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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (putlitz)

Lois Zu Putlitz

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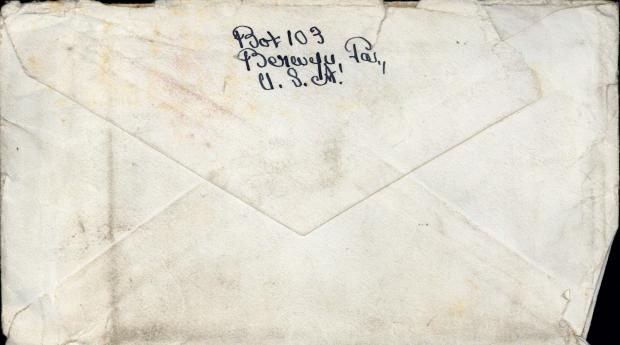
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Henri Temianka Correspondence; (putlitz)

Keywords

Henri Temianka, Lois Zu Putlitz, July 3, 1935, culture, virtuosity in musical performance, camaraderie, violinist, chamber music, postal service, SS Normandie, humor, discontent, Jean-Antoine Watteau, literature, musical recordings, hot weather, Richard Hartzer

Mr. Henrie Terriautra, 29 Aberconn Place Loudon N. H. 8 Enpland



My dearest Hewie: I shall be sterually grateful to the S.S. Normandia for bringing us so many happy moments, so many blusket at such undeserved praise, so many amarine moments and food hearty laught, all done up us one little packet. This last letter is especially precious to me because of those very estravafant words of praise. To repeat that

I do not deserve theme borders ou the platitudinous, but that you understand so readily and roping after, be it ever ao chunsely gives me a feeling of elation and patisfaction which is occasioned ouly, I believe by such a manifestation of gennine friendship as this last letter contained. So thank you for the word's of food cheer which will busy me up is this thraching, which up, Sart

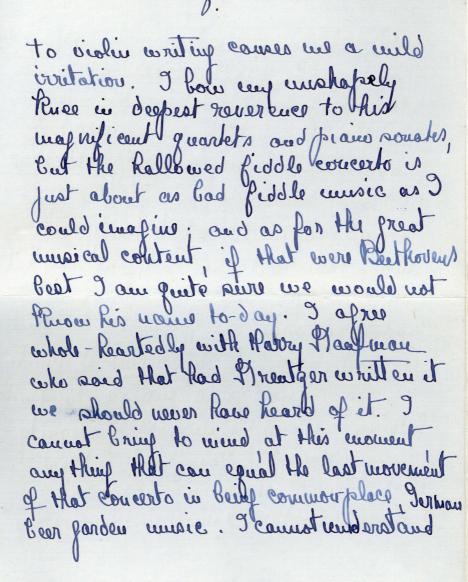
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let it rest as a generality. generalities are as safe, they are ao all embracing and unrevealing. Henever is doubt resort to generalities. That sounds like an American advertising plogan. On maghap it is a tradine : that still-born effort of a sterile wind. How do you manafe to elest without that usble monument to bad taste American advertising ? All problems are solved for us. Just thight how much leisure that leaves

us for thinking, ouly to find that there is nothing left to think about. There is not any subject which is too delicate on too personal. I am not such a prude that I connot le "broad-minded occasionally for the safe of capitalisue; after all a woman has to live, but after perusue a feu gour mostreputable mapagines ou feels that modesty conceals about as unek as a puppydop's Tail and that one way as coufess all. I have the hou or of announclup that I am now a full fledged t member of the Local No. 74, that is

the Musicians Protective Association, and can be befally classed as a "woiking goil! Just another member of the long list of emergeloyed. So now I shall buy a very provocating (I hope), revealing, shing satu dress a vivid lipstick which will province more than is to be had, put my hat over our eye, aug dear little fielde under my arm and proceed to the streets to look for a fob. Life begins at twentyand inthest dear mana to stand between we and the morass of iniquity. Magart cours between us. Dans uot imulance to the charm and fascination

of Mogart but he is not, by any means Ale alpha au 2 ourega of wusee for we. I unst bed wit, of course, that I have heard but one performance of a Moyart opera, that given by the Institute Jan dely familiar with the others prove the piano scores. I have gove through all of the Magart piano sociates rather carefully and I cannot but adout that not one but grows dien in comparison with even the early Beathover piano souches. The violine soustes of either of the afonementioned composers do not bring the traditional Oh's and Ath & to my Claspheneous lips. In fact, Beethouse & chundy transference of piono figures



Row angous with any discrimention who propased an admiration for Beethoven can pire the violin concerto any rating at all. It seems nother on insult to we to his truly mommental quartets and latepiano sociates. I never speak of these things to anyour, it is quite futile. Leople would either think I was utterly uninformed, on just making a desperate bid to be thought "original." I can write these things to you because while you way disafree violently with une oppinions, you would, 9 an aure, die gallantly fighting for the right of man to apeak this wind. Shades of Voltaire or somebody,

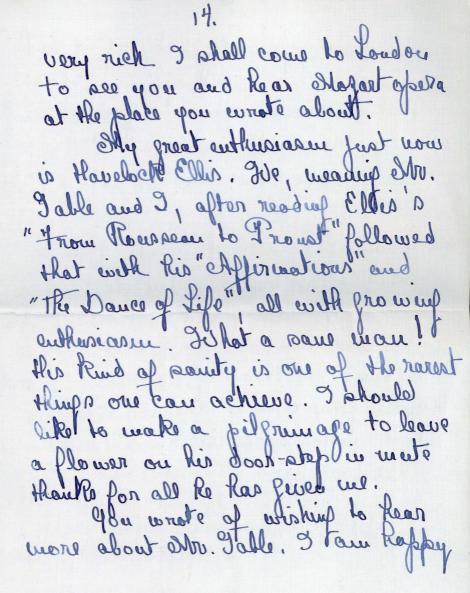
Cut Tis noue the less True because I choose to paraphrase it so body. But to reserve the amount of Mogart I know and have heard really has withing to do with my only mild appreciation. It is something more deep-seated and organically different as to speak. Oud can put lit in the light that It is my shorteduings which water it impossible for my blood to reach the Coiled point on heading Alogant but the fact remains the same viewed is any light - I remain calm sometimes charmed, occasionally enthusiastic occasionally bored. I an quite oure this will not purprise you as mach if you

just remember us a little. I do not think people change very unde fundamentally. As I recall very period of authusiases about pointings and painters - I think I was about siller and certainly vigin territory - eng enthusiasurs were never for the Magart is pointing either, the Futeous on Rophael even, which is the quintersence of Mogart to me. I say "Raphael even" Recause the is certainly a famous reame which a fair waid would look on as oue approaches a deily - but no-while I knew nothing then non do I now about painting as an art but as a purely emotional experience 3 found no sympathetic chords in me

vibrature in anison with Vepland. It was pleasant, it was pretty, after a little wore, but I could not respond and I have not changed in that subject. I do believe that some of the unpressions Le fet when we are adalescent, so recepture, so susceptule to fresh improvessions are more after the we think our final decisions because they are reglit for us, the real key to our inverselves and we don't change is what is such au integral part of us. The painters to where I did respond were a varied kodge-podge of unrelated gentlemen-Revebrandt was the Brahus of painters for we and still is, and there was Rubens, Trang Halz, and even

12.

Delacrois - just faucy - Delacroit and Mogart !! I fear Dam gente Robelass. He will not discuss Leonardo because his fame nests not upou his painting but upon the wide raufe of his envioaity But perhaps this is not such a bad thing do you way think. you stand form in your beliefs and I in mine, so we shall always have something to argue about. And just think what excitement would fue equals of row even C & Puant oppinious and hastened to tell you of my ardent devotion to no our bat Alogart - many an unbeliever carries the bead of a religious fanate. Johen I get my gob and become



to report that he has survived as well as could be expected five years of my companionality. He admits, when pressed to it that I have scarcely been what one would call restful, what with very great aptitude for failing dours stairs and therefore appearing suddenly when our least affects we, I and usually invisiting ou piving a Plantapenet a queen who wase' & born until about two centuries later, after le was at such pains to try delicately to force a little U knowledge of history into my lead as pain leasty as possible. I suppose one does not speak of ones debts even I they are debts of gratitude but ? Auou now that ? shall die in the debtors prison. At but it's many

the fine argument that we've had and it's me Grisk aport, to be sure, that sustained me in me greatest need when the words was a falling from Rive one over the other, and so impudent like, but twas never said of we that it was for lack of words that me ensurel foot was arestin as 'asy on we week, and many is the time too, that the remeet taste of victory has softened the plack of the safe. (That comes from reading la ardon O'Conner too which about the Sum taen. That Translated would mean : we read quite a lot together, and argue at the dightest provocation. Not exactly argaments in the accepted sense, nother

diologues where both talk at once If I have progressed at all in the last few years is any way, it is entirely one to my association with him our reading and our conversations. I do not Ruon of any more delightful way to in Bibe "barning" than through reading aloud to some whose comments, marfinal notes so to speak, make all of the difference in the dipertion of the feast at Rand.

I have just been sitting her sazing at the pape before me wondering of I should abor to your already prowing conviction that I should be incarcerated behind bars or pay a visit to Vienna in mediately, by adding

another paraproph of what I ao vainly report as my belief a which by all the standards of the most intellectual "spirits" could only be summed up de Heresy. But l'empleased to remember you as intelligent hatter than intellectual, I have again decided to tax your forebearance. I insist that you are also to blame because, after all, it was you who mentioned Dostoevaky, not . The kereny is just this - Dostoevally has lost this power of attraction on w. That again is something personal hatter than a smul comment on the admitted genier of Doptoevally. There is too week impotent gearning after the infinite too much stale smelling morbidity,

19.

too much of the ineliaction to make almost a fetish of violence and sondiduess, and too many epileptic fits. I alget especially to too usur epileptic fits. US find nothing to counter balance these things is Destocusty, that is the weakness is une officion. Perhaps the crue of the matter is that it is fust too alien to my nature. This wholesale washing of lines is the public squarethat is to often wistaken for artamoup the breed Ruowy as "the intellectuals" Sometimes it is just a bit sickness. Of course, dou't misenderstand we to be maintaining that Dostowsky has merely blev mistallen for art. Dan not preserving to be commenting apon his

worth as a writer, this is a purely personal reaction. But, Oh odar! 9 an so fed up with Frend and the wide spread misconception that the loudrels of ours vailings is a measure of the quality of ones feelings. I suppose that is why I prefer readup John Jale worthy to Dorotoeursty. Jes, I do! chub Mr. Treith Hinter may make slighting remarks about Jaloworthy in his latest book "Supassioned Pygnies" if he chooses, But 5 do think that a pood dose of I als worthe wight purpe him of powel of his smartness that is not as withy sometimes, as le seeves to think?. We try to follow as nearly

21.

as our pocket-book will permit the recent genes and otherwise of the Loudon publishers. He read a very thought provoking novel (whatever that is) the other Day from your shores called, "High Summer" by Richard Church ! And then of course we are always interested in that nasty Mr. Heil Aliet , and a most annoyin' pentleman named H. J. Meyers who write a very electing book "The Root and the "flower" and when we reached the last page which left everyour suspended in most hair-raising situations we the find that it is to be continued where the author writes

the nest book. Do write and tell me 4 you Ruow Jaloworthy & torastes-I you Ruow Scames, Flews, Michael, and "Aunt Ene" and Sir Lawrence Mout and - well werybody. I do love Here so. The are reading his Trilogy about the Charwell family now provouced Cherrell, of course. I do type I can visit Eugland before I die. De are also reading a book about bugs and furry things that crawl and their wil ways of fornication called, "The Natural I kilosofsky of Love" by Ramp de Tourmont, and we fust finished an energuly annoing book

and incidentally, awally American, called " Rats, Lice, and History", by Hans Jeinsser. I Hick you would find it intertaining. I am sorry all the time but that is just about all I have to write about. I had such a vier women of happy remains and to-day . In the galacouthy book the expression "Come along" is used so often and it reminded me ao of you. I had to avile rather wistfully too when I remembered your "Come along" and "Let's have a look." Gleake do ust publisk. this letter is your

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of it is no beautiful that that envinent critic, Mr. Tequer, of Vienna, would probably call it syrupy. He made une grind my teath and negopress what is generally referred to de "a foul oath when "times" of Schoenbergs "Verklaerte Nacht that it was I reprupe weesie. tie ou him ! May he le jelled by on unskaven bloud. And as to Shart's soups, not many of Hose are Russer. Jokat is the matter with people that they cannot recognize quality and beauty until it has been taken out of the attic

26.

and the matter shaken out and "pomebody also" has dis covered it. And yet all of the wodern fund that gets performed. Hell, 9 suppose junk, too, is a relative terme. In any case, I shall be there waving a flag when Mart is, at last, appreciated. Re will be some day, it is just a matter of time, but that does seerce a great fity. The have been having the most beastly hat weather, hence the delayed answer to your letter. I cannot dale this letter accurately - I started I ou July Mird and to-day is July reventeenth.

It has just occurred to us to ask you if you wer hear a word from Hartgor? Fikere is he and how is he? I have after thought of him. Have a vice time at the seaside and don't drink too much - salt water is u't good for every one. Hrite to us. I look forward to your letters as eaferly. And incidentally, where, oh where are any record of ?! Always your devoted, tois

[[Henri Temianka Correspondence Lois zu Putlitz Letter #1]]

[[Page 1 – Envelope Front]]

[[image - postmark: BERWYN JUL 18 6PM]] [[image – three U.S. postage stamps]]

Mr. Henri Temianka, 29 Abercorn Place, London, N.W. 8, England [[Page 2 – Envelope Back]]

Box 103 Berwyn, Pa., U.S.A. [[Page 3 – Letter]]

My dearest Henri: I shall be eternally grateful to the S.S. Normandie for bringing us so many happy moments, so many blushes at such undeserved praise, so many amusing moments and good hearty laughs, all done up in one little packet. This last letter is

especially precious to me because of those very extravagant words of praise. To repeat that [[Page 4 – Letter]]

2.

I do not deserve them borders on the platitudinous, but that you understand so readily and sympathetically what I am groping after, be it ever so clumsily, gives me a feeling of elation and satisfaction which is occasioned only, I believe by such a manifestation of genuine friendship as this last letter contained. So thank you for the words of good cheer which will buoy me up in this thrashing, whirling, dark [[Page 5 – Letter]]

3.

sea of striving when I feel those pangs of mental indigestion coming on. I am not likening you to a dose of bicarbonate of soda, but you must admit that the beneficial effects of both have a certain resemblance. I am tempted to "improvise" further on this little parallel but I find that the more I improvise the more I get involved in rather embarrassing realities. Perhaps I had best [[Page 6 – Letter]]

4.

let it rest as a generality. Generalities are so safe, they are so all embracing and unrevealing. Whenever in doubt resort to generalities. That sounds like an American advertising slogan. Or may haps it is a maxim: that still-born effort of a sterile mind. How do you manage to exist without that noble movement to bad taste – American advertising? All problems are solved for us. Just think how much leisure that leaves [[Page 7 – Letter]]

5.

us for thinking, only to find that there is nothing left to think about. There is not any subject which is too delicate or too personal. I am not such a prude that I cannot be "broad-minded" occasionally for the sake of capitalism; after all, a woman has to live, but after perusing a few of our most reputable magazines one feels that modesty conceals about as much as a puppydog's tail and that one may as well confess all.

I have the honor of announcing that I am now a full fledged member of the Local No. 77, that is, [[Page 8 – Letter]]

6.

the Musicians Protective Association, and can be legally classed as a "woiking goil". Just another member of the long list of unemployed. So now I shall I buy a very provocative (I hope), revealing, shiny satin dress, a vivid lipstick, which will promise more than is to be had, put my hat over one eye, my dear little fiddle under my arm and proceed to the streets to look for a job. Life begins at twentysix, and without dear mama to stand between me and the morass of iniquity.

Mozart! Dear friend let not Mozart come between us. I am not immune to the charm and fascination [[Page 9 – Letter]]

7.

of Mozart but he is not, by any means, the alpha and omega of music for me. I must admit, of course that I have heard but one performance of a Mozart opera, that given by "the Institute", I am only familiar with the others from the piano scores. I have gone through all of the Mozart piano sonates rather carefully and I cannot but admit that not one but grown dim in comparison with even the early Beethoven piano sonates. The violin sonates of either of the aforementioned composers do not bring the traditional Oh s and Ah s to my blasphemous lips. In fact, Beethoven s clumsy transference of piano figures

[[Page 10 – Letter]]

8.

to violin writing causes us a wild irritation. I bow my unshapely knee in deepest reverence to his magnificent quartets and piano sonates, but the hallowed fiddle concerto is just about as bad fiddle music as I could imagine; and as for the great musical content, if that were Beethovens best I am quite sure we would not know his name to-day. I agree whole-heartedly with Harry Kaufman who said that had Kreutzer written it we should never have heard of it. I cannot bring to mind, at this moment, anything that can equal the last movement of that concerto in being common-place, German beer garden music. I cannot understand

[[Page 11 – Letter]]

9.

how anyone with any discrimination who professes an admiration for Beethoven can give the violin concerto any rating at all. It seems rather an insult, to me, to his truly monumental quartets and late piano sonates. I never speak of these things to anyone, it is quite futile. People would either think I was utterly uninformed, or just making a desperate bid to be thought "original". I can write these things to you because while you may disagree violently with my oppinions, you would, I am sure, die gallantly fighting for the right of man to speak his mind. Shades of Voltaire, or somebody, [[Page 12 – Letter]]

10.

but it is none the less true because I choose to paraphrase it so badly. But, to resume – the amount of Mozart I know and have heard really has nothing to do with my only mild appreciation. It is something more deep-seated and organically different, so to speak. One can put it in the light that it is my shortcomings which make it impossible for my blood to reach the boiling point on hearing Mozart but the fact remains the same viewed in any light – I remain calm, sometimes charmed, occasionally enthusiastic, occasionally bored. I am quite sure this will not surprise you so much if you

[[Page 13 – Letter]]

11.

just remember me a little. I do not think people change very much fundamentally. As I recall my period of enthusiasm about paintings and painters – I think I was about sixteen and certainly virgin territory – my enthusiasms were never for the Mozart in painting either, the Watteau, – or Raphael even, which is the quintessence of Mozart to me. I say "Raphael even" because he is certainly a famous name which a fair maid would look on as one approaches a deity – but no – while I knew nothing then nor do I now about painting as an art, but as a purely emotional experience, I found no sympathetic chords in me

[[Page 14 – Letter]]

12.

vibrating in unison with Raphael. It was pleasant, it was pretty, often a little more, but I could not respond and I have not changed in that respect. I do believe that some of the impressions we get when we are adolescent, so receptive, so susceptible to fresh impression, are more often then we think, our final decisions because they are right for us, the real key to our inner selves and we don't change in what is such an integral part of us. The painters to whom I did respond were a varied hodge-podge of unrelated gentlemen -Rembrandt was the Brahms of painters for me and still is, and there was Rubens, Franz Halz, and even

[[Page 15 – Letter]]

13.

Delacroix – just fancy – Delacroix and Mozart! I fear I am quite hopeless. We will not discuss Leonardo because his fame rests not upon his painting but upon the wide range of his curiosity.

But perhaps this is not such a bad thing as you may think. You stand firm in your beliefs and I in mine so we shall always have something to argue about. And just think what excitement would ensue if I were ever to change my oppinions and hastened to tell you of my ardent devotion to no one but Mozart – many an unbeliever carries the seed of a religious fanatic. When I get my job and become [[Page 16 – Letter]]

14.

very rich I shall come to London to see you and hear Mozart opera you wrote about.

My great enthusiasm just now is Havelock Ellis. We, meaning Mr. Gable and I, after reading Ellis's "From Rousseau to Proust" followed that with his "Affirmations" and "The Dance of Life", all with growing enthusiasm. What a sane man! His kind of sanity is one of the rarest things one can achieve. I should like to make a pilgrimage to leave a flower on his door-step in mute thanks for all he has given me.

You wrote of wishing to hear more about Mr. Gable. I am happy

[[Page 17 – Letter]]

15.

to report that he has survived as well as could be expected five years of my companionship. He admits, when pressed to it, that I have scarcely been what one would call restful, what with my great aptitude for falling down stairs and therefore appearing suddenly when one least expects me, and usually insisting on giving a Plantagenet a queen who wasn't born until two centuries later, after he was at such pains to try delicately to force a little knowledge of history into my head as painlessly as possible. I suppose one does not speak of ones debts even if they are debts of gratitude, but I know now that I shall die in the debtors prison. Ah, but it's many

[[Page 18 – Letter]]

16.

the fine argument that we've had and it's me Irish spirit, to be sure, that sustained me in me greatest need when the words was a fallin' from him one over the other, and so impudent like, but 'twas never said of me that it was per lack of words that me enemies foot was a restin' so 'asy on me neck, and many's the time too, that the sweet taste of victory has softened the flask of the eye. (That comes from reading Reardon O'Conner too much about the Sinn Faen.) That translated would mean: we read quite a lot together, and argue at the slightest provocation. Not exactly arguments in the accepted sense, rather

[[Page 19 – Letter]]

17.

diologues where both talk at once If I have progressed at all in the last few years in any way, it is entirely due to my association with him, our reading and our conversations. I do not know of any more delightful way to imbibe "learning: than through reading aloud to someone whose comments, marginal notes so to speak, make all of the difference in the digestion of the feast at hand.

I have just been sitting here gazing at the page before me wondering if I should add to your already growing conviction that I should be incarcerated behind bars or pay a visit to Vienna immediately, by adding [[Page 20 – Letter]]

18.

another paragraph of what I so vainly regard as my beliefs which by all the standards of the most intellectual "spirits" could only be summed up as heresy. But being pleased to remember you as intelligent rather than intellectual, I have again decided to tax your forbearance. I insist that you are also to blame because, after all, it was you who mentioned Dostoevsky not I. The heresy is just this – Dostoevsky has lost his power of attraction for me. That again is something personal rather than a smug comment on the admitted genius of Dostoevsky. There is too much impotent yearning after the infinite, too much stale swelling morbidity,

[[Page 21 – Letter]]

19.

too much of the inclinations to make almost a fetish of violence and sordidness, and too many epileptic fits. I find nothing to counter balance these things in Dostoevsky, that is the weakness in my oppinion. Perhaps the crux of the matter is that it is just too alien to my nature. This wholesale washing of linen in the public squarethat is so often mistaken for art among the breed known as "the intellectuals". Sometimes it is just a bit sickening. Of course, don't misunderstand me to be maintaining that Dostoevsky has merely been mistaken for art. I am not presuming to be commenting upon his

[[Page 22 – Letter]]

20.

worth as a writer, this is a purely personal reaction. But, oh dear! I am so fed up with "trend and the wide spread misconception that the loudness of ones wailings is a measure of the quality of ones feelings. I suppose that is why I prefer reading John Galsworthy to Dostoevsky. Yes, I do! And Mr. Keith Winter may make slighting remarks about Galsworthy in his latest book "Impassioned Pygmies", if he chooses, but I do think that a good dose of Galsworthy might purge him of some of his smartness that is not as witty sometimes, as he seems to think. We try to follow as nearly

[[Page 23 – Letter]]

21.

as our pocket-books will permit, the recent gems and otherwise of the London publishers. We read a very thought provoking novel (whatever that is) the other day from your shores called, "High Summer" by Richard Church. And then, of course, we are all interested in that nasty Mr. Keith Winter, and a most annoyin' gentleman named H. L. Meyers, who wrote a very exciting book, "The Root and the Flower", and when we reached the last page which left everyone suspended in most hair-raising situations we find that it is to be continued when the author writes

[[Page 24 – Letter]]

22.

the next book. Do write and tell me if you know Galsworthys "Forthsytes" – if you know Soames, Fleur, Michael, and "Aunt Eve", and Sir Lawrence Mout and – well, everybody. I do love them so. We are reading his Trilogy about the Charwell family now – pronounced Cherrell, of course. I do hope I can visit England before I die. We are also reading a book, about bugs and funny things that crawl and their evil ways of fornicatin' called, "The Natural Philosophy of Love," by Remy de Gourmont, and we just finished an awfully amusing book, [[Page 25 – Letter]]

23.

and incidentally, awfully American, called "Rats, Lice, and History", by Hans Zinsser. I think you would find it entertaining. I am sorry to be shoving "we just read" at you all the time but that is just about all I have to write about.

I had such a nice moment of happy reminiscing to-day. In the Galsworthy book the expression "come along" is used so often and it reminded me so of you. I had to smile, rather wistfully too, when I remembered your "Come along" and " Let's have a look." Please do not publish this letter in your [[Page 26 – Letter]]

24.

memoirs; those last two phrases put together could so compromise you.

I was looking over some songs of Joseph Marx the other day and came across "Ein Drängen ist in meinem Herzen", poem by Stefan Zweig. When, OK where, is it going to be discovered that Joseph Marx wrote something besides "a few songs". What is the cause of the criminal neglect of his tremendous and beautiful piano concerto? He has a violin and piano sonate that is certainly more worthwhile than most of the sonates that are played. The first movement [[Page 27 – Letter]]

25.

of it is so beautiful that that eminent critic, Mr. Peyser, of Vienna, would probably call it syrupy. He made me grind my teeth and suppress what is generaly referred to as "a foul oath" when he wrote in last Sundays New York "Times" of Schoenbergs "Verklaerte Nacht", that it was "syrupy music". Fie on him! May he be jilted by an unshaven blond. And as to Marx's songs, not many of those are known. What is the matter with people that they cannot recognize quality and beauty until it has been taken out of the attic

[[Page 28 – Letter]]

26.

and the moths shaken out and "somebody else" has discovered it. And yet all of the modern junk that gets performed. Well, I suppose junk, too, is a relative term. In any case, I shall be there waving a flag when Marx is, at last, appreciated. He will be someday, it is just a matter of time, but that does seem a great pity.

We have been having the most beastly hot weather, hence the delayed answer to your letter. I cannot date this letter accurately – I started it on July third and to-day is July seventeenth. [[Page 29 – Letter]]

27.

It has just occurred to me to ask you if you ever hear a word from Hartzer? Where is he and how is he? I have often thought of him.

Have a nice time at the seaside and don't drink too much – salt water isn't good for every one.

Write to me. I look forward to your letters so eagerly. And incidentally, where, oh where, are my records?!

Always your devoted, Lois