer to Berlin, accompanied by a few lines to your correspondent there?—In that case you would have to beg the gentleman to take the note to Meyerbeer himself and wait for an answer.—I have cut my lines very short, and told him that, to make his answer easier for him, I have asked a friend of my brother-in-law's to receive it from him orally and report to me hither. I merely want him to declare in brief whether he has received my "fl. Holländer," and whether he has anything in mind with it ?—Please do so this very day!—In spite of her inward repugnance, my wife is commissioned to hand you the postage. God bless yourself and wife and child!—Thine ever,

RICHARD.

2 March [1842].

(28)

[46]

[The 7th of April Wagner leaves Paris for good, with his wife, to push forward the lagging Dresden preparations for *Rienzi*; very soon also taking a flying trip to Berlin to try to float that stranded *Holländer*.—TR.]

18. To Eduard and Cäcilie Avenarius (29)

BERLIN, 21 April [1842].

DEAREST EDUARD, DEAREST CÄCILIE!— —So it really is a whole fortnight since I went away from you—and I'm writing you only to-day! Vivid as few events in all my life, the hour and moment of our parting stands before my soul; never shall I forget it, for 'twas it that first brought fully home to me how very precious you two had become to my heart. When I left you, I certainly didn't think I should be able to hold out so long without sending you tidings: at each station I wanted to write to you; at Chalons, in fact, the paper lay spread for it. The farther we travelled, however, the more our journey engrossed us; it was fatiguing, especially for poor Minna, as we preferred not to halt even at Frankfort, for reasons [47] easy to be understood, and so were a little over 5 days and nights en route. At Dresden we therefore took a good day's rest without compunction; then a day got lost on errands and apartment-hunting; and then I went to Leipzig. There Mother, whom I found in capital condition— thank God!—Luise, Hermann and Otilie, yes, even Julius and Fritz, took such entire possession of me from hour to hour of my three days' stay there, that at length I postponed writing you till my first quiet morning at the Berlin inn. I arrived here the night before last, and squandered a whole day yesterday in quest of Meyerbeer, with whom I only got a hurried conversation in the evening. He has given me a rendezvous for 2 to-day; so half a day is left me at last to turn back to both of you in peace.

That is the history of my past fortnight's experiences, by way of brief preamble : now for an intimate word !—Never has a parting come harder to us than that of Paris; Lord! what are all the sorrows we endured there, against the sense of so sincere a friendship which we have borne away ?—What witchcraft have you played with Minna ?—Decidedly *you've* turned her heart about, so that Paris now seems nothing to her but a paradise. The whole journey she never ceased weeping; hardly had she grown a little calmer, than the only answer she could make to all the comforting I felt obliged to give her, was "Mayn't I cry again ?"—Her relations—everything was quite indifferent to her,—and when I took farewell of her to go to Dresden [meaning Leipzig] she very naively admitted [48] that she by no means wept since I was leaving her, but because she didn't know how to get back to Paris.—Oh, my dear children, just believe me, I also share her feeling: I'm still quite lukewarm in pursuit of my affairs, for my mind's too full of Paris and the dear good hearts I also know are beating for me there. I'm living little in the present yet, and it almost strikes me as no great misfortune should it turn out bad; for a good-fortune to be tasted by me *without you two* I don't reckon of much account. Howbeit, Heaven will soon take care that things shan't go too gilded with me.—Minna *wants* them to turn out amiss, that I may make a contract with Schlesinger and return to Paris :—the poor woman has no thought for anything save Paris.

For my own part, this fortnight is a dream to me already; my waking senses are with you. In that dream did Mother and the rest of us recur to me: the streets and houses where they live have altered much, themselves but little; the young brood that has shot up in their midst forms the single change. Horror takes me at the thought that perhaps I'm also not to see your Maxel any more till he has shot up too! If Minna sobbed out Maxel's name betwixt her tears, she was sure to set myself in tears at once. In the memory of that dear babe concentrates all our sadness. Maxel! Maxel !—

Otilie's children pleased me; the eldest is somewhat spoilt, the younger a droll little rogue. How envious they all were, when I told them tales of Maxel!

[49]

On every side, though, you were asked about with great affection; I went up in Mother's estimate when I assured her you were fond of me. The portraits of both of you hang in her room: your picture, dear Cäcilie, pleased me best, though it is outré in various features; yours,

good Eduard, has a certain resemblance, but is rather ordinarily conceived and executed: but both drawings took me thoroughly back to you, ay, I even had a little chat with you. When Maxel's picture comes, the Devil's certain to break loose again; I shall be unable to look at it without poignant emotion. For which matter, they are *all* looking eagerly forward to it. Will it come soon?—

I know that Minna bitterly regrets being unable to write to you this time with me. As soon as I've returned to Dresden, we will both sit down and execute a writing duet; and that's why I have had to promise Minna to get back sharp. I hope it will soon come off too, as I can't do much here for the moment; since the new Intendant, Kiistner, has not arrived yet, and Redern, so Meyerbeer assured me, neither can nor may fix anything regarding the date of my opera's production. It's almost immaterial to me, though—I would I were with you.

What I'm going to live on, this summer, I do not yet know. Luise, who is occupying herself much with my immediate requirements unasked, sees insuperable difficulties in the way of collecting the means; she wants to leave Schletter [a rich Leipzig business acquaintance], whom Mother keeps most casually suggesting, altogether out of count; [50] and Luise is right,—there are many objections.—So: I'm still the same old Out-at-elbows—with splendid prospects and an empty pouch.—

I was very sorry not to find Clärchen as we expected; she had returned to Chemnitz: should it prove impossible for me to visit her just yet, the dress shall be sent on to her Albert's on tour, and doing well,—as Mother assures me. For the present it will be difficult for me to see him either; such joys need money—confounded money.

Most ingenuously I informed Heinrich Brockhaus that you, dear Cäcilie, implored him *not* to come to Paris, as that would be your only chance of carrying out your pet idea of coming with Eduard to Germany. Of course he had to laugh, for he could see well enough by my face that it really was *my own* wish.—

Yes, dear children, if you could make that feasible,—if you both could come to us, to say nothing of Cäcilie and Maxel staying with us at our ideal Töplitz,—that would be something to fling up one's cap over. Oh, do try and manage it: you, Cäcilie, travel in front, and let Eduard fetch you in the autumn; you'll do that, won't you?—If Rienzi has come out by then, I'll defray your return journey. Ah, what would I not do!

Only rejoice us with a couple of lines, and that full soon! But *both of you*, mind; and reflect that, if Minna isn't writing with me this time, it's simply due to circumstances. Tell us all about yourselves and dear, dear Maxel. Tell us also of Herr and Mad. Kühne, to whom I only don't write this time because I'm saving it up till I can [51] do it with Minna; assure them of the greatest affection and gratitude we haven't ceased remembering their excellent selves with every day. So let me bid you all the heartiest and most fervent farewell; may you prosper and remember us! For, however long we do not see you, our eyes will grow moist as often as we think of you. A thousand thousand greetings from Your

RICHARD.

P.S.—I am seated in a dubious Berlin inn, and the remnant of my Paris cash is pulling still more dubious faces at me; so pardon if my letter reaches you unfranked this time: it shan't occur again. But I didn't want to forward through the firm, for once, so that at least you might receive these lines quick in the end.—

Our Dresden lodging is *Töpfergasse No. 7*.

19. To the Same (30)

DRESDEN, 3 May 1842.

BEST EDUARD! DEAREST CÄCILIE!—I sent you from Berlin my first dazed lament

for our parting, and so it's nothing but *devoir* and duty that I should inform you briefly of the facts of our position in a clearer mood. The first truly crushing impression, which my separation from you both was bound to leave upon me for a goodish while, has at length been effaced, in a measure, by too material contact with the present; [52] and I can only congratulate myself thereon, for I couldn't possibly have continued in that torpid reverie, into which I was plunged at the first, without serious harm to my nature and purpose.

My first shaking-up came in Berlin. True, it wasn't possible to do anything decisive towards settling the date when my opera is to be produced there, as Küstner was still on his travels; yet I made the acquaintance of Hr v. Redern, who received me with great distinction, and indulged my wish so far as to promise to arrange the present repertory so that my opera should be the next to be got up after the production of the *Huguenots* (which is to take place the end of May). So Küstner would require to set himself in flagrant opposition to arrangements made already, if he meant to put my *Holländer* upon the shelf. Of course he won't do that, though, as in the first place Mendelssohn (with whom I have struck up quite friendly relations) has assured me he's convinced that Redern will in any case exert supremacy for the first half-year, and in the second, every measure has been taken to win over Küstner to my interest (31) but that means my having to go to Berlin and Leipzig a second time, the middle of this month, which is pretty hard on me.

My pecuniary affairs have taken a turn I really much prefer. The best of it is that it didn't cost myself a word: Luise, Ottilie and Hermann had put their heads together and arrived at the conclusion (as they told me) that it was their personal [53] duty, without dragging in any stranger, to offer me as much as I considered needful to maintain me during the next half-year, in which I could count on no takings. On my return from Berlin, accordingly, they asked me what sum I required; when I put it at 200 thaler [£30] for the half-year, they appeared to think that less than they expected, and offered to let me have it in monthly instalments from their own monthly moneys, so that the thing might be kept entirely to ourselves; which naturally was very welcome to me,

In general, best children, I must confess it strikes me as if all our folk had greatly changed to their advantage: that odious hot temper seems to have somewhat died out from our family; and in this respect I was particularly pleased with Julius, whom I found better in every way than I anticipated.—The Mama is living quite in clover now, and really has a pleasant time of it: at any instant she can either be alone or in society; she has a marvellous flat, big and comfy, for which you'd envy her with your entire household. All the same, she intends going to Töplitz this year as well, and wants to churn with Minna there: how would it be, good Cäcilie, if you really came too? Just listen! We would engage a lodging for you, in fact in the same house with ourselves. In *August*, as irrevocably fixed now, my *Rienzi* is to be brought out here: good Eduard shall run over for that; I'll pay off my debt to him out of my fee, which will be something toward the journey back. Couldn't all that be arranged? Your Eduard need give you little money,—we'd club [54] our housekeeping together. Natalie (32) could be disposed of somewhere by then,—perhaps through the good Kühnes. (33) — Ah, that would be fine! You'd be giving everybody great delight. Maxel's portrait, which really has arrived at last, has made a prodigious sensation (as was to be expected); Mother described to me the impression it produced on her most touchingly: when the chick's here in *natura*, he'll play the devil with them all. True, our sisters are a wee bit envious,—never mind; better be envied, than have to envy. But you all are coming, aren't you?

There's very little for me to tell you of Dresden, after all. These people look upon me as a golden calf, and will certainly do everything I wish. They're to begin studying my opera the commencement of *July*; from most sides I'm congratulated on being able to be present, as it will have the best of influences. Reissiger is continually falling on my neck, and smothers me with kisses whenever he gets the chance ; moreover, every one assures me he really means

square by me and feels the best will: but the man has turned into such a lazy philistine, alas, that I should be terribly off if I left the artistic execution of my opera to his tender care alone.

I had just got thus far, and Minna had just finished her letter to Cäcilie (—she began hers first—)—when your joint letter arrives !—That releases the Devil—I weep—and Minna howls! A [55] nice to-do! The most sensible thing for me to do would be to leave again straight off; since nothing can come of my opera now, I've such a fearful opponent to conquer—an intriguer beyond match,—my own wife! Amid a flood of tears, she has just informed me she would put forth all her might to make my opera fail, as there'd be nothing else for me to do then but return to Paris !—Great God! neither have I any zest remaining for the thing myself, or at least I should lose it if I often received letters like to-day's, which make my heart so heavy. Believe me, dear best children,—it's the same with us as with yourselves: only, as to *one* point I'm more cheerful:—*I believe in a quicker reunion than you do.* God in Heaven—after all, one's only slave for just so long as one *can't help it*; but whoever can help it first, there really can be nothing better for him to do, Heaven knows, than institute a *Wiedersehen* between us! In this sense it has a double value to me when I look towards the smile of Fortune: with *gainings* in my purse, I'm *free* and can do what I will; and my *will* is, to *see you both again straight off*: whether in Paris or at Töplitz, is immaterial. We shall *meet again* soon; that's my belief and Minna's consolation!—The good soul looked over the first page of your letter with me,—after that she could see nothing more, her tears rolled down thick and prevented it; and yet it was a proper joy, for there's no true joy without them ! Precisely in that style will we all of us weep and rejoice, when we do meet again.—

Nothing beyond a general outburst of feeling, [56] dear Cäcilie, can be my answer just yet to your dear, darling letter. It is impossible for Minna to add even a line, since she's *dissolved*. Eduard's lines have touched me to the quick; if only that fatal "dernier des derniers hadn't figured among them! Lucky it's French, and so I see you merely meant it as a joke, dear Eduard, else I should have felt mortally offended. I know no first nor last midst those my heart belongs to I've only *one* heart, and whoever dwells there is its tenant from bottom to top; how you get on together in it, is no affair of mine,— —Children, children, buck up; good times are close ahead! Away with tears ; save them all well up for *Wiedersehen!*— —Maxel! Maxell!!!—Ah, that's another story,—it bubbles from one's heart into one's eyes the babe, that babe !—There goes Minna giving way again!—I must shut up; not another sober word will come!

I intended writing also to the cherished *trefoil* [Lehrs, Anders, and Kietz], —but this letter burns beneath my fingers, I must get it out of the house at once. I will write to the others to—morrow.—Everything goes through the firm [of Brockhaus], so you'll shortly get another letter telling you whatever I've omitted in my turmoil of to-day.—

God bless you! God preserve you! We'll have another talk soon. A thousand salutes and kisses! Tears, laughter and sobs! Ever both of Yours,

RICHARD.

[57]

20. To Sister Cäcilie Avenarius

TÖPLITZ, 13 June 1842.

DEAREST AND BEST—Here we are at Töplitz, the Schlossberg in front of our noses, a cowshed beneath us,—and here we sit and think of you— of both of you! Your excellent letter, good *Cäcilie*, we laid in the family—archives; its words stand graven on our hearts.

You faithful creature with your staunch attachment, how dear and ever near you are to us! We shall never forget either of you, not for so much as a day; and there are many hours in our days we fill with memories of both of you in all we speak or think of. Your being robbed us for this summer, is a woful grief that ne'er forsakes us, and dims our mirth. Only stay near to us in spirit through your kindness and fidelity, the least trace of which attends our steps with blessing, when courage and endurance must e'en conquer separation! How do things look; have you no prospect?—Is nobody coming from Leipzig to Paris,—or can Eduard contrive no business pretext for paying the Leipziger Quer-Gasse a visit? It isn't far from there to Dresden.—Ah God, that these should be mere empty phrases, at which you'll only twitch your lips, dear Eduard, if your confounded business leaves you even time for that. What is one to do, so long as one's a slave? Enjoy what presents itself at no expense, hope in the future, and—hold each other dear, be it from afar or near!—

Yes, *we* are at long-promised Töplitz! How [58] we all raved about it when we were together! Then let this year but be the opener of a happy turning in my fortunes, the next is bound to make my luck complete,—and with us you must be!

Ah, this Töplitz with its remotest precincts is perhaps the loveliest spot I know! Our coming here had been delayed by the uncertainty I was hovering in at the end of last, and beginning of this month, whether I should have to run over to Berlin a second time or no. I had already got as far as Leipzig again the 2nd of June, to go on from there to Berlin, when I received a letter there from Küstner telling me pretty well all I could anyhow have learnt by mouth. Since he is only just entering the Intendancy amid a thousand cross-currents and chicanes, Küstner could say nothing more definite at present *re* the date of my opera's first performance, than that it should take place as soon as ever circumstances allowed. Accordingly I abandoned pro tem a useless and expensive personal visit, and, with a man who is shewing himself so punctilious as Küstner in epistolary dealings, in any case I hope to arrive at the best possible results on this road also. So I went straight back to Dresden and arranged our departure for Töplitz with Minna, who has brought with us her excellent sister [Jette] (a good housekeeper). No doubt Minna, who has just taken up her pen, will give you fuller details of our journey, as also of our installation on the spot; so I will only say that we're lodging "*zur Eiche*," the last house on the Turnaer Wiese, a mere matter of some 50 paces from the Turna [59] Park. We are living at a farm, entirely by ourselves,—but, as said, you'll hear all that from Minna. At the first start on our lodging-hunt we came across the Rosenlaube, your quondam home, dear Cäcilie, but every room there was already taken.

We had meant climbing the Schlossberg this morning itself, to be able to report if we found your and Eduard's names there still; but Minna had cramp in the calf, and begged me to postpone that expedition for the nonce.—The Mama, who wrote to you a week ago, is also here; she travelled from Dresden *the same* day as ourselves, but in another carriage: her eternal indecision, as to whether and when she would come, hadn't permitted her to give me definite orders for booking a seat. So Mother and Minna met here for the first time, naturally in the attitude of two people who want to make one another's acquaintance at last. Mother seems very glad of our society; despite her stiff knee, she came hobbling up the Schlackenburg after us the day before yesterday, as I had told her we intended going there. She asked Minna to provide her with baked meat from time to time,—yesterday we sent her roast veal; whereupon she paid us a call, and got treated to cream. She is quite chirpy, and prattles to herself by the hour; really she's looking remarkably well, and in spite of her leanness I have firm hope that God will preserve her to us for a long time to come. (34) For that matter, [60] she is living in deuced fine style here, in a brandnew house ("the Blue Angel") on the main thoroughfare, close to the baths, first étage, and pays 10 a thaler a month without including linen: I wish her joy of it with all my heart! She's very fond of you, dear Cäcilie, and upon the Schlackenburg the other day it was amid brimming tears she recalled

her last visit to Töplitz with yourself; you may guess if we chimed in! Ah, would you were here, with that Devil's-imp, that Max!— —

Ottilie very much wants to run over to Töplitz for a week, with her children; but Mother thinks nothing will come of it. Shall see! I should like it, for I've grown quite fond of her afresh.—Luise will also arrive at Carlsbad in the next few days; I am heartily attached to her.

Holla! Rienzi is to cross the boards the end of August in full harness! You'll be there, of course? I will see to your lodgings.—All's well with it in Dresden; nowhere have I met any hostility yet.—Apropos, I have been to see Albert at Halle; I found him better than I expected ; moreover, he had been a little maligned as to his "comedian ways" at Leipzig.—I slept 2 nights in his diggings, and had long and hearty talks with him. A better engagement must be obtained him in time, that's certain,—nevertheless there was a crumb of comfort:—*he gets his salary punctually!* One knows what that is saying. His wife s as beautiful as ever; Johanna can play-act quite well, and—has a voice that justifies *great* hopes, under Albert's tuition.—I was unable to visit Cläre, but then *she* had spent *two* days at Dresden with her [61] husband, and—never looked me up!—True, Mother hadn't written her my address, but she might have guessed I was in Dresden, and Wolfram only needed to enquire at the theatre and he'd have learnt it. A thing like that's incomprehensible!— However, probably there was nothing sinister behind it!— — —

Before winding up, I have something else to request you, good Cäcilie: to tell Kietz that I should have liked to write him too to-day, but have refrained from doing so because I can learn nothing definitive re his money affairs for *another few days*; I have done what there was to do, and have good hope that my steps will have the best results. I am expecting a letter from Leipzig about it, on receipt of which I will write him Instanter and post him the letter direct ; in this way he perhaps may get his letter even earlier than the present one, which I'm sending through the firm, will reach yourselves. Heine [F.] will write him in two or three days also, with lots of fine things about our drawings [for *Rienzi?*] and the caricature, which he greeted with a regular guffaw. I had a singular feeling myself, when I set eyes again in Dresden on the long-awaited drawings: O Paris! O sorrows and joys! O you friends! O remembrances!!—

Children, fare heartily well! I don't want to break down again, for if my tears were to fall on this infernally thin paper into the bargain, my letter no doubt would present an emotional, but by no means a legible look. Farewell all of you, farewell! Eduard, eyes right! Muster yourself [62] also, next time, for a couple of lines to your Paris ex-pest!—Write us, both of you, soon; let the huge delight you'll give ourselves be your reward!—

God keep you! Onward, Max! Remember your glorious uncle, but on no account follow his footsteps!—Onward, Natalie! Grow tall and slim!—To me, to us, you dear ones never to be forgotten! Dearest Sister, best Brother-in-law! Ever all of yours,

RICHARD W.

21. 22. 23.

[Nos. 21 to 23 of the German edition constitute letters 1 to 3 of the "Minna" volumes.—TR.]

24. To Eduard Avenarius (35)

24 August (1842). DRESDEN.

BEST EDUARD—I can't and won't reply to your and Cecilie's letter with these scanty lines, which I only address you because of an instant occasion. That shall be done in a

fortnight at latest, however, not before when shall I be able to write to you clearly and fully about a weighty question [*re* Natalie?] raised in Cecilie's letter. So, everything suspended until then! I should like these lines to reach you very quickly ; hence I'm writing on the moment's spur and in all brevity.

Hr Ferd. Heine, my and Kietz's friend, has called on me, an instant back, and begged me to address you an enquiry and prayer on his behalf. He is a thorough French scholar, to wit, and [63] from time to time translates French books, novels etc., as only the other day a novel for Collmann of Leipz.; for his salary is small, and he finds himself obliged to earn a little extra off and on. Well, an obscure Leipzig bookseller, named Zirges, has just offered him the job of translating two books whose appearance the Parisians are keenly looking forward to: namely, an *Histoire militaire de l'exped. de la porte de fer*, p. F. duc d'Orléans, and secondly, *Memoires du Maréchal Soult, duc de Dalmatie*. Heine, however, who has no particular belief in the said Zirges, thinks that *you* would be getting these books translated in Paris at once in any event, since they're very interesting; and so, in case you feel disposed to, he begs you to commission *him* with that translation, which would be highly desirable to him *for the simple reason* that he would be entering relations with a solid firm. If his guess is correct, and if it's all the same to yourself *who* supplies the translation, you would be doing me a very great favour if you would think of Hr F. Heine for it ;—he 's an excellent fellow, and vowed heart and soul to my interest, to which he already, in fact, has rendered substantial services.—Please do what you can!—

Two words more.—My opera, which we have been getting up since August 1, isn't to come out till the beginning of October, to open the subscription series.— —I can't write to Kietz, either, for a fortnight: the experiences I am reaping with his affairs are most *instructive* to me; nevertheless I hope to be able to send him money—how and in what fashion, he shall hear in a fortnight. A [64] thousand greetings to all from Minna and me.—Detailed letters soon from Thy

RICHARD W.

25. To Eduard and Cäcilie Avenarius (36)

BEST BROTHER AND SISTER—You have sent us such plenteous and beautiful gifts once again, that we remain re-engaged to fresh thanks. The colder and more indifferent to us our present surroundings, the greater the warmth with which we look into the distance and the past! So our wish to meet again this summer didn't come to fulfilment; will it next year?

To let you both quite realise how much your letters have delighted us—especially that great surprise, the dear birthday-letter [for Minna's Sept. 5] —and what friendly sunbeams they appeared to us, I merely need give you a faint sketch of our life here; a colourless, cold tedium, only relieved from time to time by money bothers. Splendid relief! The 18th July I left Teplitz for good, to flick up my Dresden drones a little; Minna and mother stayed behind till August 1 To tell the truth, we can't say we much enjoyed Teplitz: we didn't make a single expedition,—Minna went up the Schlossberg, to the Schlackenburg, and the Obere Bergschenke, in fine, just wherever one decently can go on foot; beyond which, as she wasn't allowed to take long or tiring walks, she knows little, or as good as nothing, of the Teplitz [65] environs. I won't grumble at that, however, for Teplitz did us both a lot of good, and particularly to Minna; she began a regular thorough cure at last, to which it was granted me to devote all possible care. We were recommended to the bath-house doctor, Ulrich, who diagnosed Minna' s complaint most correctly; at any rate, he told her it was highest time to pay exclusive heed to her recovery, and in particular he put her on a very strict diet. She took comparatively few baths, and those of sulphur, but had to drink the more of Eger-Franzen

water. Her malady is naturally of a kind in whose regard there can be no talk of a rapid recovery; nevertheless, Minna already feels better in sundry respects. Her presentation to our mother formed a red-letter day for her. As I wrote you before, Mother lodged some distance off from us at first; in the end she moved into our house for several weeks. When I departed from Teplitz she was a trifle ill, and I left her in bed; Minna nursed her most devotedly. For all that, her state of health is very reassuring,—the baths did her a heap of good;—during the short time she stayed with us in Dresden she sprang about the promenades like a young roe.—

So we've both been back in Dresden since the 1st of August. I couldn't avoid taking a somewhat respectable lodging here, nor hiring a grand piano: the two together ran away with over the half of our monthly money; so, with the present dearness, we have a terrible pinch to keep up appearances, which I am bound to maintain much more in my position here than was needed in Paris. Often I [66] could positively bellow for the time when we shall cease being beggars in decent clothing; lucky those who needn't fear to sport their rags upon their limbs!

As to the state of my opera I wrote fairly [minutely] to Kietz, who will have passed it on to you and so spared me the trouble of relating it over again; in any event, the production of *Rienzi* will take place in about a month. Your good wishes, dear children, are all the more welcome to me, as they are cordially meant:—I rather think they'll be fulfilled. Only let me make one thorough hit—and within a year there shall be high jinks!— —

It quite alarmed us, dear Cecilie, what you told Mother and us about the danger, now happily surmounted, that threatened your health. Ah, how much I wish you, too, the chance of soon being able to exclusively attend to a cure! In fact, Eduard gives us quite serious hope that both of you will come to Germany next year; and as *he* expresses it, I also firmly trust to see it realised. —Should all go according to my wish, we shall visit you in Paris winter come a year; oh, my plans are all laid! What you write me of your trip to Bellevue touched me much. Ah, believe me, there comes a soft spot in our heart whenever we think of you: *this* 5th of September, and that of last year!!! O Heavens, what a contrast!!! I hardly congratulated Minna at all, my dumps were so deep:—then came the letter from you two, and made us fully feel again what a godlike power resides in friendship! You sat at table with us, and we kissed each other and rejoiced as if we had you tête à tête! Never, never, good Cecilie and [67] best Eduard, shall we forget your loyalty and love, and our full thanks shall reach you yet. Three cheers for the sorrows of Paris, they have borne us glorious fruit!

Dear good children, keep us in friendly remembrance—as indeed you are certain to—and rest assured that none save a good fortune *in common* can ever come our way. So pray for *Rienzi*, you also; you soon shall know the lot appointed it. Farewell! Ever and eternally both of Yours with heart and soul,

RICHARD W.

WAISENHAUS-STRASSE,

No.

5,

DRESDEN, 11. September 1842.

(P.S.)—Best thanks, dear Eduard, for the kind answer to my enquiry about translations for Hr Heine; if you really can give him employment in time, you'll please me greatly, for he has deserved it of me through unfeigned and self-forgetting sympathy.—

There's *no* foundation for Cecilie's chaff about *children* as yet : as we still have no prospect of *human* young whatever, we have to continue making up with dogs. We've another now, only 6 weeks old, a funny little chap; his name is *Peps*, or *Striezel* (because he looks exactly as if he had come from the gingerbread market). He is better than our late Robber [stolen in Paris]; still, it's hard on us to have to go on eking out with such unthinking creatures. I'd much rather have a Maxel—but there can only be *one of that* in the world at a time.

[68]

Children, a letter takes really too long through the firm; I'm sending this by post, and that

unfranked—for mere safety's sake;—true, I also have no money,—but that would be the smallest reason: I'm too fearful of losing the portage, especially when I can't pay it!

26. To Eduard Avenarius (37)

DRESDEN, 8. October 1842.

BEST EDUARD—It's true I wrote you both last time that I shouldn't be sending you news of myself again until after the production of my opera; however, it strikes me as getting too long to leave you on the *qui vive* as to the date of that production, just when you are certain to be thinking of me with additional interest. Really I intended writing yourself in particular as early as the 5th; but I was so extraordinarily busy that day, that I had only time to remember you duly and with fitting emotion, good Brother-in-law, at my and Minna's very frugal dinner. We had no wine, to toast you properly upon your birthday,—so we did it with a hearty hand-shake: he's a rogue, who does more than he's able. We'll retrieve the toast with wine, though, next time we're all together—let's hope, next summer. To resume, that day it still stood settled that my opera should be given on the 12th inst.; so I put off writing you till the 13th: but, for very good reasons and with my full consent, after allowing for every [69] unforeseen occurrence, the first performance now is definitely and most positively fixed for Wednesday the 19th; and that's how I have time to write you both again so early.

Yes, dearest Eduard, on the 19th the Devil breaks loose with lightning and thunder; I can tell you, I'm looking forward to this production with high glee, for it will be *excellent!* Singers and band are rehearsing with well-nigh more than affection; from all sides I receive the most encouraging wishes, and every one anticipates an extraordinary success. Certainly it's rare that any one can say upon such an occasion: I've nowhere come across a malcontent as yet. First singers, who only have insignificant parts in my opera, and therefore began with some grudging, were soon drawn into the general glow, and now co-operate as zealously as if they had the most grateful rôles. The band exclaims: "For once we really have a job it's worth while taking pains with." In spite of a sore throat and not feeling well, the Devrient hasn't missed a single rehearsal; and through her enthusiastic remarks wherever she goes (so I'm told) she has contributed no little to gaining my opera such credit with the public, in advance, that everybody is looking towards the production with all the intentness due to something quite out of the way. Tichatschek declares Rienzi will be his most brilliant part, since there's no other in which he finds so many opportunities.—The only one who might have been set against me by jealousy, Reissiger—seems to forget all egoistic regards in personal affection [70] for me: at least, he consistently behaves in such a fashion, especially behind my back too, that it is impossible for me to harbour any mistrust of him. You see, best friend, that's how things stand; so let the Capitol crash in on Wednesday the 19th, if my evil star pales out to boot! God place within my hands the means to shew you both my gratitude as I could wish, and you shall be pleased with me, I promise you. Devil take it, how's Max?— — —

Really I oughtn't to have plagued you with such silly chatter; your domestic affairs will be giving you worry enough, and we unfortunates have increased it for you to a certain extent. Only suffer it for my sake a little longer,—some thing is certain to happen to me soon, to cut the knot whose tightening still forces me to send you this letter unfranked to-day, and made me propose your health on the 5th without wine.—Ah, how I long for a glass of good wine—you know the sort; often I'm so washed out by these terribly exhausting rehearsals, that a frivolous craving for a drop of fire-water perhaps is excusable in me. Never mind, do you my drinking for me! Things soon shall turn better; cheer up, my darlings! Peace and blessing to you also, Mr. Loizeaux [his tailor], Draese,—Schuster [cobbler?], and whatever you're called! But a curse on that atrocious *Kietz*, who, in return for my last letter, for my most

sacred entreaties to keep faith in times of pinch with *sterling art* and console himself with that—as I did,—could find no other answer to all this I wrote him, than his chicken-hearted [71] letter to Laforgue, with the declaration that he should now hang art upon the peg and turn his hand to pot-boilers! Fine fellow that, who can help none but others o'er a stile, and not himself! He shan't have another line from me till I can send him *money* with it. *Money! Money!*— — Bah!—

Now greet and kiss Cile most fervidly for me, and Maxel most tenderly.—I embrace all my friends, and declare to them: "The knot's bound to be cut!"—God protect you, dear good Eduard! Stay true to Thy

RICHARD W.

But doesn't my wife greet and kiss you all, too?! Do I need to assure you it? Of course not.

27. To Eduard and Cäcilie Avenarius

[addressed as last]

Na, dearest Children ! Played out as I am, at least I must send you a hasty line to—day to tell you what happened yesterday. I would rather you heard it from others, though, for—I'm bound to say it—*never* before, as *every one* assures me, has an opera been received on its first appearance in Dresden with such enthusiasm as my *Rienzi*. It was a commotion, a *revolution* throughout the city;—*four* times over was I tumultuously called. People assure me that Meyerbeer's success with his production of the Huguenots here wasn't to be compared with that of my *Rienzi*. The second representation is the day after to-morrow:—every seat is taken for even the third. I am fearfully tired and run down; after the second representation [72] I'll write you *in detail*. The performance was *transportingly* fine—Tichatschek—the Devrient—everybody—everything in a perfection such *as* had never been witnessed here. Triumph, triumph, you dear good, faithful souls! The day has broken; it shall shine *upon you all!* Your

RICHARD.

DRESDEN, the 21st October 1842.

The opera will be given at raised prices for several performances more.

I got Cecilie's letter this morning—with what feelings we read its good wishes!!!

(In Minna's hand, on the margin): Children, I am too happy, my utmost wishes are attained!—MINNA.

28. To the Same

TO MY DEAR ONES IN PARIS—To which of you shall I write in particular? Shall I give each single one of you a separate piece of news? Or am I to believe I have a secret to impart to one of you which the rest are not to know? Assemble the Holy Synod of Five, grant *Cecilie* the honour of the chair—you owe it her, were it only as the sole lady among you—and hear how things go with your brother!

I ought to have written you all again long ago; but I was partly withheld by exhaustion, pressure of business, visits from members of my family, partly also by the circumstance that I wanted to wait for a few more settlements in my affairs before writing you at length. Added to which, *Heine* [73] told me he had sent Kietz a circumstantial account of the production of *Rienzi*—which, to be candid, just suited my book, as I gladly left somebody else to report details it would have been hard for myself to collect. So you had all been primed with my success—I hope—through Heine, and I might confine myself to giving you a mere outline of facts; with which I intend at least commencing.

Children, it's quite true,—my opera has had an unexampled success here; and the greater's the marvel, as it was the *Dresden* public that pronounced this success. Bear in mind: a public

which had never before been placed in the position of having to pass a *first* verdict on any considerable dramatic product. Was it not to be supposed that, with an entirely unknown author's name in front of it, these people would be shy and diffident about delivering judgment, were it only through sheer philistricity [*sic*]—So my foremost thanks are due to the whole personnel of our Opera; for, as the practising progressed, alike singers and musicians waxed more and more enthusiastic for my work, and spread such an opinion of it through every circle in the town, that every one at last agreed there had never reigned so promising a curiosity among the public here about any coming opera—as in anticipation of something quite out of the common. This lucky circumstance entirely redeemed the disadvantage of my unknown name: the public was expecting something quite out of the common,—a representation ensued such as had never before been given with like enthusiasm on [74] every hand; and the one that didn't lag behind in its enthusiasm was the audience.

But you've been informed of the success of the first representation—so not another word about it; it made an epoch in the annals of German operatic performances. Since then the opera has been given for a fourth time, and—unheard-of case— invariably at raised prices and to an overflowing house; nor do I believe those prices will be lowered in a hurry, as the rush is still the same: tickets are never to be had from one performance to the next. At the second representation again I was called, with the company, after the second and last acts. For the third representation I arranged with the regisseur that—in case there were any more calls—I should no longer appear on the stage, so that the singers should have the whole honour in future. At that performance, accordingly, there were calls after the 2nd, 3rd and 4th acts, with my name above all again; but the singers had to come forth alone, and immediately the rumour got about that I had left for Paris already. At the fourth representation the singers were vociferously called again twice. In short, the thing's assured, and there's no telling *when* the success will diminish. What's most remarkable to myself is the audience's *endurance*: I've cut as much as possible, but the opera still goes on till half past 10, and yet we haven't seen a seat vacated during a single performance; everybody sits it out with the very keenest attention till the last fall of the curtain: which, for Dresden, is something to say. When I began the shortening, I had strange experiences [75] to make: the singers said, "To be sure, it's fearfully taxing," yet none wanted anything struck from his part. I regularly went down on my knees before Tichatschek, to let something be dropped from his appallingly fatiguing part: no possibility! His constant answer was: "No, for it's too heavenly; it's too heavenly!"—

After all this, I really had some curiosity about my fee. The most unheard-of fables went the round: some said the first 3 takings would belong to me,—some that I should get 2000 thaler, etc. Instead of which, after the third representation I received a letter at last from his Excellency, telling me, with the most flattering expressions, that he was assigning me a fee of 300 thaler [£45] for my "so capital and beautiful work, albeit the customary honorarium for an opera only amounted to 20 louis d'or; but he could not resist making an exception in my favour, to testify his thanks to me." Thus you see how one fares here, so long as one's obliged to leave this sort of thing to an Intendant's generosity; my only comfort is the knowledge that the page will soon turn over for me, and upon similar occasions in the future *I* shall be able to *demand*. So, dear children, I cannot help any one much with this first receipt of mine: for, in the first place I have to pay debts to the Brockhaus's out of it; secondly, my old Magdeburg creditors are threatening me with prosecution—and I shall have to appease them so far as possible; then our bodily outfit—shirts, linen etc.—is in a condition at present that's indescribable, and cries aloud for restoration; and so on. *But*, [76] after such a fabulous *success* it's really inconceivable that things should remain for long at this *one* receipt; it is to be hoped I shall soon sell the score to a few other places, at least; moreover, a good publisher—one who'll pay me decently— cannot be very far off. With this forecast, which is surely not flippant, I will console you and my Paris creditors for a wee time yet, and

promise—to set apart my very next taking exclusively for them. It isn't to be imagined that that should be long deferred; *so comfort with a good conscience whomsoe'er you see pining for me!!!*—

And speedy takings on another path, too, will not be lacking. Only fancy!—KÜSTNER, the present Berlin Intendant, wrote me that he couldn't give my "fl. Holländer" before next February, as he means to and must bring out the Lachner opera first [*Catarina Cornaro*]; whereon comes Lüttichau and begs me let him have that opera of mine as well, that he may produce it on the heels of my *Rienzi*. So I had to write Küstner to send me back the score of the *Holländer* post-haste, since, as he cannot give the work till February, he would have the score quite time enough if I returned it to him the end of December. Then Küstner answers me evasively, not trusting himself, on account of Redern and Meyerbeer, to leave hold of the score of a composer who now has been crowned with such fame. But I have replied to him at once most determinedly: either he lays everything else on one side and gives the "Holländer" straight off, or he must remit me the score; otherwise I shall hold him responsible [77] for any damage that may accrue to me from the delay: for, why doesn't he keep his former promise?—So in any case a thing unparalleled will happen: at one and the same theatre two [new] operas by *one* composer will have been given in immediate succession. The scenery is already ordered here, and, fortune favouring, the first performance of my "Holländer" will take place a month from to-day here in Dresden. See, children, the commencement is made!!—

But I must still entertain you with something most comic, namely the rumours current here about me.—Naturally, every one has been asking: "What does it all mean? Who *is* the man? One had never heard tell of him, and of a sudden he pops up with a work putting Meyerbeer, Auber, in short, all our recent notabilities to flight! Is it a beginner's effort, this *Rienzi*? That isn't possible! Under what name can he have been writing operas before?" etc. But then they see I'm still a youngish man, and their perplexity goes on increasing.—At last it transpires that I'm a Leipziger, and was lately in Paris : of course—I'm a pupil of Meyerbeer's. The happy family B. skims the fat off it, though: B. sent me to Paris for three years, people say, to "study" there and write *Rienzi*; I drew 100 thaler a month from him, and he has contrived to get this opera produced in Dresden.—Children, this gossip will drive me to the grave with vexation! Really, it's abominable that the stupid world should be used to ascribing triumphs to such people as these...!!

[78]

For the first representation came Otilie and Hermann, in the first place, then Luise with Bochmann; Fritz [Brockhaus] hasn't been at all yet, as the editing of his journal [*Deutsche Allg. Ztg*] detains him. The one I still like best is Hermann. Luise, who is so fond of ecstasies, and jumps out of her skin at whatever's the mode, expressed her satisfaction with my opera, etc. Mother came for the second performance; she lodged with us, and was thoroughly amiable, as she still knows how to be. Julius came to the third performance: a good fellow with whom things are now going heartily ill.—It was good Clärchen, however, who gave me and Minna the greatest delight: she stayed twelve days with us, and felt and made us very happy; an excellent dear creature, full of feeling and without a grain of affectation. She is certain to have written you by now, dear Cecilie: Minna has quite become her sister, as already yours; what a deal we three did talk about you! And the two of us, I and Minna, who are alone again now, how often and with what feelings do we think of all of you; upon my word, intoxicated with all the elating things that have come my way here, I was about to call the time just past the happiest in my life, when bitter tears gave me the lie, and recalled to me the incompleteness of my luck since *you*, all *you* still failed me. Jesus Christus, what wouldn't I have given to have had you here! For listen: we're quite forlorn still; of an evening we sit all alone, all *alone*, and no one drops in as of yore: ah, what sweet remembrances the sorriest plights [79] in life may leave behind them!—Heine's are the only ones with whom we can

seek compensation; they belong to our bond out and out, have cares and troubles and are akin to me. After the dress-rehearsal of my opera Heine became my brother: he's a splendid fellow!—Children, we *must* come together again; only let my opera bear interest, and when the creditors (*Gläubiger*) are polished off; the believers (*Gläubigen*) shall have their turn. It must be! Who knows what news I shall be giving you next? "Have trust in me, the tribune!" God will vouchsafe me not merely to remain the same, but to go on increasing.—

Now give my heartiest regards to all acquaintances and sympathisers. Tell Kühne and wife the minutest item, and assure them that I and Minna are always thinking of them with the warmest thanks. God keep you all, my precious dear ones; I bring you my whole heart as greeting! All of Yours,

RICHARD W.

DRESDEN, 6. November 1842.

To-morrow I shall send off a parcel through the firm with playbills and text-books of Rienzi.

29. To Eduard Avenarius (38)

MY GOOD EDUARD—Not to mix up what's of common interest to you all with trivial specialities, I am writing you a couple of lines in particular, to beg you to oblige me by undertaking a small commission for Hofr. Winkler. For all his

[80]

To be continued...

Notes

Note 01 on page 7

Two years Richard's senior, Otilie had formed an intimacy with Charlotte, daughter of the Danish poet, Adam Oehlenschläger, and was now at the latter's home in Copenhagen on a visit which already had lasted something like nine months.—TR.

Note 02 on page 7

A little place between Dresden and Teplitz where the mother was wont to take a course of baths each summer; presumably Otilie accompanied her, and started thence for Denmark.—TR.

Note 03 on page 7

This work's identity is a little difficult to establish at present.—TR.

Note 04 on page 7

That is to say, one of the regular subscription-concerts at the Gewandhaus. The concert taking place Feb. 23, 1832, this overture was manifestly that in D minor, composed Sept. 26, and revised Nov. 4, 1831.—TR.

Note 05 on page 8

C major with closing fugue, terminally dated "Leipzig, 17 März 1832"; performed also the 30th of the ensuing April at an "extraneous" concert in the Gewandhaus.—TR.

Note 06 on page 8

Evidently regarding that Zurich conductorship which Glasenapp informs us that Rosalie was so anxious for her brother to accept in the September just past; see *Life of R. Wagner*, i, p. 166.—TR.

Note 07 on page 11

With his "juvenile" Symphony in his pocket he had gone there summer 1832, when that work obtained its earliest performance at the hands of old Dionys Weber's pupils in the Conservatorium.—TR.

Note 08 on page 11

The initial given in the German edition; but it plainly should be "P.," as these young ladies, friends of Rosalie's, were the daughters of a count Pachta, whose guest the budding genius had been two years before. See *Mein Leben* and Letters to Apel.—TR.

Note 09 on page 11

"Der wird sich gewiss auch tüchtig heben"; meaning ambiguous in the absence of data.—TR.

Note 10 on page 12

Address: "Ihr Wohlgeb. / Madame / JOHANNA GEYER / pr. Adrss. Fräulein Rosalie Wagner / zu / LEIPZIG—Reichel's Garten, im Hintergebäude."

[Note 11 on page 13](#)

Namely, to look in minor cities for the singers his manager needed. The actor Moritz of the next sentence had once played Romeo at the Prague theatre to Rosalie's Juliet.—TR.

[Note 12 on page 14](#)

Sister Clara (his senior by 5 1/2 years) and her husband Heinrich, both of them stage artists at this epoch. They do not appear to have retained their Magdeburg engagement very long, as they soon discovered how the managerial land lay.—TR.

[Note 13 on page 14](#)

Address: "Ihr. wohlgeb. / Madame / JOHANNA GEYER. / LEIPZIG. Reichels Garten, Hintergebäude, rechts."

[Note 14 on page 15](#)

Lessee and manager of the Königstädter theatre in Berlin. From this point onward it is scarcely necessary to warn the reader against taking too greatly in earnest a harmless mystification of the anxious mother.—TR.

[Note 15 on page 15](#)

"Recht offen, liebe Mutter, ich habe selbst Dich ein wenig im Verdacht, dass Du mir auch diesen Mann etwas auf den Hals gehetzt hast, ich habe dazu meine Gründe." The meaning here is somewhat obscure, though possibly connected with Frau Geyer's objection to her son's proposed marriage.—TR.

[Note 16 on page 16](#)

Avenarius was then betrothed to Wagner's half-sister Cecilie, whom he married March 5 of the ensuing year. Address of this letter: " à /Monsieur/ Monsieur AVÉNARIUS/pr. adresse :/LA LIBRAIRIE DE BROCKHAUS/ET AVÉNARIUS/à/Paris./Franco." Postmark : "Boulogne-sur-mer, 24 Août 1839.

[Note 17 on page 17](#)

Note by recipient "Answered 27, viii. fr. poste rest."

[Note 18 on page 17](#)

Address: "Monsieur / AVÉNARIUS / libraire / à / PARIS / No : 60, rue Richelieu." Postmark: "Boulogne-sur-mer, 15 Sept. 1839." Paris post mark: "16 Sept. 39."

[Note 19 on page 17](#)

Address: "à Monsieur/Monsieur/AVÉNARIUS/RUE RICHELIEU, No. 60."

[Note 20 on page 18](#)

Draft answer, on the reverse side: "4th Jan. 1840. I forward you, dear Friend, the 50 fr. you

wish for—making 400 fr. in all—and will see what I find your Frau sister [Luise?] disposed to. with the *best* will, however, I *cannot* go beyond; as, to obviate any possible misunderstandings, I ought not to conceal from you.—Ever yours, E. A."

Note 21 on page 19

Address: "Monsieur / Monsieur E. AVÉNARIUS / librairie Allemande / 60, rue Richelieu."

Note 22 on page 19

Perhaps referring to hack-work such as the "arranging of airs for all the instruments under heaven" to be undertaken for publisher Schlesinger (cf. *Prose Works*, i. p. 18).—TR.

Note 23 on page 20

By a palpable slip of the pen, Wagner has written "1840," the post mark being "23 Février 1841"; which latter year-date agrees with the draft reply of Avenarius,—who in his turn, as will presently appear, must have made a similar error in the day of the month. The address is: "Monsieur/Avenarius/librairie de Brockhaus et Avenarius/60 rue Richelieu/ Paris."

Note 24 on page 21

Draft of Avenarius' reply, on an accompanying loose sheet: "P. 22 Febr. 1841.—Believe me, dear wagner, perhaps none of your connections would be readier than myself to assist you with a loan, if I could do it. But I have no money to dispose of,—I require my earnings from the business for my really very modest house-keeping, and draw them at stated intervals whilst the capital of the bus, does not stand at my private command.—I may direct your notice to a combination which perhaps can be carried out. Get a payment on account of Guitarrero made you by Schlesinger in the form of a bill dated 6th May, or still better, June. That way you would spare him a payment of cash for the nonce, which he always likes avoiding, and I will try and get the bill discounted for you at no great loss. Yours . . ." Beneath which these words are struck through: "If you can come to me Friday. . ."

Note 25 on page 21

Address : "To Mother"; an enclosure to another letter.

Note 26 on page 23

Address: "Monsieur/Monsieur E. Avenarius/Librairie Allemande de Brockhaus et Avenarius/60, rue Richelieu/à/ Paris."

Note 27 on page 23

Address (in German this time, the letter being evidently conveyed by Minna): "Sr. Wohlgeboren / the / distinguished Bookseller / and excellent / Brother-in-law / in / Paris."

Note 28 on page 23

Draft on the back, in Avenarius' hand: "3 März 1842/Hrn. Asher & Co. in Berlin / Permit me to claim your obligingness in a small private matter to-day. I beg you, to wit, to send one of your assistants to Herr Meyerbeer with the enclosed letter and ask him for an answer, which you will doubtless have the kindness to convey to me in your next.—The enclosure is

from Hr. Richard Wagner, who is acquainted and in connection with Hr. Meyerbeer, and sent him the full score of an opera *The flying Dutchman* some time ago, without, however, getting news about it from Herr Meyerbeer as yet, who appears to be no very punctual correspondent.

"Herr Wagner would therefore like to know whether he [M.] received the opera, and what he thinks of doing with it; and I trespass on your kindness to procure my friend and relative this information—at the least to leave him in no doubt as to the score's safe receipt.

"You would much oblige me, if in your next business letter you would include a word how the matter stands, *in any event*. Kindly forgive the trouble caused you, etc., etc."

Note 29 on page 23

Address : "Monsieur/Monsieur/E. Avenarius/60, rue Richelieu/à/ Paris"; postmark: "Berlin, 2 1.4.5-6."

Note 30 on page 25

No address; written on very thin note-paper, the letter is an enclosure per the firm of Brockhaus.

Note 31 on page 26

In his capacity of Munich Intendant, he had recently rejected this same *Flying Dutchman* as "not at all suited for Germany."—TR.

Note 32 on page 26

Formerly regarded as Minna's youngest sister, but openly avowed in the master's *Mein Leben* to have been her love-child from several years before he made his first spouse's acquaintance.—TR.

Note 33 on page 26

Who kept a private school in Paris; see *Mein Leben*.—TR.

Note 34 on page 28

Her age was then just three months short of 68; she died over five years after, see p. 141.—TR.

Note 35 on page 29

Address: "Herr/Eduard Avenarius/in/Paris./Urgently recommended by Richard Wagner for kind enclosure in the next [business] letter going off."

Note 36 on page 30

Address: "Monsieur/Edouard Avenarius/Rue Richelieu, No. 60/à/Paris."

Note 37 on page 32

Address "Monsieur / Monsieur / Edouard Avenarius / Libraire/ Rue Richelieu No. 69/ à / Paris."

Note 38 on page 36

Undated enclosure in No. 28, with special address "To Eduard."