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37 Thurgate

Reading W.

6th April 1895

My dearest Emma,

I am sitting waiting to be called away to the Galilee & will spend the time in beginning a letter which I will finish to-morrow.

I expect Oliver told you of our meeting at Charing Cross & described The Bird so I will pass on. We arrived at Dover all right at about 8 o'clock & the boat (Leopold II) started almost as soon as we got on board. According to instructions I fled to the ladies cabin where there was only one other passenger. I lay flat on my back & by dint of great strength of will was not sick: I


felt however that if I relaxed my attention for a moment I should be, so I was not able to get much sleep. We landed at Ostend at 12 o'clock & found the sleeping carriage waiting for us though to Mrs. Bitter & Bird's great indignation the beds were not made! I was in a little compartment alone and slept heavily all the way to Herbesthal which we reached at 6 o'clock & where the luggage was examined. The officials were very kind indeed & only looked under the top piece of paper so my elaborate ties I had prepared to prove that my new dresses were old, were useless.

Before returning to the train we had some coffee which was very grateful & comforting. We reached Cologne at about 10 minutes to 8: we there changed and got into the Berlin express. It is a very good corridor train & we were very comfortable

in it as there was only one other person in our carriage & she was asleep the whole time. It is true that she insisted on keeping the window shut and as the carriage was heated with hot water it was somewhat hot: but that was a minor detail. We had lunch at Bildersheim and reached Berlin at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7: an accident had happened to the train in part of us and so we had to make a detour of about 50 miles: this is why we were two hours late. Mrs. Siemens met me at the station & we drove off together in a droschke to see the rehearsal of the Jubilee. This was going on in the Philharmonie, a huge concert room at one end of which was a stage. On this stage there were going to be Tableaux Vivants in which the girls took part. We only waited for the first & then hurried home. Mrs. Siemens told me that her Siemens knew nothing about the performance & chief

we were eating our dinner, he came in very angry because Lili, Marie were not at home to receive us. I soon after departed to bed. I am sleeping with Marie just now because Mrs Siemens' mother, die Frau Justigrath, is with them, when she goes I shall have a room alone. Their apartment is ~~is~~ two stories high & all the rooms lead into one another: I can't find my way about very well yet. In the house are some people called Springer: the Springer's first wife was a sister of Mrs Siemens so they are great friends and are continually coming in & out. A brother of Mrs Siemens & his wife are staying with the Springers so you see there is a good deal of society. Yesterday morning we were awakened at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 by sounds of military music: the colleagues of Mr Siemens, determined to be the first in the field had sent a

band to serenade him. We then got up
& had breakfast which was interrupted
by numerous telegrams visitors & large
baskets of flowers. After breakfast I
went out with Maria & rapidly reconed
the streets: hardly had we returned than
a message came from Mr Siemens from
the Bank bidding us all leap into droshkies
and go there to see the flowers he had
received. That I have never seen such a
sight: we mounted the stairs which were
lined with bowing menials and entered
a room filled with enormous baskets
of flowers & fat black directors. It was
most amusing: we were offered champagne
in tall pointed glasses. Mr Siemens solemnly
presented each of us with a flower. We
dined at three and finished just as
you were about to have tea. At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 5
Maria & I went away to the Philharmonie
& at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 the rest of us. Mrs Siemens

die Frau Justizrath, the brother & his wife ^{the Siemens} & I,
followed. Imagine this to be the ground
plan of the Philharmonie 

down stairs in the place where stalls would
be in a concert, were rows of long thin
tables covered with white tablecloths &
surrounded by the officials of the bank.
The ladies sat up in the gallery &
watched the scene from above. I have
never seen such nervous of men before.
At the end of the room was the stage &
between the stage & the company, an
orchestra. Suddenly a flourish of trumpet
was heard, the orchestra struck up the
march from Tanhäuser & the directors
walked solemnly in & sat down at
their table. Then a man in spectacles
with black curly hair stepped on to
the stage & declared a poem in praise
of the Deutsche Bank ending up with

"Heil dir, o Deutsche Bank!" (This is
for Pippa's benefit). The Clerks' Sing Verein
then arose & sang a song by ~~S. Pöhl~~ com-
posed for the occasion; the curtains were
drawn aside & Lili Siemens & Miss Koch
attired as Greek ladies stepped down,
& deposited laurel wreaths before the seats
of Mr Siemens, Mr Koch which were
ornamenting the stage, one at each end.
The music then stopped and the speeches
began: first the Emperor's health was
drunk: it was proposed by an old director
& at a given signal the whole hall
rose to its feet simultaneously and
gave three tremendous Hock! It was
a most thrilling scene & I felt quite
patriotic. I think, however that they made
even more noise for Mr Siemens & Mr
Koch. I cannot say I understood much
of the speeches but evidently Mr Siemens
spoke by far the best: he alone succeeded

in making these solemn young clerks laugh. I spied out Mr Bitter & Mr Bird among the crowd and at the end they came up and made kind enquiries after my health. After the speeches came the Tableaux Vivants which were a great success. Then they began their dinner and the ladies went into their diningroom & fed upon beer & vegetables. The beer was served in tall glass mugs & was delicious; it was the first time I ever appreciated beer. After dinner the men began to smoke which somewhat mitigated the pleasure. Some more of the clerks then acted a small play describing the situation of the Deutsche Bank in the year 2000; they all enjoyed this immensely because it was filled with business jokes; the only one of which that I understood was when the directors announced a dividend of 2000 per cent.

This statement aroused great enthusiasm.
After the play the ladies departed. We got
home at about 12 o'clock.

I must now tell you of a painful case
which occurred in the train. Towards
the end of the journey I said to Mr Bitter
Please now tell me what I owe you, as
he had paid for quantities of things: the
first-class cabin on the boat, the meals
not to mention porters & such like. After
an embarrassing silence he said: Oh you
must consider yourself as the guest of the Bank
of course you were never intended to pay ^{for} these
sorts of things: I couldn't think of telling you
what I paid, we should get into a great
row with the Bank for accepting any money
from you. I refused for a long time to agree
but as he refused to tell me what I owed
him and continued to repeat that the Bank
would pay, I was helpless. Don't you think
Papa might write & ask for the account or

something because it seems such a shame

We are going to Ahledorf on Wednesday
and then probably to Stresia on the
Lake Maggiore where the Picenens have
taken a villa. The weather is quite cold;
there was a hard frost in the night of
the journey & it was snowing off & on from
Cologne to Berlin. I must now stop
having already spent the whole morning
in writing this letter. Love to the family

Your loving
Perceval