

**"Klin, near Moscow, was the home of one of the busiest of
men..."**
**Previously unknown or unidentified letters by Tchaikovsky to
correspondents from Russia, Europe and the USA**

Presented by Luis Sundkvist and Brett Langston

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Introduction

Apart from their authorship, the only thing that most of the letters presented in this article have in common is that they were omitted from the Soviet collected edition of Tchaikovsky's correspondence (*Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. Literaturnye proizvedeniia i perepiska*, 17 volumes, 1959–81; hereafter referred to as *PSSL*). In all, 5,136 letters were included in *PSSL*, but as previously unknown ones kept coming to light over the following years the total number of catalogued letters had already gone up to 5,248 by the time of *The Tchaikovsky Handbook* (Indiana University Press 2002), and with even more turning up at auctions and elsewhere since then this number has risen even further (to 5,335 at the time of writing). All this goes to show that Tchaikovsky was not just a highly productive composer, but also an indefatigable letter-writer. Not for nothing would one of his British correspondents covered here describe him as "one of the busiest of men".

The majority of the 55 letters presented below are probably unknown to most Tchaikovsky scholars and editors of his works and writings, both in Russia and abroad. That being said, the existence of some of them—mainly those that were auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Germany—has been known to staff at the Tchaikovsky House-Museum in Klin for a number of years, as we learn from an article by the composer's grand-niece Kseniia Iur'evna Davydova (1905–1992), who worked as curator at the museum from 1965 to 1989. In her article, which appeared in *Sovetskaia muzyka* in 1986, Kseniia Iur'evna discussed how she was planning to bring out a supplementary volume to *PSSL* containing details on several previously unknown letters auctioned outside Russia which had been brought to her and her colleagues' attention by various correspondents in the West—in particular by Peter Muck, a violist with the Berlin Philharmonic, who regularly sent to the Klin Museum photocopies from auction catalogues in which such letters were advertised.¹

Among the findings which she planned to present in that supplementary volume were 'new' letters to Joseph Dupont, Frits Hartvigson, and Anton Door from 1876 to 1877, and one to Mili Balakirev from November 1868. She also pointed out that this volume would "expand considerably the list of the composer's known addressees, which would now include Lucien Guitry, Jules Massenet, Valentina Serova etc."² Unfortunately, Kseniia Iur'evna was unable to realize this plan because of her failing health. Her younger colleagues at the Klin Museum do not seem to have used the photocopies from auction catalogues that she was collecting for this projected volume in any subsequent publications. This perhaps explains why the existence of these letters was eventually forgotten and why none of them (with the exception of the letter to Hartvigson from 1877 which was published by Thomas Kohlhase with permission of the owner in 1998³), was recorded in the Catalogue of Letters in volume 2 of *The Tchaikovsky Handbook*. The other letters and correspondents mentioned explicitly by Kseniia Iur'evna are covered in our article (except for Valentina Serova), and, although in many cases we too have only had access to excerpts in auction catalogues, we are able to publish complete texts of a number of them, including Tchaikovsky's letter to Dupont from 1876, his first two letters to Guitry from 1885, and his first extant letter to Massenet from 1888. As for those that can only be partially published as yet, it is important to bring them to light anyway and to catalogue them properly so as to pave the way for future research.

As always, obtaining access to old auction catalogues in which details of previously unknown autograph letters by Tchaikovsky are likely to be found, is a very difficult task. For example, the British Library has just one of the series of catalogues known as *Autographen*

¹ See Ks. Iu. Davydova, 'Problemy epistolarii', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1986), no. 6, p. 87–88.

² Ks. Iu. Davydova, 'Problemy epistolarii', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1986), no. 6, p. 88.

³ See Thomas Kohlhase, "'Paris vaut bien une messe!' Bisher unbekannte Briefe, Notenautographe und andere Čajkovskij-Funde", *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 163–298 (225–226).

aus allen Gebieten published almost every year since 1885 by the firm of J. A. Stargardt in Berlin and Marburg, and in which 'new' Tchaikovsky letters and other items (signed photographs, musical autographs etc.) have periodically appeared. Fortunately, advances in technology and, in particular, the digitization work done by Google Books in recent years have meant that several of the old Stargardt catalogues can now be accessed online, though, because they can always only be viewed a snippet at a time, it is still difficult to extract and piece together the relevant portions of text.

With more recent autograph auctions, the situation is considerably better because many auction-houses have published their latest catalogues online, often with helpful search facilities that allow one to find Tchaikovsky letters featured in past sales, and in some cases even to view images of all or some of the pages of those letters. Communication by e-mail has also made it much easier to contact auction-houses, and although some of them have (understandably perhaps) ignored our requests for further information on such letters, many have responded positively and helpfully, either sharing with us images of sold letters in their archives or passing on our request to the present owners. We are very grateful to the staff of a number of auction-houses for helping to bring to light several previously unknown letters, and their assistance is duly credited in the presentation of these letters, as well as in the [Acknowledgements](#).

However, it is not only auction-houses which have been publishing their catalogues online in recent years, but also many university libraries and museums. Searching through the collections of these has turned up several 'new' Tchaikovsky letters, and the response of such institutions to our enquiries has been overwhelmingly positive, with most of them making available facsimile images for publication on the Tchaikovsky Research website.⁴ They in turn were grateful for what we could tell them about the letters in their collections, especially those whose addressees were as yet unidentified. The increasing availability of online genealogical databases has also made it easier to find out more about Tchaikovsky's less well-known correspondents, in particular the English journalist called Francis Arthur Jones whose identity is clarified here for the first time.

The use of Google Books has not only allowed us to access several (but evidently not all) of the old Stargardt catalogues, but also a number of other relatively obscure publications containing the partial or complete texts of various 'new' letters by Tchaikovsky which, understandably, escaped the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars at the time. This is the case, for example, with Tchaikovsky's first letter to the French actor Lucien Guitry in 1885—one of the most important in our article, which sheds further light on the genesis of the overture-fantasia *Hamlet* (1888) and the incidental music to the same play (1891).

Other highlights include the already mentioned first extant letter to Massenet in 1888 which deals with the Russian Musical Society's plan to invite the Frenchman to give a concert in Moscow; a letter to Ethel Smyth, also from 1888, with sarcastic comments on their mutual friend and colleague Brahms; three letters to Marie Reno, whose family had done so much to help Tchaikovsky enjoy his stay in America in the spring of 1891; a letter to the organizers of the concert he was invited to give in Vienna in the summer of 1892; two letters from early 1893 to Francis Arthur Jones whom Tchaikovsky agreed to help with an article he was writing on 'How Composers Compose' (the title of our own article is a quotation from Jones's); and a playful letter in English to Ekaterina Laroche from August 1893 in which Tchaikovsky discusses details of a Russian Musical Society concert in Saint Petersburg on 16/28 October, which would turn out to be the last concert he ever conducted.

⁴ <http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/letters/index.html>

Tchaikovsky's letters are presented here according to the country of origin or residence of his correspondent, with the section for Russia coming first, followed by the other countries in alphabetical order. Within each section the correspondents appear in alphabetical order, with unidentified ones at the end (though in many cases we have attempted to suggest who the addressee might be). A section giving the new locations of some already published letters follows. Finally, there is a chronological list of the letters with details on where they are held (where this is known) and the number of each letter in the Tchaikovsky Research website's [Letters section](#)—a regularly updated catalogue covering all of Tchaikovsky's known letters and with individual pages for each letter. On these separate pages the images of many of the letters presented here can be viewed online, courtesy of the holding institutions or their current owners. The importance of such online catalogues cannot be overestimated, for it was precisely thanks to a similar index of correspondents at The Grieg Archive on the website of Bergen Public Library that we were able to establish the identity of Francis Arthur Jones.⁵

Many gaps remain of course to be filled—especially with regard to identifying the addressees and establishing the dates of some of the letters in this article, and this is a task for which the assistance of the Tchaikovsky House-Museum is essential, because the composer kept almost all of the letters that he received, and many of the letters to unidentified correspondents presented here are bound to be replies to letters which very likely have survived in the archives at Klin. We would therefore like to invite the staff there and any other researchers with additional information to contact us via the website (info@tchaikovsky-research.net) so that we can work together on resolving these outstanding questions.

⁵ See The Grieg Archive at: <http://bergenbibliotek.no/digitale-samlinger/grieg/engelsk/grieg-intro-eng>. On this remarkable internet resource 5,700 letters from and to Grieg have been digitalized so far and made available to the public in facsimiles and transcripts (including his correspondence with Tchaikovsky in 1888). It is worth noting that of these just 890 are by Grieg: he was not as active a letter-writer as Tchaikovsky.

I. Russia

(Mili Balakirev, Adolph Brodsky, Mariia Klimentova-Muromtseva,
Ekaterina Laroche, Iurii Messer, Vasilii Sapel'nikov)

1. Tchaikovsky to Mili Balakirev, November (?) 1868 [[letter 123a](#)]

When this previously unknown letter was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg in 1979 it was brought to the attention of the Klin House-Museum, and Kseniia Davydova discussed it in some detail in her 1986 article on the letters by Tchaikovsky whose existence was known, but details of which had not been included in *PSSL*, and which she was planning to present in a supplementary volume to that edition of her granduncle's correspondence.¹ Since Kseniia Davydova unfortunately did not realize her plan and details of this interesting letter to Balakirev were not published subsequently, either in Russia or abroad, we have decided to open our article with it.

According to the description in the Stargardt catalogue, Tchaikovsky wrote his letter (which is just one page long) on the back of a letter from Nikolai Rubinstein to Balakirev. This is not at all surprising, since Tchaikovsky at the time was still lodging at Rubinstein's apartment in Moscow, and both Tchaikovsky and Rubinstein were actively corresponding with Balakirev throughout 1868 regarding various concert plans. The catalogue summary, moreover, adds that the letter deals with scheduled Russian Musical Society concerts in Saint Petersburg and with "the ballet music from [Tchaikovsky's] first, recently completed opera *The Voevoda*." An abridged German translation of the letter follows, which we have used as the basis for our partial publication in English:

[...] I thank you for remembering me and for your intention of performing my piece. If it is at all possible, dear fellow, would you be so good as to include in the concert notes the short explanation which you'll find on the title-page of the 4-handed piano arrangement? I intend to write you a long letter shortly, but for the time being I remain yours devotedly,
P. Tchaikovsky [...]

[PS:] Give my regards to all your bunch, and especially to Korsinka [= Rimskii-Korsakov]. (I daresay he has been very busy with my *Maid of Pskov*?).²

The date of the letter given in the Stargardt catalogue is "Moscow, November 1868": it is possible that this is based on the date of Nikolai Rubinstein's letter to Balakirev (assuming that Rubinstein wrote the date, which cannot be taken for granted because he was always in a rush due to his many commitments). In any case, as we shall see below, such a dating for Tchaikovsky's letter would tally with the other letters he and Balakirev exchanged in the course of 1868.

The context of this 'new' letter and the reference it contains to the *Dances of the Chambermaids* from Act II of Tchaikovsky's first opera, *The Voevoda*, is as follows. Tchaikovsky began work on *The Voevoda* (to a libretto provided by Aleksandr Ostrovskii) in

¹ See Ks. Iu. Davydova, 'Problemy epistolarii', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1986), no. 6, p. 87–88.

² J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1979), item no. 965 (consulted via Google Books). The excerpt in German is as follows: "Ich danke für Ihr Gedenken und für die Absicht, mein Stück aufzuführen. Bemühen Sie sich, Täubchen, wenn es irgend geht, auf dem Programm die kleine Erklärung zu bringen, die sich im Titel des Klavierauszuges zu vier Händen befindet. Ich habe vor, Ihnen in Kürze einen langen Brief zu schreiben, aber unterdessen bleibe ich Ihr ergebener p. Tschaikowsky....[Die Nachschrift]: Grüßen Sie alle die Ihrigen und besonders Korsinka. (Er wird sich wohl viel mit meiner Pskowitjanka beschäftigt haben)." The same excerpt is quoted in Russian in Kseniia Davydova's article above, but Tchaikovsky's original Russian text has yet to come to light.

March 1867. In May he revised his *Characteristic Dances*, written two years earlier, and used them in the opera's second act as *Dances of the Chambermaids*, which he proceeded to orchestrate while staying at Hapsal that summer. The *Dances* were first performed in public at a Russian Musical Society concert in Moscow on 2/14 December 1867 conducted by Nikolai Rubinstein. A few days later, Tchaikovsky met Balakirev for the first time, when the latter accompanied Berlioz to Moscow (the ailing French master had been invited to Russia by Balakirev); it was evidently on that occasion that Balakirev found out about the *Dances* and undertook to conduct them in Saint Petersburg, where he had been recently appointed director of the RMS concerts. Tchaikovsky refers to this promise in his first known letter to Balakirev of 21 January/2 February 1868: "In accordance with our agreement I am sending you the score of my *Dances*. If it is possible to have them performed at a concert conducted by you, I should be extremely obliged to you."³ Tchaikovsky also asked the older musician for "a word of encouragement" if the *Dances* were to his liking. The score which he had sent Balakirev was a handwritten copy⁴ (for the orchestral score of the *Dances* was not published by Jurgenson until 1873); Tchaikovsky held on to the original in order to prepare for the charity concert at the Moscow Bol'shoi Theatre on 19 February/3 March 1868 at which he himself conducted the *Dances of the Chambermaids*. This was, incidentally, Tchaikovsky's first appearance in public as a conductor, and already then the paralyzing fear which for many years befell him whenever he had to stand on the conductor's rostrum made itself felt.⁵

Balakirev did not reply to Tchaikovsky's letter until 21 February/4 March, explaining that the delay was due to his not having been able to say anything specific about when the *Dances* might be performed in Saint Petersburg. The RMS concert season had now come to an end there, but Balakirev explained that he had arranged for them to be included in a forthcoming symphonic concert at one of the imperial capital's theatres (where they would be conducted by someone else). As for Tchaikovsky's request for "encouragement" regarding his music, Balakirev wrote that he preferred to discuss the *Dances* with him in person when they met again and could play through the piece together, adding: "judging from your score, I see in you a quite fully-fledged artist, both in terms of the orchestration and the workmanship—one to whom only strict criticism should be meted out, not encouragement."⁶ Tchaikovsky replied from Moscow four days later: "I thank you sincerely for the trouble you have taken over my *Dances*, but I regret with all my heart that they will not be performed under your baton as I had wished."⁷ Balakirev passed on the full score of the *Dances* to Konstantin Liadov, who duly conducted them as part of a symphonic concert at the Saint Petersburg Bol'shoi Theatre on 17/29 March 1868.

Meanwhile, Jurgenson had published Tchaikovsky's own piano duet arrangement of the *Dances of the Chambermaids*, and the composer decided to send a personally inscribed copy of this version to Balakirev together with a further copy for Rimskii-Korsakov, as we learn from his next letter to Balakirev on 3/15 March: "In a few days' time I shall send off and kindly ask you to accept the four-handed arrangement of my *Dances*. Be so kind as to forward a copy to Rimskii-Korsakov, whom I do not know personally, but whom I love with

³ Letter 111 to Balakirev, 21 January/2 February 1868. *PSSL* V, p. 131.

⁴ The score received by Balakirev is probably the manuscript copy of the *Dances* now preserved in the Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture in Moscow (fond 88, no. 4), which has only the title page written in Tchaikovsky's hand. The composer's original autograph score is also held by the same museum (fond 88, no. 3).

⁵ Cf. Nikolai Kashkin's account of Tchaikovsky's disastrous conducting at that concert. Fortunately, the musicians all knew the *Dances* well and did not have to rely on his cues. See N. D. Kashkin, *Vospominaniia o P. I. Chaikovskom* (Moscow, 1954), p. 51.

⁶ Letter from Balakirev to Tchaikovsky, 21 February/4 March 1868. Quoted from E. L. Frid (ed.), *Milii Alekseevich Balakirev. Vospominaniia i pis'ma* (Leningrad, 1962), p. 118.

⁷ Letter 114 to Balakirev, 25 February/8 March 1868. *PSSL* V, p. 134.

all my heart."⁸ The reason why Tchaikovsky mentioned the youngest member of the "Mighty Handful" in such glowing terms is because the programme of the concert at the Moscow Bol'shoi Theatre on 19 February/3 March at which he himself had conducted the *Dances*, had also featured Rimskii-Korsakov's *Serbian Fantasy*. At around the same time as his letter to Balakirev Tchaikovsky had written an article defending the *Serbian Fantasy* against the attacks of a certain critic and emphasizing Rimskii-Korsakov's great promise. This article was published in the Moscow-based *Contemporary Chronicle* on 10/22 March 1868: it was Tchaikovsky's first foray into the genre of music criticism. Not surprisingly, the article was greeted enthusiastically by the members of the "Mighty Handful," and they received Tchaikovsky with open arms when he came to Saint Petersburg in late March/early April and attended several of their musical gatherings in Balakirev's apartment.⁹

It was probably during one of these gatherings in the spring of 1868 that Balakirev went through the *Dances* with Tchaikovsky, as he had promised earlier. Tchaikovsky would also have discussed with Rimskii-Korsakov the latter's plans for his own first opera, *The Maid of Pskov*. Around that time (it is not exactly clear when) Tchaikovsky seems to have passed on to his younger colleague a libretto for the opera drawn up by Vsevolod Krestovskii (1840–1895). It is this that Tchaikovsky refers to in the 'new' letter to Balakirev of November 1868 presented above: "I daresay he [Rimskii-Korsakov] has been very busy with my *Maid of Pskov*?"¹⁰ Rimskii-Korsakov, however, eventually decided to write his own libretto for *The Maid of Pskov* (based on Lev Mei's popular historical drama). He did not finish work on his opera until 1872.

For some reason, it took more than six weeks before the copies of Tchaikovsky's piano duet arrangement of the *Dances of the Chambermaids* were finally dispatched to Saint Petersburg. Balakirev acknowledged receipt of these in a letter to Tchaikovsky on 19 April/1 May 1868, adding: "Tomorrow Korsinka will come to sleep over at my place, and I will hand him his copy, which we will play through together." Balakirev, however, also criticized the way in which Jurgenson had published the piece. Still, he raised the possibility that the *Dances* might be performed at another concert in Saint Petersburg in early/mid May (this did not work out, though). At the end of his letter Balakirev wrote: "All our bunch send you their regards. Korsinka wanted to write to you himself. Don't forget us, drop us a few lines every now and then."¹¹ As the letter auctioned by Stargardt shows, Tchaikovsky gladly took up Balakirev's jesting nickname for Rimskii-Korsakov, and in various later letters to the leader of the "Mighty Handful" he would send his regards to "Korsinka" in particular.

However, it seems that Tchaikovsky—who went abroad that summer for only the second time since his first trip to Western Europe seven years earlier—did forget about his new friends in Saint Petersburg amidst the diversions of life in Paris (where he stayed throughout most of June and all of July 1868, finding the time also to complete the orchestration of *The Voevoda*), followed by the bustle of classes at the Conservatory and the rehearsals for his first opera at the Bol'shoi Theatre after his return to Moscow in September. His next published letter to Balakirev dates from 30 December 1868/11 January 1869, and it is clear from its contents that for some time Tchaikovsky and Balakirev had not been corresponding regularly. All the same, Balakirev had asked about Tchaikovsky in a recent

⁸ Letter 115 to Balakirev, 3/15 March 1868. *PSSL* V, p. 135.

⁹ For more details on Tchaikovsky's early contacts with the "Mighty Handful," see Marek Bobéth, 'Čajkovskij und das Mächtige Häuflein', *Čajkovskij-Studien* 1 (1995), p. 63–86.

¹⁰ As pointed out in the summary for this letter in the Stargardt catalogue. The circumstances of how Tchaikovsky became involved in passing on this libretto to Rimskii-Korsakov have not been clarified.

¹¹ Letter from Balakirev to Tchaikovsky, 19 April/1 May 1868. Quoted from E. L. Frid (ed.), *Milii Alekseevich Balakirev. Vospominaniia i pis'ma* (Leningrad, 1962), p. 123.

letter to Nikolai Rubinstein, with whom he was corresponding about various concert plans for the 1868/69 winter season.

In that letter from Tchaikovsky to Balakirev of 30 December 1868/11 January 1869 we find the following relevant lines: "I thank you for remembering me and for the attention which you bestowed upon my scribbling. I am very glad that you put said scribbling in the middle of your programme."¹² The commentary accompanying this letter in both the relevant *PSSL* volume (1959) and Aleksandra Orlova's slightly later edition of Balakirev's correspondence with Tchaikovsky (1962) explains that by his "scribbling" Tchaikovsky was referring to the *Dances of the Chambermaids*,¹³ but the 'new' letter to Balakirev presented above suggests that "scribbling" may in fact have referred to the plot summary of *The Voevoda* in the piano duet version of the *Dances* which Tchaikovsky, in this letter of November 1868, had asked Balakirev to include in the programme notes for the RMS concert in Saint Petersburg at which the *Dances* were scheduled to be performed.¹⁴ Balakirev seems to have complied with this request and sent Tchaikovsky (via Nikolai Rubinstein) a copy of the programme notes for the forthcoming concert. Ultimately, however, it was not Balakirev, but Anton Rubinstein who conducted the RMS concert in Saint Petersburg on 25 January/6 February 1869 featuring the *Dances*, just five days before the opera's successful premiere at the Moscow Bol'shoi Theatre.¹⁵

Alongside the overture, the *Dances of the Chambermaids*—a brilliantly orchestrated number—was the only section of *The Voevoda* that was spared from destruction when Tchaikovsky burnt the full score of his first opera in the 1870s because he was no longer satisfied with it. Fortunately, in the 1930s and 40s it proved possible to reconstruct the opera from the surviving sketches, orchestral parts, and solo parts.

2. Tchaikovsky to Adolph Brodsky, [n.y.] [[letter 5065f](#)]

This apparently unpublished letter with no specified date is part of the "William Mason Autographs of Musicians" collection in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University Libraries, New York. The director of this library kindly passed on our request for a scan and/or further information on this letter to the curator of the Performing Arts Collections on 29 December 2010, and we are awaiting their response.

¹² Letter 126 to Balakirev, 30 December 1868/11 January 1869. *PSSL* V, p. 150–151.

¹³ See Aleksandra Orlova's commentary for that letter in E. L. Frid (ed.), *Milii Alekseevich Balakirev. Vospominaniia i pis'ma* (Leningrad, 1962).

¹⁴ The plot summary prefacing the piano arrangement reads: "The Voevoda's betrothed [Mariia], who has been abducted and taken to his palace, lies in a state of wistful drowsiness. The chambermaids try to cheer her up. Wrapped in veils at first, they come out onto the stage, and, forming into various groups, they move gently around the young lady; little by little their movements become more animated and develop into a dance."

¹⁵ The reasons why Balakirev had to pull out of that concert (indisposition? a conflict with the RMS board of directors?) and Anton Rubinstein stepped in for him at the last minute have not yet been clarified. It cannot, however, be excluded that Balakirev conducted the *Dances* at a Free Music School concert in Saint Petersburg at some point in November–December 1868, and that when Tchaikovsky thanked him for the attention he had bestowed on his "scribbling" in letter 126 he was actually referring to the *Dances* and a recent performance of them under Balakirev's direction. This has to be investigated further.

3. Tchaikovsky to Mariia Klimentova-Muromtseva, 10/22 February 1887 [[letter 3177a](#)]

This unpublished letter, sold by R.R. Auction in December 2000, is described on the auctioneer's website as a "note to Maria Nikolaevna." Among Tchaikovsky's known female correspondents only the actress Mariia Ermolova (1853–1928) and the soprano Mariia Klimentova-Muromtseva (1856–1946) have that name and patronymic. Since Tchaikovsky in this note refers to a promise to come to "listen" to his correspondent, it presumably must have been addressed to Klimentova-Muromtseva.¹⁶

Eight years earlier, while still a student at the Moscow Conservatory, Mariia Klimentova had created the role of Tat'iana in *Evgenii Onegin*, and more recently she had appeared as the first Oksana at the première of *Cherevichki* (the revised version of *Vakula the Smith*) at the Moscow Bol'shoi Theatre on 19/31 January 1887, conducted by Tchaikovsky himself. It seems that she had asked the composer, who was then in Maidanovo, to come over to Moscow again to hear her in one of the subsequent performances of *Cherevichki*. Tchaikovsky, however, was busy with the orchestration of his new opera, *The Enchantress*. The text of his apology to her is published here on the basis of the English translation given on R.R. Auction's website:

I apologize that I could not keep my promise to come to listen to you. I have to spend a few more days working. Forgive me! Believe me, I would love very, very much to come, but the wise thing to do is to sit at home and finish my work on the opera *The Enchantress*. Kissing your hand, P. Tchaikovsky.¹⁷

4. Tchaikovsky to Ekaterina Laroche, 9/21 November 1892 [[letter 4802a](#)]

In recent years a number of previously unknown letters from Tchaikovsky to Ekaterina Laroche (née Sinel'nikova), the third wife of his fellow student at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory and lifelong friend Herman Laroche (1845–1904), have been turning up in autograph auctions abroad, suggesting—as pointed out by Boleslav Rabinovich, who prepared one such letter for publication in the second Tchaikovsky *Al'manakh* (2003)—that the Laroche family archives were scattered, with the more valuable manuscripts being sold off little by little.¹⁸ The composer's letters to Ekaterina Laroche tend to be just brief notes dealing mainly with various practical matters, but they are often full of humorous touches, because Tchaikovsky felt very much at ease in her company and was fond of her—as reflected, for instance, in the way that instead of 'Katia,' the usual affectionate diminutive for Ekaterina in Russia, he had his own pet name for her: 'Katu.' Some of these notes also provide supplementary information on Tchaikovsky's day-to-day life that allow for a more complete chronology of his comings and goings, especially in the last years of his life.

The letter presented here was auctioned in 2004 by Roger Gross Autographs in New York. A facsimile of the letter and its envelope was included on the auctioneer's website and has been used to publish its text here in full:

¹⁶ Attention was also drawn to this letter by Ronald de Vet and Thomas Kohlhasse in 'Die vom Auktionshaus *RR Auction* (USA) in den Jahren 1996–2009 im Internet versteigerten autographen Briefe...', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 17 (2010), p. 12–18 (16–17), but they suggested that Mariia Ermolova was the addressee. If, however, the note had been addressed to the actress Tchaikovsky would not have used the verb "listen," but "see" (i.e. in the sense of "seeing" her on the stage).

¹⁷ See http://www.rrauction.com/past_auction_item.cfm?ID=2441678 (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

¹⁸ See the commentary accompanying the publication of letter 5002a to Ekaterina Laroche, 6/18 August 1893, in: *P. I. Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (Moscow, 2003), p. 332–333. That particular letter was sold on the New York-based online auction website eBay in December 1998.

9 Ноября

Милая Мистрис Катю!
Я пригласил к Вам обедать Саню Литке, Володю Аргутинского и Юрия Давыдова.
Модест тоже будет. Простите за нахальство.
До свиданья ровно в 6 часов

Ваш
П. Чайковский

[*On the envelope:*]
Катерине Ивановне
Ларош
Адмиралтейская набер.
№ 10.¹⁹

In English translation:

9 November.

Dear Mistress Katu!
I have invited to have dinner at your place: Sania Litke, Volodia Argutinskii, and Iurii Davydov. Modest will also be there. Apologies for my impertinence.
See you at 6 o'clock sharp

Yours,
P. Tchaikovsky

[*On the envelope:*]
To Katerina Ivanovna Laroche / No. 10, Admiralty Embankment.

No year is indicated on the note, and there is no post stamp on the envelope either, but a quick glance at the names mentioned suggests it must be from the last years of Tchaikovsky's life: Aleksandr ("Sania") Litke (1868–1912), the composer's second cousin, and Prince Vladimir ("Volodia") Argutinskii-Dolgorukov (1872–1941) were regular members of the so-called "Fourth Suite"—the term which the composer's brother Modest felicitously coined for the group of young relatives, friends, and admirers in whose company Tchaikovsky liked to be whenever he came over to Saint Petersburg from the country.²⁰ Upon closer inspection, the address on the envelope also proves relevant: No. 10, Admiralty Embankment, was the address of Herman and Ekaterina Laroche's apartment in Saint Petersburg, and the fact that Tchaikovsky did not indicate the city suggests that he too was in the imperial capital at the time of writing. In his last years Tchaikovsky was only in Saint Petersburg on 9/21 November in 1889 and 1892. Because the composer's youngest nephew, Iurii Davydov (1876–1965), is also mentioned in this letter, it is the later year which one must go for. Iurii was sixteen in 1892, and, though still a cadet at military school in Saint Petersburg, the school's regulations allowed the older students to leave the premises on some evenings in order to visit relatives and friends. Thus, in 1892, Iurii would have been able to come along to such a dinner, but not so in 1889, when he was just thirteen.

Tchaikovsky had arrived in Saint Petersburg on 27 October/8 November 1892, and he would stay in the capital, lodging at the Grand Hotel, throughout all of November and the first half of December in order to supervise the preparations for the premières of both *Iolanta* and *The Nutcracker*, which were staged as a double-bill at the Mariinskii Theatre on 6/18

¹⁹ The facsimile in Roger Gross Autographs' Catalogue no. 63 (where this letter is listed as item no. 52) can be viewed online: <http://www.rgrossmusicautograph.com/052-63.html> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

²⁰ See M. Chaikovskii, *Zhizn' Petra Il'icha Chaikovskogo* [1900–02] (Moscow, 1997), vol. 3, p. 557, n. 1. For a more detailed discussion of the "Fourth Suite," see Alexander Poznansky, *Petr Chaikovskii. Biografiia* (St. Petersburg, 2009), vol. 2, ch. 27.

December. In the course of his stay he also gave three interviews to local journalists.²¹ The dinner at Ekaterina Laroche's apartment referred to in the above letter, to which just a few selected relatives and friends were invited, would have allowed him to take a break from all those professional and social obligations. As for his addressing her jestingly as "Mistress Katu," transliterating the English form of address "Mrs" into Cyrillic, that has to do with the fact that Tchaikovsky, who had taken up the study of English in the autumn of 1883, would often, on those occasions that Ekaterina's husband was his guest at Maidanovo or Frolovskoe, turn to him for help if during his reading of English books (especially Dickens) he came across a word he didn't understand and was too lazy to look up in the dictionary. (Laroche, a literary as well as a music critic, had a good knowledge of foreign languages, including English.) It seems that his visit to America the previous year had made Tchaikovsky keener to use his own English skills actively, and this would find a culmination of sorts in the following letter to Ekaterina Laroche presented here.

5. Tchaikovsky to Ekaterina Laroche, 11/23 August 1893 [[letter 5006a](#)]

Like the other letters to Ekaterina Laroche to have emerged in recent years, this one too is held in a collection outside Russia—namely, at the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, in Santa Barbara, California. This is the world's largest private collection of original manuscripts, which are regularly exhibited to the public for free at its various branches across the United States. The museum's founder, David Karpeles, kindly provided us with a scan of the letter, which is published here for the first time.

In playful moods Tchaikovsky would sometimes include an English phrase or two in his letters to Russian relatives and friends, but this letter is unique because all of it (except for the addressee's pet name, 'Katu') is written in English (!):

Klin 11 August

Dear Mistress Kary!

At 16 October Russian sile [= style] I will conduct the first Concert of the Imperial Russian Music-Society, and in this Concert it will be plaied [= played] the famous overture [= overture] of the celebrated musicians [= musician] German Laroche „Carmosina“!

Pray, let me make the Partition [= score] and so quickly as possible, because I must learn the Partition [= score]. You must writhe [= write] to Mrs Hubert, or your husband must make this business. I will comm [= come] at 21 August.

I kiss your hand!

Peter Tschaikovsky
(Doctor)

The concert in Saint Petersburg which Tchaikovsky is referring to here, scheduled for 16/28 October 1893, was in fact the one at which he would conduct the première of his own Symphony No. 6, alongside Laroche's overture *Carmosine* (written in 1868 for a never completed opera based on Alfred de Musset's play) in the second half and other works. At the time of writing this letter, on 11/23 August, Tchaikovsky had all but finished the orchestration of his new symphony, to which it seems he had already given the title *Pathétique*, and already on the following day he would proudly announce to several relatives

²¹ Two of these interviews are included in Alexander Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky through Others' Eyes* (Bloomington, 1999), p. 202–210.

and friends its completion (except for the markings and tempi which still needed to be inserted).

By his request to Ekaterina Laroche to "let me make" the score of her husband's overture "[as] quickly as possible" Tchaikovsky evidently meant that he wanted her to arrange for a copy of the orchestral score of *Carmosine* to be made for him so that he could study it in time for the concert. The "Mrs Hubert" mentioned in this letter is Aleksandra Hubert (1850–1937), the widow of Tchaikovsky's friend and former colleague at the Moscow Conservatory, Nikolai Hubert (1840–1888). She had assisted the composer before in preparing the piano duet arrangements of a number of his works, and as inspector of the conservatory she was well placed to find a reliable copyist who could produce for Tchaikovsky a copy of the *Carmosine* overture, one of the few works by Laroche to have achieved success in the concert-hall.²²

As for the "Doctor" added under his signature, this is something that Tchaikovsky had got into the habit of doing (mainly for humorous effect) ever since receiving his honorary doctorate of music at the University of Cambridge on 1/13 June 1893 (see also the letter to Sophie Menter in [Section VI](#)).

6. Tchaikovsky to Iurii Messer, 4/16 October 1879 [[letter 1306a](#)]

Iurii Messer worked as a proof-reader at Petr Jurgenson's music publishing firm in Moscow, and he also taught at the Conservatory and at the Nikolaevskii Women's Institute for Orphans. From time to time he helped Tchaikovsky to prepare his operas for publication—for example, in the summer of 1879 he arranged, together with Iosif Kotek, the vocal score of *The Maid of Orleans*. Messer was also the author of a number of piano pieces and made piano transcriptions of Lenskii's arioso and aria from *Evgenii Onegin*. In his biography of the composer's wife Valerii Sokolov mentions Messer, since Antonina, in 1880, was hoping to obtain a post as a music teacher at the Nikolaevskii Institute, and Jurgenson, acting on Tchaikovsky's behalf, asked Messer about this possibility. Sokolov cites his full name as: Emilii (Iurii) Frantsevich Messer,²³ which suggests he had foreign origins and that 'Messer' may have been a Russification of the French surname Messier.

This would explain why the following letter auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in 1983—the only letter from Tchaikovsky to Messer to have come to light so far—was written in French, judging from the extracts given in the auction catalogue.²⁴ The letter, dated "Kamenka, 4 October 1879," is six pages long and contains various musical examples (not reproduced in the catalogue). Although Messer was then working on the vocal score of *The Maid of Orleans*, this letter deals mainly with the proofs for the Suite No. 1, soon to be published by Jurgenson in full score, parts, and piano duet arrangement (made by Tchaikovsky himself), and with the piano reduction of *Evgenii Onegin* (also made by the composer), which Jurgenson had already published in October 1878, but in which some mistakes had evidently been found by Messer. We quote the extracts given in the catalogue:

²² The copy of Laroche's overture used by Tchaikovsky to prepare for his concert has survived in the library of the Moscow Conservatory. It contains many comments in Tchaikovsky's own hand regarding the tempo and dynamics, metronome markings, and indications of the instruments. See I. V. Brezhneva, 'Rukopisnye materialy o Chaikovskom v biblioteke Moskovskoi konservatorii', in *Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (2003), p. 337–342 (342).

²³ Valerii Sokolov, *Antonina Chaikovskaia. Istoriia zabytoi zhizni* (Moscow, 1994), p. 66.

²⁴ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1983), p. 294, item no. 982 (consulted via Google Books).

[...] J'ai expédié hier à Jurgenson 1) la partition de la suite et 2) Onéguine avec les corrections que Vous avez faites.

1) Quand les graveurs auront corrigé toutes les fautes que Vous et moi avons trouvées, Vous aurez, n'est ce pas, la bonté de revoir encore une fois les épreuves et surtout de bien examiner si les instruments sont (partout ou il le faut) désignés d'une manière certaine et claire. Je deteste cette façon française de graver les partitions; selon moi il faut les graver comme elles sont. [...] sans omettre les instruments qui ne jouent pas. [...] Dans plusieurs endroits moi, (qui suis l'auteur) je ne savais pas au juste quels sont les parties jouantes. [...] Dans la première partie il ya même un endroit ou règne une confusion étrange et que j'ai corrigée comme j'ai su, sans être certain que j'ai bien fait. Je sais seulement que la désignation des instruments était fausse et que le Piccolo n'a rien à faire dans cet endroit [...]

2) Quant à Onéguine, Vous m'avez rendu un bien grand service en corrigeant les fautes innombrables qui s'y trouvent. [...] Je n'ai pas compris certaines de Vos corrections et j'ai pris la liberté de les effacer et d'écrire: richtig [...]

[...two music examples not reproduced in the catalogue...]

J'ai trouvé d'autres cas semblables. Mais le tout est une excellente correction et je Vous remercie de tout mon cœur.

Comment va l'opéra? [...]

In English translation:

[...] Yesterday I sent off to Jurgenson: 1) the score of the suite, and 2) Onegin with the corrections you made.

1) When the engravers have corrected all the mistakes which you and I have found, you will be so good, won't you, as to look through the proofs once again, and above all to check carefully that the instruments (wherever it is necessary) have been indicated in a precise and clear way. I hate this French manner of engraving scores; in my view they should be engraved as they are [...] without omitting the instruments that don't play. [...] In many places I myself as the author didn't quite know which were the parts that were playing. [...] In the first part there is even a passage where a bizarre confusion holds sway, and which I have corrected as best as I could, without being certain that I have done it right. I only know that the designation of the instruments was wrong, and that the piccolo has no business to be in that passage [...]

2) As for Onegin, you have rendered me a great service by correcting the countless faults which are there. [...] I didn't understand some of your corrections, and I have taken the liberty of deleting them by writing: richtig [correct]

[...two music examples not reproduced in the catalogue...]

I have found other similar cases. But on the whole it is an excellent correction, and I thank you with all my heart.

How is the opera [*The Maid of Orleans*] going? [...]

As this letter shows, Tchaikovsky at first had a very high opinion of Messer's musical and proofreading skills, but eventually he began to find many faults with his work. The following summer, in a letter to Jurgenson concerning the preparation of his own piano duet arrangement of the Piano Concerto No. 2 for publication, he burst out angrily: "Why, he [Messer] isn't a proof-reader, but a clown," and insisted that henceforth he should be employed only for the first proofs, "where there are so many mistakes and they are so blatantly obvious that even he can't miss them."²⁵

²⁵ See, for example, letter 1555 to Petr Jurgenson, 1/13 August–2/14 August 1880. *PSSL IX*, p. 225–226.

7. Tchaikovsky to Vasilii Sapel'nikov, 8/20 August 1893 [[letter 5004b](#)]

The pianist Vasilii Sapel'nikov (1868–1941) frequently appeared as a soloist in the concerts of his works conducted by Tchaikovsky, both in Russia and abroad, during the last five years of his life. Tchaikovsky thought very highly of the young man's talent (see, for example, the letter to Albert Gutmann in [Section II](#)), and he also liked him for his jovial character.²⁶ Only three letters, however, from the composer to Sapel'nikov were previously known to Tchaikovsky scholars (though none of these was published in *PSSL* and two are extant only as photocopies held at the Klin archives which have never been published at all). These three letters all date from 1889.

The following previously unnoticed letter, auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg in 1978, dates from 1893 and was in fact written on the same day (8/20 August) as an equally 'new' letter to Sophie Menter presented further on in our article (see [Section VI](#)). Judging from the extracts provided (in German translation only) in the Stargardt catalogue, it dealt with much the same things as that letter to Menter: namely, with Tchaikovsky's scheduled concerts in Saint Petersburg in January 1894 and with plans for a new European tour in the spring or summer of 1894 on which he was to be accompanied by both Menter and Sapel'nikov. All these plans of course came to nothing after Tchaikovsky's death less than three months later. The partial publication of this letter below is based on the extracts in German translation cited in the auction catalogue:

[...] Our concerts in Petersburg are to take place on 15 and 29 January [18]94. I thank you for your letter and your praise for the Trepak. With you and Menter I will gladly travel to wherever you want: to Copenhagen, Stockholm, Vienna etc. [...] It is quite possible that in September I shall come to Itter [...]²⁷

It is quite possible that Sapel'nikov's letter to the composer has survived in the archives at Klin. The "praise for the Trepak" it contained refers to *Scène dansante: Invitation au trèpak*, which was the last of Tchaikovsky's Eighteen Pieces, Op. 72 (completed earlier that year) and was dedicated to the young pianist.

In June that year, Tchaikovsky had already stayed with Sapel'nikov and Menter at their home in Castle Itter, in the Tyrol, but he would not get round to visiting the place again. His only other trip abroad later that summer was a brief visit to Hamburg in late August/early September (to attend a performance of his opera *Iolanta*). From Sapel'nikov's memoirs we know that he and Tchaikovsky never met again after June 1893.²⁸

²⁶ In his reminiscences of Tchaikovsky, the violinist Iulii Konius (1869–1942) cited some of the amusing stories with which Sapel'nikov would regale his friends. See Polina Vaidman's publication of Iu. E. Konius, 'Vospominaniia o moikh vstrechakh s Petrom Il'ichom i o prebyvanii moem v Klinu', *Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (2003), p. 363–373 (365–366).

²⁷ See J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1978), item no. 922 (consulted via Google Books). The German text in the catalogue reads (with the inserted explanations italicized and in square brackets: "Unsere Konzerte in Petersburg finden am 15. und 29. Januar 94 statt. Ich danke Dir für den Brief und das Lob über den Trepak" ["*Aufforderung zum Trepak*", *das letzte der 18 Klavierstücke op. 72, das Tschaikowsky Sapellnikoff gewidmet hatte. Der Trepak ist ein Kosakentanz.*] "Mit Dir u. Menter" [*die Pianistin*] "fahre ich mit Vergnügen, wohin ihr wollt: nach Kopenhagen, Stockholm, Wien etc. ... Es ist sehr möglich, daß ich im September nach Itter komme. ...")

²⁸ See Sapel'nikov's account of this last meeting in: Alexander Poznansky, *Tchaikovsky through Others' Eyes* (Bloomington, 1999), p. 233–234.

II. Austria

(Anton Door, Albert Gutmann)

1. Tchaikovsky to Anton Door, 6/18 September 1877 [[letter 598a](#)]

Three letters from Tchaikovsky to the Austrian pianist Anton Door (1833–1919), who was his colleague at the Moscow Conservatory from 1866 to 1869 before returning to his homeland to take up a post at the Vienna Conservatory, were published in *PSSL*. They date from 1876 to 1892. A fourth letter, not previously registered in Tchaikovsky scholarship, was advertised for auction by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg on two occasions, in 1980 and 1988, and our partial publication here is based on the extracts provided in the later auction catalogue, which are more complete than in the earlier one. The addressee was not identified in either catalogue, and was described simply as "a friend in Vienna," but given the cordial tone of the letter and the fact that Tchaikovsky had no other close friend in Austria at the time, we can state with almost total confidence that it was written to Door. The favour asked by Tchaikovsky in this letter according to the auction catalogue's summary, namely that his correspondent should help him to find a piano teacher for the children of his sister, Aleksandra Davydova (1842–1891), can only have been addressed to such a long-standing friend. Tchaikovsky wrote this letter, which is reportedly four pages long and dated 6/18 September 1877, at the Davydovs' estate in Kamenka where a few days earlier he had resumed work on *Evgenii Onegin*. Since Tchaikovsky mentions the fact of his recent marriage to Antonina Miliukova (1848–1917), which took place in Moscow on 6/18 July 1877, it is worth pointing out that Antonina had not come to Kamenka with him, but had stayed behind in Moscow to get their new flat ready in time for the start of the new academic year at the Conservatory. Here is the partial text of this letter:

[...] Ma musique n'a pas eu de chance à Vienne. J'en suis désolé. Dans tous les cas, permettez moi de vous serrer [la main] bien cordialement et vous remercier pour la peine que vous vous êtes donné pour me faire connaître aux Viennois. Je ne perd pas courage. Si ma musique en vaut la peine, mon temps viendra [...]

Je pars demain à Moscou, pour recommencer pour la 12^{ème} fois mon cours d'harmonie!!! Comme c'est amusant.

Je me suis marié, il y a deux mois. Est-il vrai que vous vous êtes marié aussi?¹

In English translation:

[...] My music hasn't had any luck in Vienna. I am very aggrieved by this. In any case, allow me to shake [your hand] most cordially and to thank you for the trouble which you have taken in making me known to the Viennese. I have not lost heart. If my music is worth it, my time will come [...]

Tomorrow I am leaving for Moscow to recommence, for the twelfth time, my harmony class!!! How amusing that is.

I have got married—two months ago. Is it true that you too have married? [...]

In a letter to Door the previous year, Tchaikovsky had thanked his friend for playing piano pieces of his at recitals in Vienna, and also suggested a number of his orchestral works which he, Door, might like to recommend to the organizers of symphonic concerts in the Austrian

¹ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1988), p. 358. Shorter extracts were published in: J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1980), p. 268 (both consulted via Google Books).

capital.² From Door's reminiscences we know that in 1877 he persuaded the Austrian conductor Hans Richter (1843–1916) to include Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 3 at a concert of the Vienna Philharmonic Society, but this work was unfortunately withdrawn from the programme after the first rehearsals. The letter presented above may refer to this or a similar setback for Door in his efforts on behalf of Tchaikovsky's orchestral music in Vienna.

2. Tchaikovsky to Albert Gutmann, 9/21 August 1892 [[letter 4749a](#)]

This previously unknown letter to the Austrian music publisher Albert Gutmann (1852–1915), who in his capacity as chairman of the organizing committee for the International Exhibition for Music and Drama in Vienna had invited Tchaikovsky to conduct a concert there, forms part of the Gilman Ordway Manuscript Collection at the Schubert Club Museum (Saint Paul, Minnesota). The latter museum has a number of rare letters and manuscripts by composers on display on its website, including this one.³ Tchaikovsky replied to the Viennese committee and its chairman as follows:

[p. 1:] Klin, près Moscou
9/21 Août 1892

Très respectés Messieurs!

Vous m'excuserez de Vous répondre en français. J'écris très mal l'allemand et comme je suis en ce moment à la campagne, je n'ai personne ici pour corriger mes fautes d'ort[h]ographe.

J'ai l'honneur de répondre à la proposition que Vous me faites l'honneur de faire, — que j'accepte avec plaisir l'invitation de venir à Vienne pour y conduire l'orchestre à un concert consacré à mes œuvres. Malheureusement je ne puis plus [p. 2] disposer de la fin du mois courant ayant promis de le passer à Kieff, ou [= où] je suis attendu et où je pars demain. Je ne pourrai donc venir que vers le 20 Septembre. Demain en passant par Moscou je Vous enverrai une dépêche [= dépêche] dans laquelle je Vous prierai de fixer tout de suite le jour du concert et des répétitions [= répétitions], car il faut que je sache aussi vite que possible les dates justes pour disposer de mon temps. Quant au programme voici ce que je propose:

- 1) Suite N° 3
- 2) Sérénade [= Sérénade] pour instruments à corde
- 3) Suite du Ballet Der Nussknacker que je viens de composer. [p. 3]

Chacune de ces œuvres comporte 4 parties (vier Sätze) et je crois que c'est plus que suffisant. Si par hasard Vous teniez à ce que Mr Grünfeld ou Rosenthal exécutent mon concerto (N° 1 en Si bémol mineur), certainement je n'aurai qu'à m'en réjouir et en être [= être] on ne peut plus flatté. Alors ce concerto prendrait la place de la Sérénade pour Cordes. Si, par hasard aucun de ces grands artistes ne voulut m'honorer de leur concours, permettez moi de Vous recommander un grand, j'oserai dire, génial pianist russe [p. 4] Wassil Sapellnikoff qui se trouve justement pas loin de Vienne et qui certes serait heureux de profiter de Votre invitation. (Son adresse est Schloss Itter, Station Hopfgarten, Tyrol, bei Fr[au] Menter).

Si Vous teniez à une ouverture ou Simphonische Dichtung au lieu de la Sérénade, veuillez me le dire, cependant je préférerais[s] que Vous acceptiez mon programme tel que je Vous le propose.

Veuillez adresser Vos lettres ou Vos dépêches [= dépêches] per adresse à Mr P. I. Jurgenson à Moscou (c'est le frère de celui de Pétersbourg) qui sera toujours au courant

² See letter 444 to Anton Door, 10/22 February 1876. *PSSL* XVII, p. 220–221.

³ See <http://www.schubert.org/museum/manuscript/> (last accessed on 11 December 2010).

de mes changements d'adresse. Je suis prêt [= prêt] à venir pour le 20 Septembre. À Vienne je descend toujours à l'Hotel Goldenes Lamm (Praterstrasse). Veuillez agréer l'expression de mon profond respect.

P. Tchaïkovsky

In English translation:

Highly esteemed Sirs! You must excuse me for replying to you in French. My written German is very poor, and as I am at present in the country I have no one here who could correct my spelling mistakes.

I am honoured to say, in response to the proposal which you do me the honour of putting to me, that I gladly accept the invitation to come to Vienna so as to conduct there a concert dedicated to my works. Unfortunately, I cannot dispose any longer of the last days of the current month, having already promised to spend them in Kiev, where I am expected and where I shall be leaving for tomorrow.⁴ I can therefore only come to Vienna towards the 20th of September. Tomorrow, when I pass through Moscow, I shall send you a telegram in which I shall ask you to fix immediately the date of the concert and the rehearsals, since it is essential that I know the exact dates as soon as possible so that I can dispose of my time accordingly. As for the programme, this is what I suggest:

- 1) Suite No. 3
- 2) Serenade for String Orchestra
- 3) Suite from the ballet *The Nutcracker*, which I have just composed.

Each one of these works comprises four sections (vier Sätze), and I think that this is more than sufficient. If by any chance you should wish that Mr Grünfeld⁵ or Rosenthal⁶ should perform my concerto (No. 1 in B-flat major), I would certainly be delighted by this and feel enormously flattered. In that case this concerto would take the place of the Serenade for Strings. If by any chance neither of these great artists should wish to do me the honour of participating in my concert, allow me to recommend to you a great Russian pianist—indeed, I'd say a pianist of genius—Vasilii Sapel'nikov, who is at present not far from Vienna and who would most certainly be glad to take up your invitation. (His address is: Itter Castle, Hopfgarten Station, Tyrol, at Frau Menter's).

If you would like an overture or symphonic poem instead of the Serenade, please let me know, although I would prefer you to accept my programme such as I have suggested it.

Would you address your letters or telegrams to Mr P. I. Jurgenson in Moscow (he is the brother of the one in Petersburg⁷), who will always be informed of my changes of address. I am prepared to come for the 20th of September. In Vienna I always stay at the Goldenes Lamm Hotel (Praterstrasse). Please accept this assurance of my profound respect.

P. Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky was very keen to conquer the Viennese public and the critics there, many of whom had hitherto disregarded or dismissed his music out of anti-Russian prejudice—the most striking example being Eduard Hanslick's notorious description of the Violin Concerto,

⁴ Tchaikovsky did not in fact travel to Kiev at all in mid/late August 1892 or at any other point that summer. Instead, on 11/23 August he paid a brief visit to Moscow in order to liaise with the engravers who were preparing the scores of *The Nutcracker* and *Iolanta* for publication, returning to Klin immediately afterwards to go through the proofs. His decision to accept the invitation to give a concert in Vienna changed his travel plans for that summer considerably.

⁵ Alfred Grünfeld (1852–1924), Austrian pianist.

⁶ Moriz Rosenthal (1862–1946), Polish pianist.

⁷ Osip Jurgenson (1829–1910), the older brother of Tchaikovsky's main publisher.

premiered in Vienna by Brodsky in 1881, as "stinking" music, and of its finale as redolent of "the brutal, sad merriness of a Russian parish fair [...] with its cheap liquor."⁸ Tchaikovsky never forgot about this review, and the opportunity to refute such critics was clearly the main factor which induced him to accept the offer from Vienna. As he wrote to his brother Anatolii five days later: "The Exhibition committee has been inviting me so emphatically to conduct a concert there that I've made my mind up. This will be profitable for me in the sense that up to now Vienna, out of Russophobia, has treated me, if not hostilely, then contemptuously, and has ignored my existence. It would be nice to overcome these prejudices."⁹

Having accepted the committee's offer, Tchaikovsky would arrive in Vienna on 6/18 September 1892, but at the first rehearsal three days later he was so dismayed by the cramped conditions of the concert venue that he cancelled his engagement and left the city at once.¹⁰ The above letter is nevertheless an important testimony of Tchaikovsky's artistic plans in the summer of 1892, and it also reflects his admiration for the young pianist Vasilii Sapel'nikov (see the letter to Sapel'nikov of 8/20 August 1893 in [Section I](#)).

⁸ See a compilation of Hanslick's reviews of Tchaikovsky's works—from the overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet* in 1876 to the opera *Iolanta* in 1900—in Ernst Kuhn (ed.), *Tschaikowsky aus der Nähe. Kritische Würdigungen und Erinnerungen von Zeitgenossen* (Berlin, 1994), p. 196–213. It was only in later years that Hanslick began giving his music some credit.

⁹ Letter 4754 to Anatolii Tchaikovsky, 14/26 August 1892 *PSSL XVI-B*, p. 155.

¹⁰ Cf. letter 4767 to Modest Tchaikovsky, 7/19 September–10/22 September 1892. *PSSL XVI-B*, p. 164–165.

III. Belgium

(Désirée Artôt-Padilla, Joseph Dupont, Jean-Théodore Radoux, Józef Wieniawski)

1. Tchaikovsky to Désirée Artôt-Padilla, 10/22 February 1889 [[letter 3790a](#)]

Tchaikovsky's hopes of marrying Désirée Artôt (1835–1907), the great Belgian mezzo-soprano—whose talent had made such an impression on him when she first came to Moscow with the Italian opera company of the Warsaw Theatre in the spring of 1868, and to whom he became engaged at the end of the year—had been dashed by her sudden decision, upon returning to Warsaw in early 1869, to marry instead the Spanish baritone Mariano Padilla y Ramos (1842–1906) without, it seems, giving Tchaikovsky any explanation. This had caused him great pain at the time, if only because of the humiliation it entailed. But nineteen years later, when he saw her at a soirée in Berlin (the last stop of his first concert tour of Germany) on 22 January/3 February 1888, all was forgiven. "I was inexpressibly glad to see her," he wrote to his brother Modest. "We immediately became friends again, and didn't touch upon the past with a single word."¹ Indeed, later that year he would go on to compose the Six French Songs, Op. 65, specially for her, and when she heard about this she wrote from Berlin, where she was then living with her husband and daughter, to thank Tchaikovsky, emphasizing that he had to come to their house on his next visit to Berlin where they would host a reception in his honour.²

Tchaikovsky next came to Berlin in February 1889, as part of his second European conducting tour, and Mme Artôt-Padilla, perhaps mindful of the composer's dislike of social engagements, felt it was necessary to remind him of her invitation in a note which she left for him at his hotel: "My dear Friend, I have come to remind you that you promised to spend the evening with me tomorrow—as you requested, there will be very few people. [...] Let me know by just one word that you have not forgotten me and believe in all my sympathy, in my loyal friendship."³ Tchaikovsky's brief reply on the same day (10/22 February 1889) was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in 1984 who published its text in their catalogue together with a facsimile. A photocopy is reportedly held in the Tchaikovsky House-Museum at Klin, but it does not seem to have been published elsewhere, so we have decided to include the text here:

Certainement je ne l'ai pas oublié, chère et bonne Madame, et je m'en réjouis d'avance! À demain! Merci!

Votre bien dévoué
P. Tchaikowsky⁴

In English translation:

I have certainly not forgotten it, dear and kind Madame, and I am already rejoicing in anticipation! Till tomorrow! Thank you!

Your very devoted
P. Tchaikovsky

¹ Letter 3484 to Modest Tchaikovsky, 23 January/4 February 1888. *PSSL XIV*, p. 353–354.

² Letter from Désirée Artôt-Padilla to Tchaikovsky, 27 October/8 November 1888. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (Leningrad, 1970), p. 194–195, p. 30.

³ Letter from Désirée Artôt-Padilla to Tchaikovsky, 10/22 February 1889. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 195, p. 30.

⁴ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten*, Katalog-Nr. 631 (Marburg, 1984), p. 294, item no. 946 (consulted via Google Books).

Tchaikovsky not only attended the reception at the singer's house the following evening, but he also spent most of the following days in her company during this brief stay in Berlin. In the midst of all the social events he had to attend, he explained to his brother Modest, "my sole consolation is Artôt, who gets invited to wherever I am, and of whom I am awfully fond."⁵

2. Tchaikovsky to Joseph Dupont, 25 October/6 November 1876 [[letter 508a](#)]

The following unpublished letter from 1876 is addressed to the Belgian conductor Joseph Dupont (1838–1899), whom Tchaikovsky probably first met in the autumn of 1868, when Dupont arrived in Moscow together with the Italian opera company of the Warsaw Theatre.⁶ The principal attraction of this company during their guest appearances in Moscow (which lasted until 19/31 December 1868) was the mezzo-soprano Désirée Artôt, who as has been previously noted, was briefly betrothed to Tchaikovsky. In 1870 and 1871, Dupont also served as the conductor of Moscow's own Italian opera company at the Bol'shoi Theatre, so it is no surprise that Tchaikovsky, in his reply to a request from Dupont for the score of one of his works, addresses him as "dear friend". This letter was advertised by the Arcturial auction-house in Paris on 14 December 2010. Benoît Puttemans, the auctioneer in charge of this letter, kindly provided us with a colour photocopy, and we have used this to publish its full text here:

[p. 1:] Moscou. Le 25 Octobre 1876
6 Novembre.

Cher maître et ami !

Vous avez eu l'extrême [= extrême] bonté de m'avoir demandé quelque composition à moi qui eut pu être jouée sous Votre direction à Bruxelles[s]. Si jusqu'à présent je ne V[ou]s ai rien expédié [= expédié], c'est que j'étais dans l'indécision: laquelle de mes œuvres serait la plus propre à me présenter au public éclairé [= éclairé] de Votre capitale. J'ai trois symphonie[s] dont la première n'est gravée qu'en partition, la deuxième qu'en arrangement de piano et ce n'est que la troisième qui va être bientôt [= bientôt] gravée (partition et parties séparées), d'une manière complète. C'est celle aussi que je considère comme la meilleure, du moins comme la plus mûre des trois. Outre cela j'ai une ouverture [p. 2] de concert (Roméo et Juliette [Juliette]), une fantaisie symphonique (La tempête) une autre intitulée Francesca da Rimini, des ouvertures et des morceaux détachés [= détachés] de mes opéras. Après mûre réflexion c'est l'ouverture de Roméo et Juliette [Juliette] que je crois de toutes mes choses celle qui a le plus de chances pour plaire au[x] publics étrangers. Une symphonie d'un auteur complètement inconnu inspire toujours de la défiance. Le public dit : il y en a tant de célèbres [= célèbres], pourquoi veut on nous ennuyer [= ennuyer] pendant une heure avec l'œuvre d'un inconnu? Une ouverture — c'est différent [= différent]. Si elle à déplu [= a déplu] on se dit qu'après tout c'a n'a duré qu'un petit quart d'heure. Ainsi donc c'est l'ouverture en question que je recommande à votre bienveillante attention. Elle est gravée chez Bote et Bock à Berlin et [p. 3] j'ai écrit au chef de cette maison pour qu'il V[ou]s <en> envoie au plus vite la partition et les partie[s] séparées [= séparées]. Cependant si V[ou]s teniez à autre chose, je suis, comme de raison, prêt [= prêt] à V[ou]s servir. Dans ce cas je V[ou]s enverrai, selon Votre choix[,] telle de

⁵ Letter 3795 to Modest Tchaikovsky, 15/27 February 1889. *PSSL* XV-A, p. 51.

⁶ For more information on the career of Joseph Dupont (and that of his elder brother, Auguste Dupont), see two articles by Christophe Pirenne: 'Dupont et Dupont à Bruxelles', *Revue belge de musicologie* 55 (2001), p. 283–302; and 'Joseph Dupont, chef d'orchestre du Théâtre impérial Italien de Varsovie (1867–1870)', *Revue belge de musicologie* 60 (2006), p. 141–153.

mes compositions que V[ou]s voudrez, mais pas autrement qu'en partition et parties séparés [= séparées] écrites [= écrites]. Quant à la troisième symphonie dès que ce sera prêt [= prêt] je V[ou]s l'expédierai [= expédierai].

Veillez donc, cher et excellent ami[,] me donner un mot de réponse et sachez que dans tous les cas je suis et je serai Votre ami fidèle et profondément reconnaissant

P. Tchaikovsky

In English translation:

Dear maestro and friend! You had the extreme kindness to ask me for some composition of mine which could be played in Brussels under your direction. If I have so far failed to send you anything, it is because I was uncertain as to which of my works would be the most suitable to introduce me to the enlightened public of your capital. I have three symphonies, of which the first has only been published as a full score, the second only in arrangement for piano, and it is only the third which is soon going to be engraved in a comprehensive fashion (full score and orchestral parts). It is also the latter which I consider to be the best, or at least the most mature, of the three. Apart from that I have a concert *overture* (*Romeo and Juliet*), a symphonic fantasia (*The Tempest*), another such fantasia entitled *Francesca da Rimini*, and various overtures and pieces extracted from my operas. On mature deliberation it is the *Romeo and Juliet* overture which, of all my works, I believe to have the greatest chance of being able to please foreign audiences. A symphony by an unknown author never inspires confidence. The public says: there are so many famous composers; why should we have to be bored for an hour with the work of an unknown one? An overture is a different matter. If it fails to please, people say that after all it did just last a brief quarter of an hour. And so it is this particular overture which I submit to your benevolent attention. It has been engraved by Bote & Bock in Berlin, and I have written to the director of this firm to ask him to send you the full score and individual parts as soon as possible.⁷ However, if you would like something else, I am, as you might reasonably expect, willing to oblige you. In that case I shall send you, in accordance with your choice, that composition of mine which you would like, only it will have to be in the form of a handwritten full score and individual parts. As for the third symphony, I shall send it to you as soon as it is ready.

Could you please, my dear and splendid friend, send me a word or two in reply, and let me assure you that in any case I am, and shall always be, your faithful and profoundly grateful friend.

P. Tchaikovsky

We have not yet been able to establish whether Dupont managed to programme any of Tchaikovsky's works in Brussels, and if so, whether he followed the composer's advice.⁸

Tchaikovsky, however, was not wrong in placing his hopes on the overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet* as the work which would pave the way for his growing popularity outside Russia. As he would point out in his first letter to Édouard Colonne just two months later, this work, first performed in Paris at one of Jules Padeloup's popular concerts on 28 November/10 December 1876, had attracted the attention of a number of Parisian musicians.⁹

⁷ The letter to Hugo Bock mentioned by Tchaikovsky below has not yet come to light.

⁸ Lucinde Braun intends to research the context of this letter further and publish her findings in the 2012 issue of the *Tschaikowsky Gesellschaft Mitteilungen*.

⁹ See the publication of letter 528a to Colonne, 25 December 1876/6 January 1877, in: *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 15 (2008), p. 4–7.

3. Tchaikovsky to Jean-Théodore Radoux, 11/23 December 1887 [[letter 3433a](#)]

This letter to the Belgian bassoonist Jean-Théodore Radoux (1835–1911), who was appointed bassoon professor at the Liège Conservatory in 1856 and became its director in 1872, is held at the Médiathèque Musicale Mahler in Paris (Fonds Sylvain Dupuis, Album 7, p. 84). Facsimiles of autograph letters by several composers and musicians, including Berlioz, Bülow, Gounod, Liszt, Mahler, Massenet, Saint-Saëns, and many others have been published in a very well presented section of the Médiathèque's website,¹⁰ but unfortunately Tchaikovsky's letter to Radoux is not among them. According to the regulations of this institution, scans or complete transcripts of documents in its collections cannot be provided on request; it is necessary to consult the materials on site. Nevertheless, Alena Parthonnaud, a librarian at the Médiathèque, kindly provided us with some short extracts in order to help us with our work. In his letter to the Belgian musician, written shortly before he departed from Russia on his first conducting tour of Western Europe, Tchaikovsky writes:

St Petersburg
11/23 Décembre 1887

[...] Bien qu'un peu étonné de ce que ma première symphonie possédât le don de vous plaire [...] remercie infiniment pour le désir [...] de faire connaître aux Liégeois [...] une symphonie quoique faible sous tous les rapports [...] Je suis désolé de ce que la partition gravée, que vous possédez fourmille de fautes d'impression.

Mon éditeur P. I. Jurgenson a l'intention de publier une nouvelle édition. [...]

In English translation:

[...] Although I am a bit astonished that my first symphony had such qualities as to please you [...] [I] thank you infinitely for your wish [...] to acquaint the citizens of Liège with [...] a symphony, which, though it is poor in every respect [...] I am very sorry that the engraved score which you possess is teeming with printing errors.

My publisher, P. I. Jurgenson, intends to bring out a new edition.¹¹ [...]

The full score of the Symphony No. 1 (*Winter Daydreams*) had been published by Jurgenson in Moscow in 1875, on the basis of the revised version of this work (originally composed in 1866–68) which Tchaikovsky had made the year before. This edition was indeed riddled with printing errors, as Tchaikovsky pointed out to Jurgenson on a number of occasions, but otherwise the composer always remained very fond of his First Symphony, so his disparaging remarks about it in this letter to Radoux of 1887 may perhaps be ascribed to excessive modesty. That being said, it would be necessary to consult the whole text of this letter, which will hopefully be made accessible to researchers soon.

Radoux does seem to have carried out his intention of acquainting the public at Liège with Tchaikovsky's music—though not with the First Symphony after all. Thus, in a letter which Tchaikovsky's French publisher Félix Mackar (1837–1903) wrote to the composer on 10/22 January 1888, we read: "Your Second Symphony was performed at the Liège Conservatory under the direction of [Jean-Théodore] Radoux, the director of the conservatory. Would you not like to conduct your works in Liège? Would you like me to

¹⁰ See the archive of images at: http://www.mediathequemahler.org/archives_en_images/category/lettres-de-musiciens (last accessed on 11 December 2010).

¹¹ The orchestral parts of the First Symphony (in its 1874 revised version) were indeed published by Jurgenson in 1888.

discuss this?"¹² We have not yet been able to find any information on what was presumably the first performance of Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony in Belgium.

As for Mackar's suggestion, this is what Tchaikovsky, then in the middle of his concert tour in Germany and elated by his successes so far, replied to his French publisher from Leipzig on 14/26 January 1888: "You ask me if I would like to go to Liège or Brussels to conduct there. But of course, with great pleasure—as long as it is not later than the end of March or early April, and that I just have to conduct parts of the concerts rather than entire ones. I would prefer Brussels especially, since I suppose that the orchestra in Liège can't be a first-rate one."¹³ Tchaikovsky did not in fact give a concert in Belgium until 2/14 January 1893, and it was to be in Brussels. However, his misgivings about the quality of the orchestra in the 'provincial' city of Liège may well have been unfounded.

4. Tchaikovsky to Józef Wieniawski, 30 December 1892/11 January 1893 [[letter 4837a](#)]

Tchaikovsky himself first conducted his own music in Brussels on 2/14 January 1893, in a concert whose programme was very varied, for it included the Suite No. 3, the Piano Concerto No. 1 (soloist Franz Rummel), the suite from the ballet *The Nutcracker* (recently premièred at the Mariinskii Theatre), the Serenade for String Orchestra, and the overture *The Year 1812*. He arrived in Brussels four days before the concert, and not long after his emotional visit to his childhood governess Fanny Dürbach (1822–1901) at her home town of Montbéliard in the west of France. In Brussels there were other reminders, if not of his childhood, then at least of the years of his youth. For during the interval of his concert the Belgian composer François-Auguste Gevaert (1828–1908), whose famous *Treatise on Instrumentation* (Liège, 1863) Tchaikovsky had translated into Russian back in 1865, gave a speech to thank him on behalf of the Brussels Association of Musicians to which Tchaikovsky had donated his conducting fee.

Another prominent musician based in the Belgian capital was the Polish-born pianist and composer Józef Wieniawski (1837–1912), the younger brother of the more famous Henryk Wieniawski (1835–1880) and a professor at the Brussels Conservatory. Tchaikovsky was acquainted with him from their days as colleagues at the Moscow Conservatory, where the younger Wieniawski had worked as a professor of piano from 1866 to 1869. He had met him again in Berlin, in February 1889, during his second European conducting tour.¹⁴ In view of their long acquaintance it doesn't come as a surprise that shortly after his arrival in Brussels at the start of 1893 Tchaikovsky sent a visiting card to Wieniawski with the following text, which was published for the first time in a Belgian music journal in 2006 on the basis of the autograph held at the Royal Library of Belgium in Brussels:

Mon cher ami ! Je suis arrivé hier soir. Je viens d'avoir une répétition et suis si fatigué, que je ne puis aller vous voir tout de suite. Quand permettrez vous que je dîne chez vous ? Est-ce aujourd'hui ou demain ? Donnez moi un petit mot de réponse.¹⁵

¹² Mackar's letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 10/22 January 1888 is included (in Russian translation only) in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 157.

¹³ Letter 3474 to Félix Mackar, 14/26 January 1888. *PSSL* XIV, p. 339–340.

¹⁴ Cf. this entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 16/28 February 1889: "Dinner at Dressel's [restaurant] (the Bocks, Artôt, Bohlmann, Wieniawski." Quoted from Wladimir Lakond (transl.), *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (Westport CT, 1973), p. 261.

¹⁵ Sandrine Thieffry, 'Les Wieniawski à Bruxelles d'après leur correspondance inédite conservée à la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique (1874-1912)', *Revue belge de musicologie* (2006), p. 67–68. The author dated this brief note to 11 January 1893 (NS) on the basis of its contents, since the card itself bears no date. Mme

In English translation:

My dear friend! I arrived last night. I have just had a rehearsal and am so exhausted that I cannot come to see you immediately. When will you allow me to come and dine with you? Will it be today or tomorrow? Do let me have a brief reply.

It seems that Wieniawski, knowing that Tchaikovsky was in town, had gone to his hotel in the morning, but because the composer was out, having to attend the first rehearsal for his concert, he had only been able to leave his visiting card. The above note, then, is Tchaikovsky's reply later in the afternoon. Since Tchaikovsky was very meticulous in storing all the letters, even down to short notes, that he received, Wieniawski's visiting card addressed to his Russian colleague may well have survived in the archives at Klin.

IV. Czech Republic

(Adolf Čech)

1. Tchaikovsky to Adolf Čech, 5/17 October 1888 [[letter 3687a](#)]

Five letters from Tchaikovsky to the Czech conductor Adolf Čech (1841–1903), dating from 1888 to 1891, were published in the Soviet edition of his correspondence, the last volume of which (vol. XVII with letters for the year 1893 and those from other years that had come to light since the earlier volumes) appeared in 1981. A few years later, in 1985, the letter to Čech presented below was published for the first time (in French translation and with a facsimile) in a book detailing the musical autographs and documents held at the Musée royal de Mariemont in Belgium.¹ Ten years later, it was published again (in both the original German and in French translation) in a compilation of the letters by composers and musicians held at the Musée royal de Mariemont.² As indicated there, Tchaikovsky's letter was acquired for the museum on 6 April 1908 at an auction of the collection of autographs belonging to the late Fritz Donebauer, a notable Prague-based collector.

These publications, however, seem to have escaped the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars, and by including the text here we hope to rectify this situation. Tchaikovsky writes in connection with the forthcoming production of *Evgenii Onegin* at the Prague National Theatre—the opera's first performance outside Russia—which he had agreed to conduct himself, but the initial rehearsals for which were being directed by Čech:

Kline, bei Moskau / 5 / 17 October [1888]

Hochgeehrter Herr Capellmeister!

Ihre freundliche[n] Zeilen habe ich gleich bekommen und beeile mich[,] Ihnen gleich meinen wärmsten Dank zu ausdrücken [= auszudrücken] für alles[,] was Sie für mich schon gemacht haben und machen werden! Es ist mir besonders angenehm[,] dass Sie eine so gute Meinung von meiner Oper haben!

Seitdem ich Ihnen geschrieben habe, haben Sie [= sich] die Sache ein bis[s]chen verändert. Man möchte mich in Petersburg in einem grossen Concerte dirigiren lassen (am 24 / 12 October) und in Warschau und anderen Städten Concerte mit meiner Mitwirkung arrangiren. Ich glaube sogar[,] dass mein Vertreter Herr Zet aus Petersburg hat schon in Prag geschrieben [= schon nach Prag geschrieben hat,] ob man [= man] nicht Onéguine bis Januar aufschieben könnte. Aber, obgleich es mir auch sehr lieb wäre[,] nur erst im Januar nach Prag zu gehen, aber bitte Sie sehr[,] sich nicht damit zu genieren [= sich nicht davon genieren zu lassen]. Machen Sie es so[,] wie es Ihnen am bequemsten ist. Gewiss[,] wenn Sie anders nich[t] können, ich komme zum 20 November. Aber bitte, lieber Herr Capellmeister[,] mir gleich einen [= eine] Antwort geben [= geben Sie mir gleich eine Antwort]. Von Petersburg sind schon die Costumbilder [= Kostümbilder] und die Mise en scène nach Prag geschickt.

Ich wünsche dass die Oper bei Ihnen mit den Petersburger Streichen [= Strichen] geht [= dass die Oper bei Ihnen mit den Petersburger Verkürzungen inszeniert wird]. Dieselben sind alle von mir selbst, dem Rathe Naprawniks folgend, gemacht worden. Bitte, Herr Capellmeister, wenn Sie Frau Čerwinka-Rieger sehen, fragen Sie sie, ob sie meinen Brief erhalten hat. Ich habe sie nämlich um eine sehr wichtige Sache gebeten (ein

¹ Gérard Pinsart, *Ces musiciens qui ont fait la musique: autographes et documents musicaux du XVIe au XXe siècle* (Morlanwelz, 1985), p. 208–210.

² Malou Haine, *400 lettres de musiciens: au Musée royal de Mariemont* (Liège, 1995), p. 416–417.

Vorwort zu Onéguine) und möchte sehr wissen[,] ob sie die Güte haben wird[,] meine Bitte zu erfüllen.

Lassen Sie mich Ihnen noch einmal herzlich danken, mein hochgeehrter Herr und lieber Freund!

Ihr ergebenster
P. Čajkovsky

In English translation:

Highly esteemed Herr Kapellmeister! I have just received your friendly lines and hasten to convey to you immediately my most fervent gratitude for everything that you have already done, and will be doing, for me! It is particularly gratifying to me that you have such a high opinion of my opera!³

Things have changed slightly since I last wrote to you.⁴ There are plans to have me conduct at a big concert in Petersburg (on 24 / 12 October), as well as to arrange concerts with my participation in Warsaw and other cities.⁵ I even think that my agent Mr. Zet⁶ in Petersburg has already sent a letter to Prague enquiring whether it might not be possible to postpone *Onegin* until January. However, even though I myself would prefer to come to Prague in January, I beg you not to feel constrained by this. Do what is most convenient for you. If everything else is impossible for you, I shall definitely come for the 20th of November. However, dear Herr Kapellmeister, please do give me an immediate reply.⁷ The sketches of the costumes and the mise en scène have already been dispatched from Petersburg to Prague.

³ Tchaikovsky is replying here to a letter written to him by Adolf Čech in Prague on 29 September/11 October 1888. In this letter Čech had explained that, as requested by Tchaikovsky himself, *Evgenii Onegin* was to be staged there on 18/30 November 1888, and that he would soon be able to begin the rehearsals and "to devote myself entirely to your remarkable opera, which has completely (please don't take this for flattery) taken hold of my heart". It had been Tchaikovsky's own wish—when prompted by the director of the National Theatre, František Šubert (1849–1915), during his first visit to the city earlier that year—to conduct *Onegin* in Prague, but the opening night would in fact take place six days later than planned, that is on 24 November/6 December 1888. Čech's letter has been published (in Russian translation) in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 188–189.

⁴ See letter 3676 to Adolf Čech, 22 September/3 October 1888. *PSSL* XIV, p. 543–544.

⁵ Tchaikovsky would in fact conduct at two major concerts in Saint Petersburg that autumn before his departure for Prague: a concert of the Philharmonic Society on 5/17 November 1888, whose programme was drawn exclusively from his own works, and which, among other things, featured the première of the Symphony No. 5; and the second half of the Russian Musical Society's third symphonic concert on 12/24 November 1888, which featured the première of the overture-fantasia *Hamlet* and the second performance of his new symphony. Tchaikovsky's second concert tour as a conductor of his works, which again took him to various Western European cities, did not begin until late January/early February 1889. Warsaw was not included in the itinerary, and he did not conduct a concert there until January 1892.

⁶ Julius Zet (in Russian: Iulii Tset) was for many years secretary to the pianist Sophie Menter, and it was through her that he met Tchaikovsky. In 1888 he became the composer's representative in his negotiations with Western European concert agents. Tchaikovsky thought very highly of Zet's personal qualities, but the latter did not have a good eye for business and many of his ambitious enterprises fell through. He left Russia in 1891 and never went back again. See M. Chaikovskii, *Zhizn' Petra Il'icha Chaikovskogo* [1900–02] (Moscow, 1997), vol. 3, p. 229, n. 1.

⁷ Adolf Čech replied to this letter already on 10/22 October 1888, and explained that after receiving it he had immediately gone to see František Šubert to discuss the possibility of postponing the production of *Onegin*, but it had turned out that it could at most be postponed by a few days, and not until January 1889, since Antonín Dvořák's new opera *The Jacobin* was to be produced at the start of the coming new year. Čech's letter has been published (in Russian translation) in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 189, but note 3 accompanying this publication states incorrectly that it is a reply to Tchaikovsky's letter of 22 September/3 October (letter 3676) because the editors were unaware of the existence of the above letter.

I would like the opera to be staged in your city with the Petersburg cuts. These were all made by me personally, following Nápravník's advice.⁸ Please, Herr Capellmeister, when you see Frau Červinková-Riegrová, would you ask her if she has received my letter? For I have asked her to do me a very important favour (to write a Foreword to *Onegin*), and I would very much like to know if she will be so kind as to fulfil my request.⁹

Let me thank you cordially once again, highly esteemed Sir and dear friend!

Yours most devotedly,
P. Tchaikovsky

The first performance of *Onegin* in Prague on 24 November/6 December 1888, conducted by the composer, would turn out to be a resounding success and endeared the music-loving Czech capital to him even further.

2. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent [Josef Bohuslav Foerster?], 14/26 March [1892?] [[letter 5065e](#)]

The reason why this letter, auctioned by Sotheby's in London on 26 May 2000, has been placed in the section for Czech correspondents of Tchaikovsky, will become clear from the brief summary given in the auction catalogue:

Autograph letter signed ("P. Cajkovsky"), in German, to an unidentified composer ("Sehr geehrter Herr!"), expressing interest in looking at his compositions, thanking him for his letter, assuring him of his good health, and passing his best wishes to the violinist Ondricek. 1 page, 8vo, printed stationery bearing the composer's monogram, Moscow, 14 March, no year, mounted.¹⁰

Tchaikovsky often used German in writing to his Czech correspondents, the number of which had increased significantly after his two triumphant visits to Prague in 1888, and the violinist mentioned can only be František Ondříček (1857–1922), so this letter may well be addressed to a Czech friend of the latter, and, moreover, one who was an aspiring composer. Tchaikovsky seems to have first made Ondříček's acquaintance in March 1888, during his first appearance as a conductor in London, where the violinist was also performing at the time.¹¹ So this letter must have been written after 1888 (more on the dating below).

Among the Czech composers featured in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (Leningrad, 1970)—the only such compilation of letters to Tchaikovsky from foreign musicians and other correspondents involved in the music and theatre world to have been published so far—the only one who had yet to make a name for himself at the time of

⁸ See, for example, letter 3674 to Eduard Nápravník, 21 September/3 October 1888 (*PSSL XIV*, p. 538–539), in which Tchaikovsky discusses some of the cuts he made for the production of *Onegin* at the Saint Petersburg Mariinskii Theatre in October 1884.

⁹ The Czech librettist Marie Červinková-Riegrová (1854–1894), who had met Tchaikovsky in Prague in February 1888, had recently sent him her translation into Czech of the libretto of *Onegin* together with a letter on 3/15 September 1888. Cf. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 187–188. Tchaikovsky thanked her warmly in his reply, and also asked her if she could write a short text explaining the significance of Pushkin's verse novel to the Czech public which could be distributed to the audience before performances of the opera in Prague. See letter 3668 to Marie Červinková-Riegrová, 12/24 September 1888, in *PSSL XIV*, p. 532–533.

¹⁰ See the Sotheby's website: http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=TFGF (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The letter was listed as lot no. 263 in sale no. L00202.

¹¹ Cf. the diary entries made in London from 9/21 March to 11/23 March 1888, in which Tchaikovsky describes how he spent much of his time with Ondříček and his wife. *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 241–242.

Tchaikovsky's first visit to Prague is Josef Bohuslav Foerster (1859–1951), whose wife, the soprano Berta Foerstrová-Lautererová (1869-1936) sang Tat'iana at the first performance of *Evgenii Onegin* in Prague conducted by Tchaikovsky (see the letter to Adolf Čech above).

Three letters from Tchaikovsky to Foerster were published in *PSSL*, the earliest dating from 23 October/4 November 1892 (letter 4790, *PSSL* XVI-B, p. 183). However, it seems that there were more, because in a letter that Foerster wrote to Tchaikovsky from Prague on 13/25 October 1892 he thanks him (in German) for "your kind request to send you some of the compositions of mine that have been published."¹² This would fit in with the contents of the auctioned letter as described in the summary. The fact that the three letters to Foerster in *PSSL* are in French, whereas the auctioned one is in German, can also be accounted for: Foerster used German for his letter to Tchaikovsky of 13/25 October 1892, apologizing at the end for not writing in French "because my French is still very primitive!". This suggests that in his first letter to Tchaikovsky, written earlier that year, he would also have used German. Tchaikovsky was certainly capable of writing letters in German, even several pages long (as the letter to Adolf Čech above, and the letters to Julius Laube and Selma Rahter presented below, clearly demonstrate), and so he may well have used German too in his reply (just one page long) to Foerster's first letter before switching to French to answer his second letter and in their subsequent correspondence. By the time of his next letter to Tchaikovsky, on 2/14 November 1892, Foerster had himself also begun using French, and, significantly, he explained in this letter that he had begun studying music theory very late, at the age of 20, having previously pursued studies in chemistry, and that because of this late start only a handful of his compositions had appeared in print so far.¹³ Again, this would be in keeping with the addressee of the auctioned letter being an 'aspiring' composer.

However, the dating of this letter is problematic. The catalogue description says it bears the date "Moscow, 14 March," but no year. After 1889 the only years in which Tchaikovsky was in Russia in March are 1891, 1892, and 1893. Assuming that it is a reply to Foerster's first letter to him, which would have been written at some point before October 1892, then Tchaikovsky's letter could be dated to 14/26 March 1892, but we know that he was then in Maidanovo, completing the orchestration of *The Nutcracker*. Since he often wrote "Maidanovo, near Moscow" in letters to foreign correspondents, it is not impossible, though, that the Sotheby's specialist who drew up the summary simply omitted to mention "Maidanovo" and that would square with the letter being from 14/26 March 1892. (Reading 14 March as a NS date, which is unlikely, the only one of those years in which he was in Moscow or the Moscow province on 2/14 March is 1891, but that would not accord with the letter being a reply to Foerster).

Only two of the three extant letters to Tchaikovsky from Foerster have been published, the earliest one being that of 13/25 October 1892, so it would be necessary to consult the archives at Klin and check if the other letter from Foerster dates from some days before 14/26 March 1892, to confirm or refute this hypothesis.

¹² Letter from Josef Bohuslav Foerster to Tchaikovsky, 13/25 October 1892. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 220, p. 184–185.

¹³ Letter from Josef Bohuslav Foerster to Tchaikovsky, 2/14 November 1892. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 220–221, p. 185–186.

V. France

(Édouard Colonne, Eugénie Vergin Colonne, Louis Diémer, Louis Gallet,
Lucien Guitry, Jules Massenet, Pauline Viardot-García, three unidentified)

1. Tchaikovsky to Édouard Colonne, 11/23 January 1877 [[letter 534a](#)]

Like the letter to Albert Gutmann of 9/21 August 1892 (see [Section II](#)), the following unpublished letter of 11/23 January 1877 is also part of the Gilman Ordway Manuscript Collection at the Schubert Club Museum (Saint Paul, Minnesota). Tchaikovsky here takes up Édouard Colonne's response to his first letter to the conductor seventeen days earlier, in which he had enquired about the possibility of organizing a concert of his works in Paris, to be paid for out of his own pocket.¹ Colonne's response has not come to light, but it was clearly encouraging as was already known from Tchaikovsky's letter to Sergei Taneev the following day,² and as is now confirmed by this, the second of Tchaikovsky's letters to Colonne:

[p. 1:] Moscou. Le 11 Janvier 1877.

Monsieur !

Permettez moi de V[ou]s remercier sincèrement pour la bonne lettre que V[ou]s m'avez fait l'honneur de m'envoyer. Je suis on ne peut plus heureux et fier de l'extrême [= extrême] condescendance [= condescendance] avec laquelle V[ou]s avez bien voulu me promettre Votre prècieux [= précieux] concours pour le concert projeté. Je me suis adressé, ainsi que V[ou]s me l'avez recommandé, à M. Giacomelli pour l'organisation [= organisation] de ce concert et dès que j'aurai sa réponse je V[ou]s écrirai [= écrirai] d'une manière détaillé [= détaillée] sur la date du concert, [p. 2] la quantité de musiciens qu'il me faut, le programme etc.

Il y a encore un détail [= détail] que je voudrais éclaircir [= éclaircir]. Cela va s'en dire que mes compositions gagneront énormément [= énormément] à être [= être] dirigées par V[ou]s. Et je dis cela non pour débiter [= débiter] un fade compliment, mais dans la profonde et inèbranle [= inébranlable] conviction que je n'ai pas le talent ni le savoir-faire nécessaire [= nécessaire] pour conduire un orchestre aussi exercé et aussi inconnu <pour moi> que le Votre, d'une manière qui soit digne de lui.

Mais V[ou]s même [= même], Monsieur ? Veuillez me dire franchement si cela ne V[ou]s fatiguera pas trop d'avoir à rèpeter [= répéter] et faire marcher le concert. Quant [= Quant] à moi, je m'estim- [p. 3] -erai fort heureux si V[ou]s prenez cette tâche sur V[ou]s, — mais dans tous les cas je ne me conformerai absolument qu'avec ce V[ou]s me conseillerez de faire.

Permettez moi de V[ou]s remercier cordialement pour toutes Vos bontés et de V[ou]s prier d'agrèer [= agréer] l'expression<s> de la plus haute estime de Votre dèvoué [= dévoué]

P. Tchaikovsky

In English translation:

Monsieur! Allow me to thank you sincerely for the kind letter which you have done me the honour of sending to me. I am immensely happy and proud of the extreme forbearance with which you have deigned to promise me your invaluable participation in

¹ See the publication of letter 528a to Colonne, 25 December 1876/6 January 1877, in: *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 15 (2008), p. 4–7.

² See letter 535 to Taneev, 12/24 January 1877, in: *PSSL* VI, p. 108.

the planned concert. I have written, as you advised me, to Mr Giacomelli regarding the organization of this concert, and as soon as I have his reply I shall write to you in detail about the date of the concert, the number of musicians I need, the programme etc.

There is one other detail I would like to clarify. It goes without saying that my compositions will profit enormously from being conducted by you. And I say this not for the sake of paying an insipid compliment, but in the profound and unshakeable conviction that I have neither the talent nor the know-how required to conduct an orchestra which is as seasoned and as unfamiliar to me as yours, in such a fashion as to be worthy of it.

But what about you, though, Monsieur? Do tell me frankly if you think it may be too exhausting for you to have to rehearse and set the concert going. As for me, I would consider myself most happy if you were to take this task upon yourself. However, I shall in any case submit entirely to what you advise me to do. Allow me to thank you cordially for all your kindness, and to beg you to accept this assurance of the highest esteem felt for you devotedly by

P. Tchaikovsky

The "Mr. Giacomelli" referred to here is Adolphe Giacomelli (*ca.* 1825–1893), a French music journalist and concert agent of Italian origins. Tchaikovsky's letter to him has not come to light. The composer soon had to abandon the great hopes that he had placed on this concert—for which he had even volunteered to conduct Colonne's orchestra himself until the Frenchman persuaded him otherwise—when he was unable to raise enough money to hire a suitable venue in Paris.

2. Tchaikovsky to Édouard Colonne (?), 9/21 October 1892 [[letter 4782b](#)]

In later years, when Tchaikovsky was already a world-famous composer and his relationship with Colonne had been cemented by their collaboration in a number of Châtelet concerts in Paris in 1888 and 1891, as well as by Colonne's invitation to Moscow in 1890 (see the commentary for the second letter to Massenet below), he would often send the French conductor letters of recommendation on behalf of young musicians and singers—both Russian and foreign ones whom he had met in the course of his European concert tours.³

One such letter, dated "Klin, 9/21 October 1892," was sold by Sotheby's in London on 8 December 2000, with the addressee just described as an "unnamed recipient,"⁴ and it reappeared again in the December 2002 auction catalogue of L'Autographe SA in Geneva. In the latter catalogue there is a more detailed summary of this two-page letter, including some excerpts, and the addressee is tentatively identified as Colonne. This summary is all that we have of the letter, and is quoted here:

Tchaïkovski écrit de Klin où, désormais illustre et financièrement à l'aise, il s'est installé depuis peu dans l'espoir d'y trouver une certaine tranquillité d'esprit. « Cher ami ! Cette petite lettre vous sera remise par une sympathique compatriote... très bonne pianist, que je recommande à Votre bienveillante protection... ». Le compositeur, qui durant quelques jours avait séjourné à Paris au début de la même année, espère que son correspondant (Edouard COLONNE, l'organisateur de

³ See, for example, letter 3467 of 10/22 January 1888 on behalf of the young German violinist Willy Burmester and his sister Johanna, a pianist, both of whom Tchaikovsky had recently met in Hamburg (*PSSL* XIV, p. 331); letter 3998 of 7/19 January 1890 on behalf of the soprano Mariia Klimentova-Muromtseva (*PSSL* XV-B, p. 15); and letter 4602 of 4/16 (or 16/28) January 1892 on behalf of the mezzo-soprano Elena Ter'ian-Korganova (*PSSL* XVI-B, p. 25). The first of these three letters to Colonne is also included in *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 267, where it is discussed by Thomas Kohlhase in an article on Tchaikovsky's correspondence with Willy Burmester.

⁴ See the Sotheby's website: http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=37CRH (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The letter was listed as lot no. 231 in sale no. L00209.

concerts ?) voudra bien accorder son soutien à la jeune artiste, Madame Stoss-Petroff, et l'en remercie d'avance⁵

In English translation:

Tchaikovsky writes from Klin where, now that he is famous and financially secure, he has recently fixed his residence with the hope of finding some peace of mind there. 'Dear friend! This little letter will be handed to you by a nice compatriot of mine [...] a very good pianist, whom I recommend to your benevolent protection. The composer, who had stayed in Paris for a few days at the start of the year, hopes that his correspondent (Édouard COLONNE, the organizer of these concerts?) will be so kind as to extend his support to the young artiste, Madame Shtos-Petrova, and thanks him in advance.

That this letter of recommendation may well have been addressed to Colonne, is suggested by a letter which Tchaikovsky wrote on the same day to the conductor Aleksandr Vinogradskii (1855–1912), who was chairman of the Kiev branch of the Russian Musical Society and had welcomed the composer during his visit to Kiev at the end of 1891 (Tchaikovsky conducted a concert of his works there on 21 December 1891/2 January 1892). In a letter which has apparently not survived, Vinogradskii had asked Tchaikovsky to help the young pianist Aleksandra Nikolaevna Shtos-Petrova, possibly a recent graduate of the Kiev Conservatory, to secure concert engagements in Paris, and the composer enclosed, together with his reply to Vinogradskii, "letters to Lamoureux and Colonne."⁶

The reason why Colonne is the more likely addressee of the above letter of recommendation—rather than his 'rival,' the conductor Charles Lamoureux (1834–1899), who was in charge of another series of popular concerts in Paris—is that before October the only other extant letter from Tchaikovsky to Colonne for 1892 dates from January,⁷ that is four months before the composer moved into his new house at Klin. Judging from the auction catalogue's summary for the above letter, it began with some remarks about his new place of residence. Given that, as far as we can tell, Tchaikovsky had not been in touch with Colonne since January (he had only stopped over briefly in Paris twice that summer), he would have had to inform the conductor about his new address. Moreover, the opening greeting "Dear friend" (or "My dear friend") is one that he often used in his letters to Colonne in these years, whereas he was not so well acquainted with Lamoureux, and if the letter had been addressed to the latter he would probably have written: "Dear maestro" (see the first letter to Massenet below).⁸ To prove conclusively that this letter was meant for Colonne, it would be helpful to consult the archives at Klin because if any letters from him to Tchaikovsky during the period

⁵ *L'Autographe SA Catalogue 51*, item no. 142; available online at: <http://www.autographe.org/cat51.htm> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

⁶ Letter 4782 to Aleksandr Vinogradskii, 9/21 October 1892. *PSSL XVI-B*, p. 175.

⁷ The exact dating of letter 4602 to Colonne in *PSSL* (XVI-B, p. 25) is open to question. The editors of *PSSL* concluded that the date on the letter "16 January 1892" was OS and therefore to be read as 16/28 January—even though Tchaikovsky was abroad during that whole period and he normally used only NS dates when writing to non-Russian correspondents from abroad.

⁸ No letters from Tchaikovsky to Lamoureux (from either before or after 9/21 October 1892) have come to light as yet. However, Mackar had introduced the composer to Lamoureux in Paris on 27 May/8 June 1886, as we learn from an entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for that day: "We found Lamoureux (very friendly) and Marmontel at home." Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 80. One letter from Lamoureux to Tchaikovsky, dating from 1885 (i.e. before they were personally acquainted), is included in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 216–217, p. 143–144, but it does not indicate there whether any further letters from Lamoureux have survived in the Klin archives.

from May to October 1892 were to be found there it would suggest that he already knew the composer's new address.⁹

Further on in his letter to Vinogradskii on the same day, Tchaikovsky observed somewhat pessimistically: "Over the past few years I have written countless such letters (specifically to the two aforementioned *signori* [i.e. Colonne and Lamoureux]), and not one of them has led to anything. That is understandable, too. Pianists and pianists from all corners of Europe flock to Paris in the hope of being able to play in one or the other public concert, and only a very small proportion achieve this goal. And besides—this is between you and me—they achieve it not at all because they have brought letters of recommendation with them, but thanks to specific circumstances and actions. So if Lamoureux or Colonne deign to offer Mrs. Shtos an engagement, this will be either (1) because her playing is particularly brilliant, so that she can take the Parisian public by storm (that's how Sapel'nikov, for example, played in Paris), be it under the direction of Lamoureux or that of Colonne; or (2) because Mrs. Shtos-Petrova, who is very beautiful, appeals to these bigwigs as a woman; or (3) because [...] But I'd rather say no more, since I don't know anything for sure, though I have heard a lot about the greed for money of one of these famous conductors."¹⁰

We have not been able to find out whether Aleksandra Shtos-Petrova did succeed in giving a concert in Paris. She would later be appointed professor of piano at the Kiev Conservatory.

3. Tchaikovsky to Eugénie Vergin Colonne, 7/19 January 1893 [[letter 4845a](#)]

Evidently despairing at the lack of success of so many, if not all, of the letters of recommendation with which he equipped young musicians who were going to Paris and hoped to be engaged by Colonne for one of the Châtelet concerts, Tchaikovsky decided to direct one such letter to Colonne's wife instead. Eugénie Vergin Colonne (b. 1854), the conductor's second wife, had had a successful career as a vocal soloist (mezzo-soprano) at the Châtelet concerts and had gone on to become a much sought-after singing teacher. Tchaikovsky found her "extremely pleasant" when he met her in Paris in 1888.¹¹ This may explain the tone of the following letter of recommendation on behalf of a young Russian violinist, which is certainly much more impassioned than anything he ever wrote to her husband.

A facsimile of this letter was published in an issue of the *Musical Courier* in 1906, but despite the wide circulation of this American journal, it seems to have escaped the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars at the time and the letter did not find its way into *PSSL*. To rectify this situation we publish the letter here in full:

⁹ *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970) includes only five of the eleven letters from Colonne to Tchaikovsky that are reported to have survived in the Klin archives, and the latest of these five letters dates from June 1890. No indication is given as to whether there were more letters from Colonne in the following years up to Tchaikovsky's death.

¹⁰ Letter 4782 to Aleksandr Vinogradskii, 9/21 October 1892. *PSSL* XVI-B, p. 175–176. This letter is known only from a copy in the Klin archives, and the cut [...] occurs in the copy. The composer's letter to Vinogradskii is also quoted in German translation in Thomas Kohlhasse's abovementioned article on Tchaikovsky's correspondence with Willy Burmester. Cf. *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 269–270. Prof. Kohlhasse suggests that by "greediness for money" Tchaikovsky was alluding to Colonne, who, on 13/25 January 1880, had conducted the first performance in France of the Fourth Symphony, not just because he was convinced of the work's merits but also because Nadezhda von Meck had paid him a handsome sum for his orchestra's services.

¹¹ Diary entry for 12/24 February 1888. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 234.

[p. 1:] 19 Janvier 93
Paris

Chère Madame!

Bien des fois je me suis adressé à mon ami Colonne pour lui recommander des compatriotes, qui voudraient se faire entendre au[x] concerts du Chatelet [= Châtelet]. Je sais combien il est difficile pour lui de trouver une place pour chaque artiste qui lui est bien recommandé; aussi jamais n'ai j'été [p. 2] désappointé quand mes lettres de recommandations n'aboutissent à aucun résultat. Mais aujourd'hui je m'adresse à lui par Votre intermédiaire non comme à Colonne, chef d'orchestre célèbre, mais comme à l'ami. De grâce qu'il sacrifie un quart d'heure de son temps pour mon jeune protégé Petchnikoff, lequel du reste Vous con- [p. 3] aissez [= connaissez] pour l'avoir entendu au Conservatoire à Moscou. Mais ceci ne suffirait pas: je Vous demande en grâce, je Vous supplie, je Vous implore comme la plus grande manifestation de Votre amitié (que j'apprecie [= apprécie] énormément [= énormément]) — de lui trouver une petite place dans un des Concerts du Chatelet [= Châtelet]. Je considérerai cela comme [p. 4] un vrai bonheur pour moi. D'ailleurs le jeune homme est vraiment un talent hors ligne et je suis sûr que Vous serez content de lui!

De grâce, chère bonne Madame, soyez mon interprete [= interprète] auprès de Votre cher mari et priez le bien de faire ce que je désir[e] ardemment. Pour le jeune homme c'est une grosse affaire: il y va de toute sa carrière. Je me mets à Vos pieds.

P. Tschaïkovsky¹²

In English translation:

Dear Madame! On many an occasion I have written to my friend Colonne to recommend to him compatriots of mine who would like to be heard at the Châtelet concerts. I know how difficult it is for him to find a place for every artist who has been recommended to him in such terms; and, moreover, I have never felt disappointed when my letters of recommendation came to nothing. Today, though, I am addressing myself to him, through your mediation, not in his capacity as Colonne, the famous conductor, but as to a friend. I beg him to sacrifice a quarter of an hour of his time for my young protégé Pechnikov, whom, by the way, you know, since you heard him at the Moscow Conservatory. However, that would not be enough: I ask you kindly—nay, I beseech, I implore you, by way of the greatest manifestation of your friendship (which I cherish enormously), to find him a little slot in one of the Châtelet concerts. I would consider this a true blessing for me. Besides, this young man is truly exceptionally talented, and I am certain that you will be satisfied with him!

I beg you, dear, kind Madame: would you be my spokeswoman with regard to your dear husband and ask him emphatically to do what I so ardently wish? For the young man it is a matter of great consequence: his whole career depends on it. I throw myself before your feet.

P. Tchaikovsky

Further research needs to be done on the violinist Aleksandr Pechnikov (1873–1949) and where Tchaikovsky first heard him play. His name does not appear at all in the indices of any of the *PSSL* volumes, or in *Dni i gody*, the chronicle of Tchaikovsky's life and works brought out in 1940 under the overall editorship of Vasilii Iakovlev (1880–1957)—a reference book

¹² The facsimile appears in the 29 August 2006 issue of *The Musical Courier*, in a section entitled 'Tschaikowsky's Praise of Petschnikoff'. We have not yet been able to consult the actual journal; a copy of the facsimile was provided to us by Dr. Ann Kersting-Meuleman of the Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt-am-Main, which has a small collection of Tchaikovsky-related documents, including a number of autograph letters that have been published in earlier *Mitteilungen* and *Čajkovskij-Studien* volumes.

which to this day remains indispensable for Tchaikovsky scholars—Pechnikov appears only once. Thus, we read there that on 19/31 August 1892, at one of the concerts held in Moscow that summer as part of the so-called Electrical Exhibition, Pechnikov appeared as the soloist in Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, under the baton of the Czech-born conductor Vojtěch Hlaváč (Voitekh Glavach; 1849–1911). Tchaikovsky, however, seems to have been in Klin at the time.¹³

Pechnikov studied violin at the Moscow Conservatory under Jan Hřimalý (1844–1915), graduating in 1891. It was probably at a student performance at the Conservatory that Tchaikovsky first heard him play—after all, in his letter to Mme Colonne Tchaikovsky mentions that she had heard him at the Conservatory, and this must have been during one of her husband's guest appearances in Russia. The first of these was at the Russian Musical Society concert in Moscow on 23 March/4 April 1890, for which Tchaikovsky had originally hoped to engage Massenet, but after being "shamefully" deceived by the latter (see the letters to Massenet below), he had invited Colonne in his place. Ever since that concert Colonne was invited regularly to Russia over the following years, and he conducted symphonic concerts and operas in both Moscow and Saint Petersburg. His wife is known to have accompanied him to Russia at least during his first visit to the country in 1890.¹⁴

Tchaikovsky's recommendation was clearly not undeserved, for Pechnikov would go on to have a successful international career. In 1899, during one of his tours of America, he gave the first performance in Chicago of the Violin Concerto. If the latter work had been as frequently on the programmes of the concerts that Tchaikovsky conducted in his lifetime as, say, the First Piano Concerto, then Pechnikov might well have appeared as a soloist under his direction in one of the music capitals of Europe, as was the case with other talented young Russian musicians such as Vasili Sapel'nikov.

4. Tchaikovsky to Louis Diémer, 10/22 February 1887 [[letter 3177b](#)]

This letter was auctioned by Axel Schmolt Autographen-Auktionen in Krefeld, Germany, on 18 April 2009. A complete facsimile was published in the company's *Auktionskatalog* no. 21 (also available on their website) together with a description of the letter, whose addressee, however, was not identified there.¹⁵ Here is its full text:

[p. 1:] Kline, Maidanowo.
10/22 Fevrier [= Février] 1887.

Cher Monsieur et ami !

Vous me permettez[,] n'est ce pas[,] de V[ous] appeler ainsi ? Le précieux [= précieux] concours que V[ous] voulez bien prêter [= prêter] à une séance consacrée à ma musique me prouve assez que V[ous] me faites l'honneur d'en être [= être] un. J'apprécie [= apprécie] énormément [énormément] l'attention flatteuse que V[ous] me témoignez. Recevez, [p. 2] cher Monsieur et ami, l'expression de ma profonde reconnaissance et veuillez être l'interprète de ce même sentiment auprès de M^{ts} Brun et Mas.

J'espère dans le courant de cette saison avoir le plaisir de V[ous] serrer la main à Paris.

Votre bien dévoué et reconnaissant

P. Tschaiḱovsky

¹³ Cf. *Dni i gody P. I. Chaikovskogo* (Moscow / Leningrad, 1940), p. 556.

¹⁴ Cf. Colonne's letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 6/18 June 1890 in which he thanks the composer for having arranged for him to come to Moscow that spring, and emphasizes how both he and his wife had been received warmly by everyone they met there. See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 142.

¹⁵ See <http://ww8.schmolt.de/index.php/startseite/newsarchiv-mainmenu-44/126-ergebnisliste-21-auktion-vom-1842009.html> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

In English translation:

Dear Sir and friend! You do allow me to address you as such, is it not so? The invaluable part which you are kindly willing to play in a recital dedicated to my music is sufficient proof for me that you do me the honour of being my friend. I appreciate enormously the flattering attention which you bestow upon me. Please accept, dear Sir and friend, this assurance of my profound gratitude, and be so kind as to communicate to Messrs. Brun and Mas the same feeling.

I hope that in the course of this season I shall have the pleasure of shaking your hand in Paris.

Yours, most devotedly and gratefully,

P. Tchaikovsky

From the date it is clear that this letter is addressed to one of the musicians who on 11/23 February 1887 would take part in a recital of Tchaikovsky's works at the salle Erard in Paris that had been organized by the composer's French publisher Félix Mackar. An announcement issued by Macker in various newspapers before the recital gives us the names of all the musicians involved: they were the singer Juliette Conneau; the pianist Louis Diémer (1843–1919); the violinist Martin Pierre Marsick (1848–1924); the Russian cellist Anatolii Brandukov (1859–1930); the violist Joseph-Louis-Marie Mas; and the violinist Alfred Brun (b. 1864).¹⁶

Messrs. Mas and Brun, mentioned in the letter itself, can be excluded as possible addressees, and the same applies to Mme Conneau and Brandukov, a good friend and former student of Tchaikovsky's at the Moscow Conservatory. This leaves us only with Marsick and Diémer. An already published letter from Tchaikovsky to Macker the same day sheds further light: "My dear and kind friend! It is a great pity that the recital couldn't be postponed [Tchaikovsky had been unable to come to Paris, as Macker had hoped], but it can't be helped. Thank you, my excellent friend for all the trouble you are taking and for all that you are doing to propagate my music in Paris. [...] I have written to all these gentlemen, as well as to Mme Conneau, but as I don't know their addresses, would you be so kind to forward these letters? As you told me, I have asked Diémer to thank Messrs. Brun and Mas on my behalf."¹⁷

Thus, the recipient of the recently auctioned letter is Louis Diémer, who at the recital of 11/23 February 1887 played the piano part in Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio (with Brandukov and Marsick), as well as several piano pieces by the composer: *Chant sans paroles* (No. 3 from *Souvenir de Hapsal*, Op. 2), *Polka de salon* (No. 2 of the Three Pieces, Op. 9), *Mazurka* (No. 5 of the Twelve Pieces, Op. 40), *Romance* (No. 5 of the Six Pieces, Op. 51), and also Liszt's transcription for piano of the *Polonaise* from *Evgenii Onegin*. It is likely that Diémer was also the accompanist for Mme Conneau when she performed a selection of the Six Romances, Op. 6, including *None But the Lonely Heart*. The recital was a great success, as Macker immediately hastened to inform the composer.¹⁸ The Piano Trio and *None But the*

¹⁶ Cf. V. Fédorov, 'Čajkovskij et la France (A propos de quelques lettres de Čajkovskij à Félix Macker', *Revue de Musicologie* 54 (1968), no. 1, p. 59, n. 1.

¹⁷ Letter 3176 to Félix Macker, 10/22 February 1887. *PSSL* XIV, p. 43–44. Tchaikovsky's letter to Juliette Conneau has not come to light.

¹⁸ Cf. Macker's letter of 12/24 February 1887 to Tchaikovsky in: *Čajkovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 209–210, p. 154.

Lonely Heart made a particularly strong impression on the audience, as one of those present, a musician called Jacques Du Sautoy, would report to Tchaikovsky a few days later.¹⁹

5. Tchaikovsky to Louis Gallet, 23 July/4 August 1892 [[letter 4739a](#)]

This new letter to the French librettist Louis Gallet (1835–1898), auctioned by R.R. Auction in June 2006, comes as something of a surprise. The auctioneer's website gave only an English translation (which, as it turns out, was not entirely accurate), together with a description of this one-page letter from which we quote only the most relevant part: "There is a notation in another hand, on the reverse of the second integral page, 'Tchaikovsky Kline near Moscow Russia Write Detroyat.'"²⁰ Both of these were used for a partial English publication of the letter in the *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* (2010), where the addressee was not explicitly stated but its connection to Tchaikovsky's unrealized project for a French-language opera, *La Courtisane*, was rightly emphasized.²¹ Thanks to a facsimile image kindly provided by Bobby Livingston of R.R. Auction we can now publish this letter to Gallet in full in the original French:

23 Juillet/4 Août 1892

Cher et tres respecté Monsieur!

Voulez Vous avoir l'extrême [= extrême] obligeance de Vous remettre à la versification de La Courtisane) dont j'attendrai avec impatience les actes 2^{me} et 3^{me} ! Je Vous adresse d'avance mes remerciements les plus chaleureux.

Votre bien dévoué
P. Tchaïkovsky

In English translation:

Dear and highly esteemed Sir! Would you be so extremely obliging as to resume the versification of La Courtisane, of which I shall be impatiently awaiting Acts II and III! I send you in advance my most fervent thanks.

Yours very devotedly,
P. Tchaikovsky

The annotation in another hand: "Write Detroyat," as described on the auctioneer's website, might at first glance suggest that this letter could instead be addressed to Gallet's fellow-librettist Léonce Détroyat (1829–1898), but anyone who is familiar with Tchaikovsky's tortuous relationship with Détroyat would think twice before making such a conclusion. In their partial publication of the letter, Ronald de Vet and Thomas Kohlhase did not propose Détroyat as its addressee, but because of the faulty English translation on the auctioneer's website they could not be certain either that it was addressed to Gallet. For "versification" had been misread as "verification" by the R.R. Auction specialist dealing with this letter, leading to the relevant phrase being translated as follows: "Would you please be kind enough

¹⁹ See Thomas Kohlhase's publication of Tchaikovsky's letter 3219a to Jacques Du Sautoy, 4/16 April 1887 in: *Čajkovskij-Studien* 1 (1995), p. 21–35, where Du Sautoy's letter to the composer from Paris on 15/27 February is also published.

²⁰ R.R. Auction. *Catalog 310 (June 2006)*, item no. 865. Also on the company's website. See http://www.rrauction.com/past_auction_item.cfm?ID=3132098 (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

²¹ See Ronald de Vet and Thomas Kohlhase, 'Die vom Auktionshaus RR Auction (USA) in den Jahren 1996–2009 im Internet versteigerten autographen Briefe...', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 17 (2010), p. 12–18 (14).

to start again checking [*sic*] *La Courtisane*...". It should of course be "versifying," and if the translation on the website had been more accurate, then the letter's addressee would almost certainly have been identified explicitly as Gallet in the 2010 *Mitteilungen* article, because in their collaboration on producing the libretto of *La Courtisane* for Tchaikovsky, Détróyat worked out the outline scenario, whereas Gallet was responsible for turning that into verse.

It is worth recapping here the origins of this peculiar Franco-Russian operatic project so as to place the above letter in context. Tchaikovsky had first met Détróyat during his visit to Paris in the summer of 1886, and the latter soon became obsessed with the idea of collaborating with the composer on a French-language opera that, as he assured Tchaikovsky then and on subsequent occasions, was bound to be a triumphant success on the stage of the Paris Opéra. Tchaikovsky, evidently attracted by the prospect of having the magnificent resources of that opera-house at his disposal and of taking the Parisian public by storm, but not quite so confident as Détróyat about having their work accepted by the Opéra, would eventually give his half-hearted agreement.

The various outline librettos that Détróyat then proceeded to send to Tchaikovsky during the first half of 1888 were each more unsuitable than the other—with one based on a drama by Victor Hugo (not one of Tchaikovsky's favourite writers), another set in sixteenth-century Spain, and yet another adapted from a novel by Chateaubriand, the events of which took place in both Georgia and Russia, but which showed such disregard for the national character and customs of those countries that Tchaikovsky wryly noted: "I am quite convinced that Mr Détróyat is as familiar with Russia as I am with China."²² In September of that year, however, Tchaikovsky, who had recently completed his Symphony No. 5 and was looking to embark on a new stage work, himself suggested to Détróyat a subject for their joint French-language opera: Goethe's ballad *Der Gott und die Bajadere*.²³ This poem about the redemption of a *bayadere*, that is a Hindu dancing-girl, through the steadfastness of her love for the god who assumes human form to test her, clearly appealed to Tchaikovsky, who had already given some thought to the subject because earlier that year Ippolit Shpazhinskii (his librettist for *The Enchantress*) had drawn up for him a scenario for an opera *The Bayadere* on the basis of Goethe's ballad. That project had been discarded in favour of the ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*, a commission from the Imperial Theatres, but Tchaikovsky probably realized that the subject of *Der Gott und die Bajadere* would be ideal for the French stage, where oriental-themed operas had been all the rage for some time.

Détróyat was immediately captivated by the idea, and already by mid/late October 1888, he and Gallet, whose collaboration he had enlisted, were able to send Tchaikovsky a draft scenario. To avoid comparisons with Auber's opera-ballet *Le Dieu et la bayadère* (1830), the ever resourceful Détróyat had decided to turn the heroine, Sadia, into a singer. The opera's title was to be *Sadia, ou La Courtisane*. Tchaikovsky received the libretto of Act I by early/mid July 1889, but he explained to his librettists that he could not begin composing the music of the opera until he had the whole libretto. Since Gallet had other commitments at the time, and Tchaikovsky soon became absorbed in the composition of *The Queen of Spades* (January–June 1890), all plans for *La Courtisane* were shelved.

²² Letter 3557 to Félix Mackar, 27 April/9 May 1888. *PSSL* XIV, p. 420–421.

²³ Tchaikovsky's letter to Détróyat with this suggestion has not come to light, but from Détróyat's reply to him from Paris on 29 August/10 September 1888 it is clear that the original idea was Tchaikovsky's. This and several other letters from Détróyat to the composer have been published (in Russian translation only) in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 115–123. As for Tchaikovsky's letters to Détróyat, the situation is rather worse: to date we know of only four such letters: for three of these we have only the brief extracts that appeared in an auction catalogue in Paris, in 1992, and which are quoted in André Lischke, *Piotr Ilyich Tchaïkovski* (Paris, 1993), p. 541–544; only one has been published in full in the original French, namely letter 3598a to Léonce Détróyat of 20 June/2 July 1888. See Thomas Kohlhasse's publication of this letter in *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 243–248.

After completing *The Queen of Spades* Tchaikovsky was reluctant to undertake a new opera too soon, but Détróyat kept pressing him to honour his earlier promises and insisting that he had found a theatre in Paris which would stage *La Courtisane*. The situation became so unpleasant for Tchaikovsky that he asked his friend Lucien Guitry (see below), to go and speak with Détróyat on his behalf when the actor was on holiday in Paris in the summer of 1890. It seems, though, that to avoid upsetting Détróyat, Tchaikovsky assured him, in September, that he would compose the music for *La Courtisane* by the end of the following year.²⁴ Shortly afterwards, in January 1891, following an exchange of letters with Gallet, who was more realistic than Détróyat, Tchaikovsky made it clear that he would not in fact be able to begin composing *La Courtisane* until the 1892/93 season, once he had discharged his commissions to the Mariinskii Theatre: the opera *Iolanta* and the ballet *The Nutcracker*. Gallet undertook to explain this to Détróyat and also to urge him to find a theatre in Paris that would actually commission the score of *La Courtisane* from Tchaikovsky.²⁵ Gallet, however, also left the option open for Tchaikovsky to pull out of the project at any point, and it seems that this is what happened when the composer met up with both Gallet and Détróyat in Paris in March 1891 and they decided to abandon their joint project.²⁶

The following year, on 18/30 July 1892, Tchaikovsky's French publisher Félix Mackar informed the composer that Détróyat, who had recently been appointed director of the Théâtre Lyrique in Paris, had told him that if Tchaikovsky was able to complete *La Courtisane* in the summer of 1893, he, Détróyat, would undertake to stage it at this theatre during the 1893/94 winter season. Mackar asked Tchaikovsky if he wanted to reply to Détróyat directly himself.²⁷ Tchaikovsky—who, as we learn from Modest's biography, would become furious at the very sight of Détróyat's handwriting because the Frenchman had "bombarded" him so often in the past with letters full of unrealistic ideas and suggestions—²⁸ evidently chose not to write to Détróyat, but to Gallet instead, since he got on better with him, and Gallet was after all the main author of the libretto. This is what prompted the 'new' letter to Gallet of 23 July/4 August 1892 presented above.

It seems that after receiving Tchaikovsky's letter Gallet jotted down on the reverse of the page the annotation mentioned earlier "Write [to] Détróyat": this was most likely meant as a reminder that he had to get in touch with Détróyat, perhaps to discuss amendments to the scenario for Acts II and III of *La Courtisane* that Tchaikovsky, by his own acknowledgement, was awaiting "impatiently." As it turned out, however, this project never came to fruition: since only Act I of the libretto by Gallet has survived in the Klin archives (together with the outline scenario drawn up jointly by Détróyat and Gallet),²⁹ one can only conclude that by the time of Tchaikovsky's death the following year Gallet had not even got round to writing the verses for Acts II and III. No musical sketches by Tchaikovsky for *La Courtisane* are

²⁴ Again, this letter from Tchaikovsky to Détróyat, sent from Tiflis in September 1890, has not survived, but its contents may be deduced from Détróyat's reply to him on 22 September/4 October 1890. See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 123.

²⁵ Louis Gallet's letter to Tchaikovsky of 11/23 January 1891 was published in the original French for the first time in *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 255–257. A Russian translation is included in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 105–107.

²⁶ As explained in a note in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty*, p. 124, n. 11. The source of this information is, however, not given there.

²⁷ See Mackar's letter to Tchaikovsky of 18/30 July 1892 (in Russian translation) in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 164.

²⁸ M. Chaikovskii, *Zhizn' Petra Il'icha Chaikovskogo* [1900–02] (Moscow, 1997), vol. 3, p. 374. Interestingly, Modest decided to replace Détróyat's name with the cryptogram 'X' when referring to him (even though Détróyat was no longer alive at the time of writing).

²⁹ See Ks. Iu. Davydova, 'Problemy epistolarii', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1986), no. 6, p. 87–88 (88); and also the *Thematic and Bibliographical Catalogue of P. I. Čajkovskij's Works* (Moscow, 2006), p. 817–818.

known to exist either, and indeed Modest in his biography of the composer pointed out that "this opera was never even begun."³⁰

6. Tchaikovsky to Lucien Guitry, 1/13 April 1885 [[letter 2677a](#)]

Although several letters from Lucien Guitry (1860–1925) to Tchaikovsky have survived in the composer's archive at Klin, together with photographs and other souvenirs presented to him by the French actor, and some of these have been published,³¹ only two letters from Tchaikovsky to Guitry have come to light so far.

Extracts from what was almost certainly the very first letter which Tchaikovsky sent to the actor were published in an auction catalogue in 1974, when the autograph was sold along with other manuscripts from the collection of Lucien's son, the even more famous actor, playwright, and director Sacha Guitry (1885–1957).³² Eleven years later, a luxuriously produced volume on the life and career of Sacha Guitry was brought out by Jacques Lorcey, who included facsimile reproductions of some of the autographs that had once belonged to the younger Guitry, including letters by Berlioz and Beethoven, and Flaubert manuscripts. Among these unique autographs one of the highlights, to quote Lorcey, was "the beautiful letter which Tchaikovsky wrote to Lucien Guitry in 1885."³³ A facsimile of the whole letter (which is four pages long) was included in that volume. In several other books on Sacha Guitry which refer to his childhood years in Russia (for he was born in Saint Petersburg, where his father worked for the Mikhailovskii Theatre's French company during eight winters from 1882 to 1891) and to his father's career as an actor, excerpts from Tchaikovsky's letter to Lucien Guitry are also quoted, but they seem to have escaped the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars.³⁴

This important letter, which impinges on the work history of both the overture-fantasia *Hamlet* (1888) and the incidental music to the play (1891), and which also confirms the admiration which Tchaikovsky felt for Guitry's talent, is published here in full on the basis of the facsimile of the original. The context is as follows: on 30 March/11 April 1885 Tchaikovsky had seen Guitry on the stage of the Mikhailovskii Theatre as Edmund Kean in Alexandre Dumas père's play inspired by the great English actor's life: *Kean, ou Désordre et génie* (in which there is a scene where Kean plays Hamlet).³⁵ It seems that immediately after the performance Tchaikovsky had sought out Guitry to tell him of the great impression it had made upon him, for two days later, while still in Saint Petersburg, he wrote to the actor:

³⁰ M. Chaikovskii, *Zhizn' Petra Il'icha Chaikovskogo* [1900–02] (Moscow, 1997), vol. 3, p. 274, n. 2.

³¹ See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 209–212, p. 107–114, where eight letters from Lucien Guitry to Tchaikovsky, dating from 1887 to 1891, have been published in both the original French and in Russian translation. A number of photographs of Guitry, some with personal inscriptions for Tchaikovsky, have been published in: *Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (2003), p. 423–424.

³² Cf. *Autographes et documents historiques dont la vente aux enchères publiques aura lieu Hotel Drouot salle no. 10, le jeudi 21 novembre 1974, à 14 heures 30, item no. 94.*

³³ Jacques Lorcey, *Sacha Guitry. Cent ans de théâtre et d'esprit* (Paris, 1985).

³⁴ See Jacques Lorcey, *Sacha Guitry, l'homme et l'œuvre* (Paris, 1982), p. 19; Raymond Castans, *Sacha Guitry* (Paris, 1993), p. 20; Jacques Lorcey, *Tout Guitry de A à Z* (Paris, 2007), p. 166.

³⁵ Cf. letter 2673 to Modest Tchaikovsky from Maidanovo on 15/27 March 1885, in which the composer tells his brother that he would definitely arrive in Saint Petersburg on the morning of 30 March/11 April, in order to attend Guitry's benefit performance later that evening. *PSSL XIII*, p. 50.

[p. 1:] 1/13 Avril 1885

Cher Monsieur Guitry!

Je tiens à V[ou]s remercier encore une fois pour la très vive jouissance que V[ou]s m'avez fait éprouver avant hier. Mon admiration, ma sympathie [p. 2] pour Votre beau talent sont maintenant plus vifs, plus intenses que jamais. J'ai beaucoup pensé à V[ou]s ces deux derniers [= derniers] jours et me permette de V[ou]s communiquer le résultat de mes considérations sur Votre avenir artistique. Il faut que vous paraissiez à Votre prochain bénéfice [= bénéfice] dans un rôle [= rôle] de Shakespeare, [p. 3] celui de Roméo ou de Hamlet. Il le faut, parce que le repertoire [= répertoire] courant [= courant] ne suffit pas pour que V[ou]s puissiez déployer toutes les ressources de Votre talent aussi original, aussi sympathique [= sympathique] que sérieux et grave. Ce n'est que quand V[ou]s aurez joué Shakespeare qu'on en appréciera la juste valeur.

Mais ce n'est pas seulement pour V[ou]s donner des conseils (un droit que je m'arrose arbitrairement) que je V[ou]s écris. C'est pour V[ou]s pro- [p. 4] -mettre formellement de faire pour Votre prochain bénéfice [= bénéfice], dans le cas que V[ou]s jouerez Hamlet ou Roméo, une ouverture et des entractes spécialement adaptés aux ressources de l'orchestre du Théâtre [= Théâtre] Michel. Ce sera pour moi un grand plaisir et je serai fier de participer un peu à Votre triomphe.

Je V[ou]s serre bien cordialement la main et V[ou]s prie de transmettre mes salutations respectueuses à M^{me} Guitry.

P. Tchaïkovsky³⁶

In English translation:

Dear Monsieur Guitry! I must thank you once again for the very keen enjoyment which you caused me to experience the day before yesterday. My admiration, my sympathy for your beautiful talent are now more vivid and intense than ever before. I have thought a lot about you these last two days, and I shall take the liberty of telling you what is the outcome of my deliberations regarding your future as an artist. It is necessary that at your next benefit performance you should appear in a Shakespeare role—that of Romeo, or Hamlet. It is necessary, because the current repertory does not offer sufficient scope for you to deploy all the resources of your talent, which is as original and appealing as it is earnest and grave. It is only once you have played Shakespeare that your talent will be appreciated at its true value.

However, it is not solely to give you advice (a right which I arrogate to myself arbitrarily) that I am writing to you. It is in order to promise you formally that for your next benefit performance, in the event that you should play Hamlet or Romeo, I shall write an overture and entr'actes specially tailored to the resources of the orchestra at the Mikhailovskii Theatre. It will be a great pleasure for me, and I shall be proud to participate a little in your triumph.

I shake your hand most cordially and ask you to convey my respectful greetings to Mme Guitry.³⁷

P. Tchaikovsky

³⁶ Jacques Lorcey, *Sacha Guitry. Cent ans de théâtre et d'esprit* (Paris, 1985). The facsimile appears on an unnumbered page in a section with several photographs entitled 'Sacha Guitry, ses amis et son temps,' between p. 144 and p. 146 of the main text.

³⁷ Marie-Louis-Renée Delmas (de Pont-Jest; 1858–1902), the daughter of a minor novelist, who had eloped with Guitry to London in the summer of 1882 and married him there. She also accompanied him to Russia during his seasons at the Mikhailovskii Theatre. They had four children, of whom only two survived infancy: Jean-Louis-Edmond (1884–1920) and Alexandre-Pierre-Georges (1885–1957). The latter was called 'Sasha' by his Russian nanny, and eventually by everyone else in the family. In September 1889, while on holiday in France, Lucien applied for a divorce from Renée, who still loved her husband, despite his liaison with a certain Mlle Angèle, a fellow actress with the Mikhailovskii Theatre's French company. (Mlle Angèle is mentioned in Tchaikovsky's diaries from June 1886 onwards, and in Guitry's letters to the composer). The divorce was finally granted in September 1890, and although Renée was awarded custody of their two sons, Guitry took Sacha with him to

When discussing the overture-fantasia *Hamlet* (1888) in his biography of the composer, Modest Tchaikovsky emphasized how Guitry's performance as Kean in 1885 had acted as a catalyst for its composition: "Once, while under the effect of the strong impression caused by Lucien Guitry's splendid acting in *Kean*, where, among other things, there is a scene from *Hamlet*, Petr Il'ich said he would gladly write the music to this tragedy if Guitry were to act in it."³⁸ Tchaikovsky did not forget about his promise, which, as the above letter to Guitry shows, he had made formally in writing, but it was not until almost six years later that the collaboration between composer and actor bore fruit, and Tchaikovsky wrote his incidental music for *Hamlet*—just in time for Guitry's farewell performance at the Mikhailovskii Theatre on 9/21 February 1891.

7. Tchaikovsky to Lucien Guitry, 8/20 April 1885 [[letter 2680a](#)]

Tchaikovsky's next letter to Guitry, written just seven days after the first, was sold by R.R. Auction in May 2009, and its full text is published here on the basis of the facsimile scans which appeared on the company's website when the letter was advertised.³⁹ We received permission to use these scans from the present owner whom Bobby Livingston of R.R. Auction kindly contacted on our behalf.

The day after Guitry's performance as Kean at the Mikhailovskii Theatre on 30 March/11 April 1885, Tchaikovsky had left Saint Petersburg and travelled to Moscow, where, after a brief visit to his house in nearby Maidanovo, he was also staying at the time he wrote this, his second letter to the actor:

[p. 1:] 8 Avril 1885
Moscou

Mon cher ami !

Vous m'aviez dit à notre dernière entrevue à la gâre [= gare] que V[ou]s aviez l'intention de venir dans le courant de ce mois à Moscou. Est-ce de la presumption [= présomption] de ma part de s'être [= être] imaginé [= imaginé] que c'est un peu exprès pour moi que V[ou]s vouliez venir ? Ou bien me l'avez V[ou]s dit ? Dans la hâte du départ ai-je mal entendu ?... Je ne sais, mais ce [p. 2] qui est certain c'est que j'aurais été infiniment [= infiniment] heureux de pouvoir V[ou]s faire les honneurs de notre deuxième capitale, mais à mon très grand regret je suis forcé de m'en aller un de ces jours au midi de la Russie. On doit donner mon opera [= opéra] Mazeppa à Odessa et il faut absolument qu'avant d'y aller pour surveiller les répétitions, je fasse encore une excursion dans le gouvernement de Kieff, où des raisons [p. 3] de famille m'appellent impérieusement.

J'ai crû de mon devoir, cher ami, <de V[ou]s avertir>, que dans le cas que V[ou]s viendriez à Moscou tout de même [= même] — je ne serai pas la [= là] pour serrer Votre main.

J'en suis désolé, — V[ous] n'en doutez pas, je l'espère.

Ne m'oubliez pas, pensez à ce que j'ai eu la hardiesse de V[ou]s conseiller à Petersbourg [Pétersbourg], comptez sur ma promesse et croyez fermement à

Saint Petersburg for his last season at the Mikhailovskii Theatre in 1890–91. See Henry Gidel, *Les deux Guitry* (Paris, 1995), p. 63–65.

³⁸ M. Chaikovskii, *Zhizn' Petra Il'icha Chaikovskogo* [1900–02] (Moscow, 1997), vol. 3, p. 285.

³⁹ See http://www.rrauction.com/past_auction_item.cfm?ID=3189493 (last accessed on 12 December 2010). Attention was also drawn to this letter by Ronald de Vet and Thomas Kohlhase in 'Die vom Auktionshaus RR Auction (USA) in den Jahren 1996–2009 im Internet versteigerten autographen Briefe...', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 17 (2010), p. 12–18 (12–13); but that publication was based only on the description and abridged English translation on the auctioneer's website.

l'inèbranlable [inébranlable] amitié et à [p. 4] mon admiration pour Votre grand et beau talent.

Mille choses aimable[s] de ma part à M^{me} Guitry.
Votre bien devoué [= dévoué] ami.

P. Tschaïkovsky

In English translation:

My dear friend! You told me at our last meeting at the station that you intended to come to Moscow in the course of this month. Is it presumption on my part to have imagined that it is to some extent expressly on my account that you want to come here? Or did you actually tell me so? In the haste of my departure did I mishear something?... I don't know, but what is certain is that I would have been infinitely happy to show you around our second capital; to my very great regret, however, I am compelled to travel to central Russia one of these days. My opera *Mazepa* is to be produced in Odessa,⁴⁰ and before going there to supervise the rehearsals it is absolutely necessary for me to make another trip—namely to Kiev province, where I am emphatically summoned by family reasons.

I felt it was my duty, dear friend, to warn you that in the event that you should come to Moscow all the same, I won't be there to shake your hand.

This makes me ever so sad—I trust you do not doubt this.

Do not forget me, think about what I was so bold as to advise you in Petersburg,⁴¹ count on my promise, and believe firmly in [my] unshakeable friendship and my admiration for your great and beautiful talent.

Give Mme Guitry a thousand kind regards from me.

Your very devoted friend.

P. Tchaikovsky

Although Tchaikovsky was certainly being sincere when assuring Guitry of his admiration for his talent, he was less so in the reasons that he gave for not being able to receive the actor in Moscow. This is clear from a letter that he wrote to his brother Modest on the same day (in fact just before his letter to Guitry): "Modichka! Forgive me for not having written for so long. I'm writing this in a rush, mainly so as to ask you to arrange that Guitry doesn't come to visit me in Moscow or in Maidanovo. I'm very much afraid of that. I'm going to write to him too right now, and I tell you in advance that my fibs⁴² will be as follows: that I have to go to the country in the south of Russia for family reasons and was intending to do that in May, but that since in May I am being summoned to Odessa, where *Mazepa* is to be staged (this is true, although I'm not intending to go there at all), I have to go to the country now. So now you know, for when you meet him, what kind of fibs you have to tell him."⁴³

One can only speculate as to why Tchaikovsky was so anxious to avoid having to receive Guitry in Moscow or at his house in Maidanovo—perhaps he was afraid the actor would remind him of his promise to write incidental music for his next performance in a Shakespeare tragedy (something that he was not yet ready to undertake), perhaps there were

⁴⁰ As Tchaikovsky's letter to his brother Modest that same day (quoted further on) shows, there were indeed plans to stage *Mazepa* (1884) in Odessa in the summer of 1885, but it is not clear whether this production actually took place. It is not mentioned in the chronological list drawn up by N. N. Elkina which details performances of Tchaikovsky's operas in Russia and Western Europe from 1869 to 1893. See *Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (2003), p. 433–445.

⁴¹ i.e. that for his next benefit performance Guitry should choose a Shakespeare tragedy, either *Hamlet* or *Romeo and Juliet*. See Tchaikovsky's first letter to Guitry of 1/13 April 1885 above.

⁴² Tchaikovsky uses the word 'vran'e', which is less strong than 'lozh' ('lie', 'falsehood'), and so it is translated here as 'fib', i.e. essentially a 'white lie'.

⁴³ Letter 2680 to Modest Tchaikovsky, 8/20 April 1885. *PSSL* XIII, p. 59–60.

other reasons.⁴⁴ What is certain, though, is that he did not travel to Kamenka or to Odessa at all in the spring or summer of 1885. Although in the past Tchaikovsky had often stayed with the Davydovs for various long periods throughout the year, life at Kamenka had lost much of its charm for him because of the eccentric conduct of his eldest niece, Tat'iana, and her conflicts with her parents. He now preferred to stay at the house he was renting in Maidanovo where he had more peace and quiet in which to work.⁴⁵

In subsequent years, Tchaikovsky does not seem to have resorted to any more such pretexts to avoid his new friend. Indeed, he would often meet up with the actor and his family (and later also his mistress, Mlle Angèle) during his visits to Saint Petersburg, and in early 1888, when Guitry asked him if he could write some incidental music for a staging of Act III from *Hamlet* in a forthcoming charity production (without actually reminding the composer of his promise so as not to press him into undertaking this task), Tchaikovsky apparently agreed.⁴⁶ The production did not take place, however, and in the summer of 1888 Tchaikovsky wrote his overture-fantasia *Hamlet* instead, but in January 1891 he would fulfil his earlier promise to Guitry.

8. Tchaikovsky to Jules Massenet, 5/17 February 1889 [[letter 3787a](#)]

Although Tchaikovsky did not quite place Massenet in the same league as Bizet or Delibes (as a ballet composer), and he found *Manon*, for example, something of a disappointment when he heard one of the opera's first performances in Paris in February 1884,⁴⁷ he still thought very highly of his French contemporary. Not surprisingly, then, he went to call on Massenet during his visit to Paris in February–March 1888 as part of his first tour of Western Europe as a conductor of his works. Unfortunately, Massenet was not at home, and Tchaikovsky was only able to leave his visiting card.⁴⁸ The two composers would not meet until Tchaikovsky's visit to Paris the following spring as part of his second conducting tour.

One of Tchaikovsky's missions during this second tour was to enlist various leading European musicians and composers to come to Russia in the 1889–90 season and conduct concerts of the Russian Musical Society's branch in Moscow, recently deprived of its principal conductor, Max Erdmannsdörfer, who had decided to return to his native Germany. Tchaikovsky was on the society's board of directors at the time, and he took a very active role in helping it out of this tight spot. Thus, in a letter to Jurgenson from Dresden on 5/17 February 1889, he wrote: "As far as Klindworth and Dvořák are concerned, I shall find out very soon. I've received a letter from Massenet. He enthusiastically accepts our offer, but requests that the decision about the exact dates be postponed, since this depends on the fate of

⁴⁴ That Tchaikovsky may have been embarrassed by what was perhaps on his part (at least initially) an infatuation with Guitry, is suggested by the fact that in letter 2678 to Nadezhda von Meck, written at Maidanovo from 3/15 to 9/21 April 1885, when telling his benefactress how he had spent his time in Saint Petersburg he did not mention his impressions of Guitry's performance as Kean on 30 March/11 April. However, this may also have been simply because Tchaikovsky felt it might seem frivolous to describe a visit to the French theatre in Saint Petersburg. (As is well known, Mrs. von Meck disliked the theatre and society life in general).

⁴⁵ For more details of Tchaikovsky's growing disenchantment with Kamenka from 1882 onwards, see, for example, Alexander Poznansky, *Petr Chaikovskii. Biografiia* (St. Petersburg, 2009), vol. 2, p. 177–179.

⁴⁶ Cf. Lucien Guitry's letter to Tchaikovsky of 25 January/6 February 1888 in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 209–210, p. 108–110. Tchaikovsky's reply to this letter has not survived, though.

⁴⁷ Cf. letter 2435 to Nadezhda von Meck and letter 2436 to Modest Tchaikovsky, both on 13/25 February 1884. *PSSL XII*, p. 315–319.

⁴⁸ See Demar Irvine, *Massenet: A Chronicle of His Life and Times* (Portland, 1994), p. 157.

his new opera [*Esclarmonde*]."⁴⁹ Tchaikovsky's first letter to Massenet inviting him to Moscow has not come to light, nor has Massenet's evidently positive reply, but Tchaikovsky's second letter to his French colleague, written in Dresden on 5/17 February 1889, together with a later one were auctioned at the Hôtel Drouot in Paris on 8 December 1938. Extracts from these two letters were published in a catalogue of the famous auction-house.⁵⁰

This auction was evidently not brought to the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars at the time, and in *PSSL*, as well as in most subsequent publications, the letters from Tchaikovsky to Massenet were assumed to have not survived.⁵¹ Now, thanks to Dr. Jean-Christophe Branger of the Université Jean Monnet in Saint-Etienne, who referred to Tchaikovsky's letters to Massenet in his book on *Manon*,⁵² and who kindly provided us with a scan of the relevant page in the 1938 auction catalogue, we are able to bring these letters into scholarly circulation.

There is a further twist to this story, though. The Arcturial auction-house recently advertised on its website that a letter from Tchaikovsky to Édouard Colonne, three pages long and reportedly dated "Dresden, 19 February 1889," was to be auctioned in Paris on 14 December 2010. A facsimile of the first page was provided on the website together with a transcript of the whole text.⁵³ Upon closer examination of this facsimile, however, the following emerged:

- (a) next to the greeting which opens the letter: "Cher maitre!" there was a pencil annotation in another hand: "Edouard COLONNE (1838–1910) / violoniste et chef d'orchestre / ami de Tch[aikovsky]";
- (b) the date of the letter as indicated in the description was incorrect, because a "7" had been read as a "9". The actual date is: "Dresden, 17 February 1889";
- (c) the transcript of the text was not entirely accurate (judging from the facsimile of the first page provided);
- (d) most importantly, the text of the first page was exactly identical with the extract of Tchaikovsky's letter to Massenet quoted in the 1938 auction catalogue!

Thus, the letter had been wrongly identified as being addressed to Colonne, whereas in fact it was Tchaikovsky's first extant letter to Massenet. Benoît Puttemans, the auctioneer at Artcurial in charge of this letter, was duly informed of this, and with just one day to go before the auction he was able to modify the description on the website to indicate that the advertised letter was addressed to Massenet rather than to Colonne. The complete text of this letter is published here for the first time on the basis of a colour photocopy kindly provided by Mr. Puttemans, who also explained that he did not know who had pencilled in the annotation about Colonne next to the opening greeting (It was most likely a previous owner of the autograph who was unaware of its full significance).

⁴⁹ Letter 3786 to Petr Jurgenson, 5/17 February 1889. *PSSL* XV-A, p. 42. Jurgenson was also on the society's board of directors.

⁵⁰ *Lettres autographes et correspondances diverses adressées principalement au maître et à Mme Massenet. Vente Henri Baudoin, Paris, hôtel Drouot, 8 décembre 1938*, item no. 22.

⁵¹ An exception is Kseniia Davydova's article mentioned in the [Introduction](#). Massenet's name appears among the 'new' correspondents which her projected supplementary volume to *PSSL* was to feature.

⁵² Jean-Christophe Branger, *Manon de Jules Massenet, ou, Le crépuscule de l'opéra-comique* (Metz, 1999), p. 10, n. 8.

⁵³ See <http://www.artcurial.com/en/asp/fullcatalogue.asp?salelot=1886+++++104+&refno=10321884> (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The letter was offered as lot no. 104 in sale no. 1886.

[p. 1] Dresde 17 Fevrier [= Février]
1889

Cher maitre [= maître] !

Votre bonne lettre m'a rattrapé [= rattrapé] à Dresde et je m'empresse de Vous dire que j'ai été on ne peut plus content et heureux de ce que Vous ayez accepté notre invitation. Vous ne [p. 2] sauriez croire combien on s'en réjouira à Moscou, où j'ai déjà [= déjà] annoncé par télégraphe [= télégraphe] la bonne nouvelle.

Je serai à Paris dans le courant du mois de Mars et tâcherai de Vous voir ne fût-ce [= fut-ce] que pour un moment [p. 3] pour Vous remercier de vive voix et aussi pour obtenir des renseignements plus ou moins précis quant à la date [= date] de Votre concert moscovite.

Donc au re[v]oir! Recevez l'expression de ma vive admiration et de ma grande reconnaissance!

P. Tchaïkovsky ⁵⁴

In English translation:

Dear maestro! Your kind letter caught up with me in Dresden, and I hasten to tell you that I was tremendously pleased and happy at your acceptance of our invitation. You cannot imagine how much joy this will cause in Moscow, where I have already broken the good news by means of a telegram.

I shall be in Paris in the course of March, and shall attempt to see you, if only for a moment, so as to thank you in person and also to obtain some more or less accurate information regarding the date of your Moscow concert.

And so till we meet! Receive this assurance of my keen admiration and of my great gratitude!

P. Tchaikovsky

Indeed, soon after his arrival in Paris a month later, Tchaikovsky would meet with Massenet (this was evidently their first meeting),⁵⁵ and they discussed the Russian Musical Society's invitation in more detail. Massenet also attended the Châtelet concert on 19/31 March 1889 at which Édouard Colonne conducted the *Tema con variazioni* from the Suite No. 3 in the Russian composer's honour. Tchaikovsky noted proudly in his diary: "Massenet's enthusiasm."⁵⁶ Two days later, while still in Paris, Tchaikovsky reported back to Jurgenson: "I have seen Massenet several times; he is very flattered and glad to come to Russia. He still can't give an exact date, but would prefer to come in the spring [of 1890]."⁵⁷

9. Tchaikovsky to Jules Massenet, 12/24 September 1889 [[letter 3933a](#)]

As time passed by, Tchaikovsky became increasingly worried by Massenet's failure to inform him of when exactly he could come to Moscow for his concert. This prompted a four-page letter to Massenet which, again, is known only from the extracts published in that 1938

⁵⁴ Mr. Puttemans informed us that at the auction on 14 December 2010 the letter was acquired by the Musée des lettres et manuscrits in Paris. It is to be hoped that in the section devoted to Tchaikovsky on this museum's website a facsimile of his letter to Massenet will be made available to the public in due course.

⁵⁵ An entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 12/24 March 1889 reads: "Soirée at Colonne's house. Stuffy air. My songs. Acquaintance with Massenet." See *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 266.

⁵⁶ Diary entry for 19/31 March 1889. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 268.

⁵⁷ Letter 3826 to Petr Jurgenson, 21 March/2 April 1889. *PSSL XV-A*, p. 82–83.

auction catalogue. Tchaikovsky writes from Moscow on 12/24 September (the paraphrase of part of the text given in the catalogue is also included):

[...] À notre dernière entrevue, je vous avais prié de fixer définitivement la date du concert que vous conduirez, selon votre promesse, à la Société Impériale Musicale Russe de Moscou. Préoccupé par les répétitions d'Esclarmonde', incertain, comme vous me le disiez, sur le sort que l'avenir réservait à cet opéra, vous aviez voulu remettre à plus tard une réponse décisive à mes sollicitations [...]

[Maintenant, 'Esclarmonde' remporte un plein succès; il devient indispensable de savoir quand Massenet viendra en Russie. La date du 4 avril 1890 lui conviendrait-elle?]

[...] Nous désirons pour plusieurs raisons que vous acceptiez ce jour-là [...] et depuis longtemps la direction a réservé ce jour-là pour vous [...] Je vous prie seulement de ne pas retirer votre promesse [...] Vous m'avez donné l'autorisation d'annoncer votre arrivée à Moscou au public; on vous attend avec impatience et notre position vis-à-vis du public muscovite serait bien fautive si son attente ne se réalisait pas. De grâce, venez, cher maître! Je vous assure que cela n'est pas aussi fatigant ni aussi difficile que l'on se l'imagine [...]⁵⁸

In English translation:

[...] At our last meeting I asked you to give a definitive date for the concert which, as you promised, you will conduct at the Imperial Russian Musical Society of Moscow. Since you were then preoccupied with the rehearsals for Esclarmonde, and, as you told me, also uncertain as to the fate which the future held in store for this opera, you expressed the wish to postpone a final response to my requests until sometime later [...]

[Now 'Esclarmonde' had proved a complete success, it was becoming essential to know when Massenet would be coming to Russia. Would the date of 4 April 1890 suit him?]

[...] For several reasons we would like you to accept that date [...] and the board of directors long ago booked that date for you [...] I beg you only not to go back on your promise [...] You authorized me to announce to the public that you would be coming to Moscow; you are expected there impatiently, and our situation with regard to the Muscovite public would be quite awkward if its expectations were to fail to come true. Please do come, dear maestro! I assure you that all this is neither as exhausting nor as difficult as you may imagine [...]

However, despite Tchaikovsky's entreaties in the above letter, Massenet was unable or unwilling to keep his promise to come to Moscow, and in a letter which has not come to light he informed his Russian colleague about this.

As an urgent replacement Tchaikovsky at first thought about inviting Saint-Saëns (who had already toured Russia before, in 1875 and 1887), and on 10/22 December 1889 he wrote to his French publisher Félix Mackar asking him to go and see Saint-Saëns immediately and pass on to him an invitation from the Russian Musical Society to conduct its scheduled concert of French music in Moscow on 23 March/4 April 1890 (i.e. the date offered to Massenet earlier).⁵⁹ Saint-Saëns, however, declined, and Tchaikovsky then

⁵⁸ *Lettres autographes et correspondances diverses adressées principalement au maître et à Mme Massenet. Vente Henri Baudoin, Paris, hôtel Drouot, 8 décembre 1938, item no. 23.*

⁵⁹ Cf. letter 3981 to Félix Mackar, 10/22 December 1889. *PSSL XV-A*, p. 215–216.

arranged instead for Édouard Colonne to be invited to Moscow, as he explained in another letter to Macker: "We needed someone who could replace Massenet, who deceived us shamefully."⁶⁰

Colonne accepted the invitation and came in the spring of 1890 to Moscow where he conducted the Russian Musical Society's scheduled concert of French music, to great acclaim from both the public and the critics. Back in Paris in the summer, he wrote to Tchaikovsky to thank him "for having given me the opportunity to visit your marvellous city of Moscow, which is made even more marvellous by the hospitality and kindness of its inhabitants."⁶¹

As for Massenet, it is likely that Tchaikovsky had no wish to correspond with him again after the Frenchman's "shameful deceit." Certainly, no more letters seem to have been exchanged between the two composers. This did not prevent Massenet, though, from supporting the motion to have Tchaikovsky elected a corresponding member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris on 14/26 November 1892.⁶² In Massenet's defence it should be added that, like Brahms, he was daunted by the prospect of travelling to a country with such an inhospitable climate as Russia. This is clear from a remark that the American soprano Alma Aronson made in passing in a letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris, also towards the end of 1892: "Massenet told me that he would like to visit Russia, but that he won't go because he is afraid of the cold weather there."⁶³

10. Tchaikovsky to Pauline Viardot-García, 4/16 June 1886 [[letter 2964a](#)]

While Turgenev had been alive, Tchaikovsky, despite the urging of Nadezhda von Meck, had been reluctant to visit Pauline Viardot's famous salon in the house on the rue de Douai which she and her family shared with the great Russian writer—a salon which was one of the musical centres of Paris, and in which Tchaikovsky's songs had been performed at several of the literary-musical matinees organized by Turgenev to raise funds for the relief of hard-up Russian students and artists living in the French capital. Tchaikovsky's reasons were much the same as those which led him to avoid Lev Tolstoi after their first meetings in Moscow in December 1876—a fear that making the personal acquaintance of a writer whose works he had admired ever since his youth would prove to be a disappointment, and perhaps also a fear that Turgenev, like Tolstoi, would be able to read into his heart and find out things about him which he did not wish the wider world to know.⁶⁴

After Turgenev's death in 1883, however, the circumstances changed, and during his month-long stay in Paris in the summer of 1886 Tchaikovsky finally decided to call on Mme Viardot, who was now living on her own in a house on the boulevard Saint-Germain (in 1883 she had lost not only Turgenev, but also her husband, Louis Viardot, and her youngest

⁶⁰ Letter 4068 to Félix Macker, 14/26 March 1890. *PSSL* XV-B, p. 98–99.

⁶¹ Letter from Édouard Colonne to Tchaikovsky, 6/18 June 1890. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 216, p. 42.

⁶² See Émile Paladilhe's letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 23 November/5 December 1892, in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 217, p. 169.

⁶³ Letter from Alma Aronson to Tchaikovsky, 18/30 October 1892. See B. I. Rabinovich, E. G. Sorokina, and I. A. Skvortsova, 'Perepiska Chaikovskogo s A. Aronson' in *Chaikovskii. Zabytoe i novoe* (2003), p. 324–331 (327).

⁶⁴ Cf. Tchaikovsky's entry in his special journal on 1/13 July 1886, in which he recalled his meetings with Tolstoi almost ten years earlier: "When I became acquainted with *L. N. Tolstoy*, I was seized with fear and a feeling of embarrassment before him. I imagined that this great explorer of hearts, with one glance, would penetrate into all the secrets of my soul." Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 245. See also letter 1115 to Nadezhda von Meck, 19 February/3 March–20 February/4 March 1879, in which he explains his reasons for not wishing to call on Turgenev as being solely due to his discomfort in social situations. *PSSL* VIII, p. 121–125.

daughters by then all had families of their own). It seems that Mme Viardot made the first step and invited Tchaikovsky to her house, having probably found out about Tchaikovsky's arrival in Paris from the cellist Anatolii Brandukov, who was then based in Paris. The entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 31 May/12 June 1886, in which he recorded his first visit together with Brandukov to Pauline Viardot's house is well-known, because it contains his impressions upon seeing the autograph score of *Don Giovanni*, which Mme Viardot had purchased thirty years earlier and which she allowed Tchaikovsky to peruse for some two hours that day: "We set off for Viardot's place. A storm. We were thoroughly drenched. What a first acquaintance! Still, we weren't allowed to go home. This occurrence made acquaintance easier. Lunch. Little old Viardot enchanted me. Her hanger-on. In the drawing-room. Her pupil, a Russian girl, sang an aria from *Lakmé*. Saw the orchestra score of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, written IN HIS OWN HAND!!!!!!! Went home..."⁶⁵

Tchaikovsky would keep up his acquaintance with the great Franco-Spanish singer (who was also a composer of several fine songs and operettas to librettos written in French by Turgenev), and although, as it turned out, he did not see her again during the rest of his stay in Paris in 1886, he would call on her again during his first two concert tours of Western Europe, in 1888 and 1889 respectively, which included a stop in Paris in each case.⁶⁶ This acquaintance also led to Tchaikovsky exchanging a number of letters with Pauline Viardot: three letters by her, dating from 1886 to 1889, and one (possibly two) by Tchaikovsky, dating from 1886 (and 1888), were known to scholars so far.⁶⁷

The 'new' letter to Pauline Viardot presented here was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg in 1979. According to the catalogue's description it is 2 2/3 pages long and the date it shows is "Paris, 16 June 1886": this is therefore Tchaikovsky's earliest known letter to Mme Viardot, written just four days after his memorable first visit to her house. Judging from the excerpts included in the catalogue, Tchaikovsky does not mention in it his impressions of the *Don Giovanni* manuscript score (if he had, Stargardt would surely have pointed it out or used a relevant quotation to introduce the letter in their catalogue). We publish here those excerpts, together with part of the catalogue's summary introducing the second excerpt:

J'ai été bien désolé en apprenant que c'est hier que Vous aviez fait mettre un couvert pour moi à Votre table, tandis que c'est Vendredi que je me promettais l'extrême plaisir de dîner chez Vous... J'aurais bien envie de Vous expliquer pourquoi j'ai la présomption de

⁶⁵ Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 82, but Wladimir Lakond's translation has been checked against the original, as published in *Dnevnik P. I. Chaikovskogo, 1873–1891* (Saint Petersburg, 1993 = reprint of 1924 edition), p. 64, and modified slightly.

⁶⁶ For Tchaikovsky's meetings with Pauline Viardot in 1888, see the second letter to her presented below. During his visit to Paris the following year he attended a special musical performance at Mme Viardot's house on 27 March/8 April 1889, which he described in letter 3830 to Vladimir Davydov from London two days later: "The day before my departure [from Paris] I went to a soirée at Viardot's. There was a performance of an operetta of hers, which she composed twenty years ago to a libretto by Turgenev. The cast featured her two daughters, as well as her students, amongst whom one Russian girl performed a Russian dance, to the great delight of the audience." *PSSL XV-A*, p. 87–88. In many sources, including *PSSL*, it was assumed that the operetta which Tchaikovsky saw and heard at Mme Viardot's house was *Le Dernier Sorcier* (1869), but Nicholas Žekulin has shown that it was in fact a performance of the earlier operetta *Trop de femmes* (1867). See Nicholas G. Žekulin, *The Story of an Operetta. 'Le Dernier Sorcier' by Pauline Viardot and Ivan Turgenev* (Munich, 1989), p. 97.

⁶⁷ The three letters from Pauline Viardot to Tchaikovsky have been published in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 208–209, p. 103–104. Tchaikovsky's letter to her of 9/21 June 1886 was published as letter 2968a in *PSSL XVII*, p. 237–238, whilst a letter of 28 March/9 April 1888 which is believed to be addressed to Pauline Viardot was published in abridged form by Thomas Kohlhase in *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 13 (2006), p. 9–10, on the basis of the excerpts provided in the catalogue for an auction held in Tutzing, Germany, in March 2005. However, it has not been proved conclusively that this letter was indeed addressed to her.

croire que la faute de tout ce malentendu n'est pas à moi, — mais je n'ose pas. Je me mets donc à Vos pieds et Vous demande simplement pardon....

Auf die—ihm übermittelte—Frage der Adressatin, ob er Gefallen an einem "jeu de musique" fände, antwortet Tchaikowsky:

Mais certainement, Madame, — cela me réjouirait beaucoup et je ne sais vraiment comment Vous exprimer toute ma reconnaissance pour la bonté que Vous avez de songer à me faire plaisir.⁶⁸

In English translation:

I was very aggrieved to learn that it was yesterday that you had a place laid for me at your table, for Friday was the day that I was looking forward to the extreme pleasure of dining at your house [...] I would very much like to explain to you why I have the presumption to believe that the fault of this misunderstanding lies not with me, but I do not dare to do so. I therefore throw myself at your feet and ask you simply to forgive me [...]

[To his correspondent's question—which had been passed on to him—as to whether he would like to take part in a 'musical game', Tchaikovsky replies:]

But of course, Madame — that would delight me very much, and I truly do not know how to convey to you all my gratitude for your kindness in seeking to do nice things for me.

It seems that shortly after their first meeting on Saturday 31 May/12 June 1886, Pauline Viardot had invited the Russian composer to have dinner at her house the following week, but, as the above letter shows, Tchaikovsky thought the dinner was to take place on Friday, 6/18 June, whereas the dinner had in fact been fixed for Tuesday, 3/15 June. An entry in Tchaikovsky's diary covering the events of the early evening of that Tuesday reads: "Tried to work. Brandukov. A misunderstanding with Viardot. He went to explain."⁶⁹ Thus, Brandukov apologized on Tchaikovsky's behalf for his having missed the invitation that evening, and he seems to have passed on to Tchaikovsky a request from Mme Viardot as to whether he would like to take part in a 'musical game' at her salon, presumably involving her students and other musician friends (Pauline Viardot was very fond of such parlour games⁷⁰). Tchaikovsky decided the following day to add to Brandukov's verbal apology a written one in the form of the letter to Mme Viardot presented above.

On Friday, 6/18 June 1886, Mme Viardot would herself write a small note to Tchaikovsky, again inviting him (and Brandukov) to dine at her house the following Monday, 9/21 June.⁷¹ Unfortunately, on that day she unexpectedly had to travel to Fontainebleau, just outside Paris, in order to visit a friend of hers who was ill, and she wrote to Tchaikovsky asking if he could come to her house on Tuesday evening instead.⁷² Tchaikovsky replied that very same day, apologizing that he could not accept her invitation because his friends were planning to give a farewell dinner in his honour on Tuesday evening before he departed for

⁶⁸ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1979), item no. 966 (consulted via Google Books).

⁶⁹ Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 84.

⁷⁰ For example, she invented the famous *jeu de portraits* which she and her family had often played with Turgenev: in this game "Turgenev drew the profile of a human head and each player had to write a character sketch appropriate to it." See Patrick Waddington, *Turgenev and George Sand. An Improbable Entente* (London, 1981), p. 60.

⁷¹ Letter from Pauline Viardot to Tchaikovsky, 6/18 June 1886. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 208, p. 103.

⁷² Letter from Pauline Viardot to Tchaikovsky, 9/21 June 1886. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 209, p. 103.

Russia the following evening. He promised to try to call on her on Wednesday morning, just before his departure, in order to say goodbye to her, but added just in case: "If I do not have the good fortune of seeing you, permit me to convey to you in writing how happy I am to have made your acquaintance, and how touched I was by the gracious reception which you were so kind as to accord to me."⁷³

In the end Tchaikovsky postponed his departure from Paris by one day—from Wednesday, 11/23 June, to Thursday, 12/24 June 1886—because of some bureaucratic hurdles that still had to be overcome so that he could take his three-year-old grand-nephew Georges-Léon (the illegitimate son of his niece, Tat'iana Davydova, who had been looked after by a French family) with him to Russia where he was to be adopted by the composer's older brother, Nikolai, and his wife, Ol'ga. The complications in obtaining a passport for little Georges evidently meant that Tchaikovsky had no time to call on Mme Viardot as he had promised, and he would not see her again until his next extended stay in Paris in spring 1888.

11. Tchaikovsky to Pauline Viardot-García, 25 February/8 March 1888 [[letter 3507a](#)]

Paris was the penultimate stop of Tchaikovsky's first conducting tour of Western Europe in early 1888, and a lot of effort was put in beforehand by his friends there—not least by his assiduous French publisher Félix Mackar—to ensure that his two concerts at the Théâtre du Châtelet would draw large audiences and be covered by all the leading newspapers. The launching event was to be a soirée in Tchaikovsky's honour hosted by a wealthy Russian patron of the arts living in Paris, Nicolas de Benardaky (b. 1838), and his wife Marie (1855–1913) at their salon on 16/28 February 1888, just four days after the composer's arrival in the city. Benardaky had spared no expense to organize this soirée, engaging Colonne's orchestra and the finest instrumental and vocal soloists in Paris to perform a number of works by Tchaikovsky under the composer's direction. More than three hundred persons attended, drawn from the crème de la crème of Parisian society, and the resonance of that evening was such that it led to Tchaikovsky receiving invitations to all kinds of musical and social events throughout the rest of his stay in Paris which lasted for some three weeks.

One prominent figure in Parisian society—at least in musical circles—who did not need to be made aware of Tchaikovsky's significance by all this advertising on his behalf was Pauline Viardot, for she had genuinely appreciated his music ever since Turgenev had introduced her to the song *None But the Lonely Heart* in 1871. Her first meeting with the composer in 1886, as discussed above, showed that the appreciation was mutual, and this explains why, despite all the bustle of rehearsals and social commitments, Tchaikovsky himself took the initiative of calling on Mme Viardot on Friday, 19 February/2 March 1888.⁷⁴ She seems to have invited him to a reception at her house the following Friday, and it is to this invitation that the following 'new' letter, auctioned at the Hôtel Drouot in 1990, refers. A brief extract from this letter (drawn from a possibly longer extract in the auction catalogue) is cited by Myriam Chimènes in her book on the role of aristocratic patronage and salons in the musical culture of Paris. The extract given there is as follows:

Mme de Benardaky voudrait beaucoup être invitée chez vous demain. Oserais-je vous prier de bien satisfaire le désir de cette dame.⁷⁵

⁷³ Letter 2968a to Pauline Viardot, 9/21 June 1886. *PSSL* XVII, p. 237–238.

⁷⁴ As recorded in his diary for that day. See *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 237.

⁷⁵ Quoted in Myriam Chimènes, *Mécènes et musiciens: du salon au concert à Paris sous la IIIe République* (Paris, 2004), p. 424. Her bibliographical reference reads: "lettre de Tchaïkovski [à Pauline Viardot] 8 mars 1888, en français, *Catalogue de vente Drouot, 27 novembre 1990*."

In English translation:

Mme de Benardaky would very much like to be invited to your place tomorrow. May I dare to ask you to fulfil this lady's wish?

Tchaikovsky had good reason to seek to do Marie de Benardaky such a favour, for she and her husband had not only organized the soirée that opened the doors of Paris to him, but they had also kept inviting him to their house subsequently, and, moreover, Marie, a talented amateur singer, had performed his songs at many of the Parisian salons.

It is likely that Mme Viardot would have agreed to invite Marie to the soirée at her house the following day—a soirée which Tchaikovsky recorded in his diary: "Dinner and evening reception at Viardot's. Her *beaux-fils*. Singing. Viardot's beautiful song."⁷⁶ Unfortunately, it has not been possible to establish which of Pauline Viardot's many songs in various languages (including Spanish, French, German, and Russian) so impressed Tchaikovsky on that occasion.

12. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified correspondent, 8/20 July 1886 [[letter 2999a](#)]

The following letter was auctioned in 1974 by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg, and its description in the catalogue explains that it is dated "Klin, 8 July 1886," is 3 1/4 pages long, and is addressed "to a (French) composer who wanted to publish his transcriptions of Tchaikovsky's works with P. Jurgenson in Moscow". A brief extract from the letter is included in the catalogue and is the basis of our publication. Tchaikovsky writes to his correspondent from Maidanovo:

[...] Je les trouve très bien faites et Vous remercie de tout cœur pour l'attention sympathique que Vous voulez bien témoigner pour mes œuvres. Jurgenson veut bien les faire graver, mais ces morceaux étant faits pour des amateurs très forts et possédant une grande virtuosité, — il dit qu'ils ne pourront jamais avoir beaucoup de succès d'argent et que par conséquent il ne peut rétribuer l'auteur des transcriptions comme il le mériterait [...]⁷⁷

In English translation:

[...] I think they [the transcriptions] have been done very well and thank you with all my heart for the nice attention which you are so kind as to bestow upon my works. Jurgenson would very much like to engrave them, but because these pieces have been made for amateurs who are very advanced and endowed with great virtuosity, he says that they can never have a lot of commercial success, and that consequently he cannot remunerate the author of the transcriptions as he deserves [...]

Earlier that summer, during his almost month-long stay in Paris (15/27 May–12/24 June 1886), Tchaikovsky had, through his French publisher, Félix Mackar, made the acquaintance of a number of local musicians, including teaching staff and students at the Conservatoire. It

⁷⁶ Diary entry for 26 February/9 March 1888. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 238. Mme Viardot's son-in-laws referred to here are the publisher Georges Chamerot (1845–1922), who was married to her second eldest daughter Claudie (1852–1914), and the minor composer Alphonse Duvernoy (1842–1907), the husband of her youngest daughter Marianne (1854–1919). Both daughters were musically gifted and remained close to their mother even after marrying.

⁷⁷ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (1974), p. 149 (item no. 554)

is possible that the addressee of this letter was one of these. We know that a certain Jacques Du Sautoy (b. ca. 1850), for example, made piano transcriptions of works by Tchaikovsky, and that in 1887 he wrote to the composer to ask him if there were any employment opportunities at the Moscow or Saint Petersburg Conservatories,⁷⁸ but until further evidence comes to light we cannot with any degree of certainty identify the addressee as Du Sautoy, or indeed any of the Parisian musicians whom Tchaikovsky mentioned in his diary during his visit to Paris in the summer of 1886.⁷⁹

13. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent, 2/14 March 1887 [[letter 3192a](#)]

On the Artifact website (an auction catalogue database service) we found a description of an autograph signed letter sold in 1995 by Alexander Autographs in Stamford, Connecticut. The letter is reportedly in French, written on both sides of the composer's monogrammed correspondence card, and bears the date "2 March 1887". Only an English translation of the text is given on the website:

Dear Maestro and friend! How touched I was by the several affectionate lines you were kind enough to write to me upon the occasion of the soirée of the 23rd of February! I thank you with all my heart and say to you 'until we meet again' as I am indeed counting on coming to Paris very soon. It will be a real pleasure for me to see you again and to press your hand. Your very devoted friend, P. Tchaikovsky⁸⁰

The indicated date "2 March" is more likely to be OS, so that this brief letter's date would then be 2/14 March 1887. The reason for this is that on 2 March (NS), that is, on 18 February/2 March 1887, Tchaikovsky wrote to his French publisher Mackar: "I still don't know when I shall be coming to Paris, but I shall most certainly come no later than during the course of this season."⁸¹ In the above letter, however, Tchaikovsky says that he is "counting on coming to Paris very soon". Moreover, in that letter to Mackar—written in response to his French publisher's report about the success of the recital of his works which had taken place at the Salle Erard in Paris on 11/23 February 1887⁸²—Tchaikovsky did not mention having received any other letter from a member of the audience or from a musician who had taken part in the recital, which he would surely have done if that had been the case.

We cannot be entirely sure about the addressee of this letter, but it may well have been one of the musicians involved in the recital (see the commentary for the letter to Louis Diémer of 10/22 February 1887 above), and among these Tchaikovsky seems at that point to have been personally acquainted only with the violinist Martin Pierre Marsick, whom he had met in Paris in the summer of 1886.⁸³ Tchaikovsky says he looks forward to seeing his correspondent again, and this would fit in with the latter being Marsick.

⁷⁸ See Thomas Kohlhase's publication of Du Sautoy's letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 15/27 February 1887 in: *Čajkovskij-Studien* 1 (1995), p. 21–35. The publication is based on a copy of the letter provided by Polina Vaidman, who managed to identify it in the archives of the Tchaikovsky House-Museum at Klin.

⁷⁹ Jacques Du Sautoy, incidentally, does not seem to be mentioned in Tchaikovsky's diaries at all, and very little is known about him.

⁸⁰ See <http://www.artifact.com/auction-lot/peter-illich-tchaikovsky-1840-1893-russian-compo-220-p-jn1v1rx2fk> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

⁸¹ Letter 3187 to Félix Mackar, 18 February/2 March 1887. *PSSL* XIV, p. 52–53.

⁸² Cf. Mackar's letter of 12/24 February 1887 to Tchaikovsky in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 209–210, p. 154.

⁸³ Cf. the entry which Tchaikovsky made in his diary in Paris on 23 May/4 June 1886: "Meeting with Marsick and his wife at the Café Glacier Napolitain". Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 79.

Tchaikovsky did not in fact travel to Paris that year until the end of the summer. The diary entries which he made during his brief stay there, from 2/14 to 4/16 August 1887, record no meetings with the local musicians, only with his publisher Mackar.

14. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent [Lucien Guitry?], 17/29 March [1886?] [[letter 5065d](#)]

This letter was advertised by Alexander Autographs in Stamford, Connecticut, on 20 February 2005. On the Live Auctioneers website, which still features this announcement, a facsimile of the whole letter is provided. It is just one page long and reads:

29 Mars (?)

Mon cher ami !

Je viendrai, bien sûr, à l'heure indiquée. Quant à mon frère, il Vous remercie de tout son cœur, — mais pour cette fois il ne pourra profiter de Votre trop aimable invitation, ayant déjà promis de déjeuner chez un ami.

Bien à Vous

P. Tchaïkovsky⁸⁴

In English translation:

My dear friend! Of course I will come at the hour you've fixed. As for my brother, he thanks you heartily, but this time he will not be able to take advantage of your ever so kind invitation, since he has already promised to have lunch with a friend.

Yours sincerely,

P. Tchaikovsky

The date of this brief note given in the auctioneer's description: "29 November" seems to be incorrect. Close inspection of the facsimile suggests that the hastily written name of the month is March, but we are not entirely certain.

The most likely addressee of this note would seem to be Lucien Guitry, since both Tchaikovsky and his brother, Modest, were good friends of the actor. Apart from Guitry, it is difficult to think of any other French-speaking mutual acquaintance of Tchaikovsky and his brother who was on such familiar terms with them.

If the note is assumed to be to Guitry, then it must have been written either in Saint Petersburg or Paris: the actor shuttled back and forth between these two cities between 1882 and 1891 (staying in the Russian imperial capital only during the winter months), and returned permanently to Paris in the spring of 1891. In any case, the date on the note is likely to be NS, which Tchaikovsky would have probably used even when writing to Guitry from Saint Petersburg, so we can work on the assumption that the OS/NS date is 17/29 March. The years from 1882 to 1885 inclusive can be discarded from the very start, because the letters to Guitry presented earlier show that Tchaikovsky did not become properly acquainted with him until 1885, and indeed in his first letter to the actor, on 1/13 April 1885, he still addressed him as "Cher Monsieur Guitry." This leaves only two possible years in which Tchaikovsky and Modest were both at the same time in one of these two cities on 17/29 March: 1886 (Saint Petersburg) and 1891 (Paris). The later of these two dates is the least likely, because

⁸⁴ See <http://www.liveauctioneers.com/item/782737> (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The item was advertised as lot no. 405 in the auction of the Autographs & Manuscripts/Powers Collection by Alexander Autographs on 20 February 2005.

Guitry was then in the process of trying to establish himself on the French theatre stage again, and he is unlikely to have had the time to invite Tchaikovsky and Modest to lunch.

It is in fact 17/29 March 1886 which is the most likely date of this note, as will become clear from a glance at Tchaikovsky's diary. From the latter we know that on the evening of 14/26 March 1886 he left Maidanovo together with Modest to go to Saint Petersburg.⁸⁵ Two days later, the composer attended a performance of a French play *La doctoresse* at the Mikhailovskii Theatre, after which he had supper at a restaurant with various friends, among them Guitry, and his favourite cousin, Anna ("Annette") Merkling (1830–1911).⁸⁶ It seems that the next morning, on 17/29 March, Guitry sent Tchaikovsky a note inviting him and Modest to have lunch with him the following day—either because Guitry was soon about to return to France with his family (his wife Renée and their two little sons, Jean and Sacha) after yet another winter season at the Mikhailovskii, or because he wanted to wish Tchaikovsky a safe journey to the Caucasus, where the composer travelled to for the first time shortly afterwards. Either of these options would account for the entry in Tchaikovsky's diary on 18/30 March: "Lunch at Palkin's restaurant. Mme Guitry bade good-bye."⁸⁷

This letter can therefore be tentatively identified as a brief note to Lucien Guitry on 17/29 March 1886, accepting the actor's invitation to lunch the following day, but declining on behalf of his brother. If it can be proved conclusively—perhaps by consulting the archives at Klin, since not all of the letters from Guitry to the composer that have survived there have been published—this note would be the third letter from Tchaikovsky to the French actor to have come to light so far.

⁸⁵ Cf. the last entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 14/26 March 1886: "Departed for St. Petersburg with Modya". Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 57.

⁸⁶ Cf. the last entries in Tchaikovsky's diary for 16/28 March 1886: "Supper at Toucet's restaurant. Annette, Apukhtin, Kozlov, Kritzky and Guitry." Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 57.

⁸⁷ Diary entry for 18/30 March 1886. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 57.

VI. Germany

(Robert Bignell, Hugo Bock, Hans von Bülow, Paul Cossmann, Mathilde Cossmann, Aline Friede, Julius Laube, Sophie Menter, Selma Rahter, Friedrich Sieger, two unidentified)

1. Tchaikovsky to Robert Bignell, 8/20 January 1890 [[letter 3999a](#)]

The Belgian-born violinist Robert Bignell (1863–1919) spent most of his life in Hamburg (he resided in the nearby town of Altona, now a suburb of the Hanseatic city), playing first in the orchestra set up in Hamburg by Julius Laube (see Tchaikovsky's letter to Laube below) and eventually becoming leader of the Philharmonic Society's orchestra. It was as a member of the former ensemble that Bignell took part in a concert organized by Laube on 6/18 January 1888 in honour of Tchaikovsky, who had come to Hamburg as part of his first tour of Germany as a conductor of his own works. Bignell went to Russia with the rest of Laube's orchestra when the latter, thanks to Tchaikovsky's endorsement, was engaged to perform at the famous concerts at Pavlovsk every summer from 1888 to 1891. One letter from Bignell to Tchaikovsky, dating from January 1889, regarding these engagements was published by Peter Feddersen in his excellent study on Tchaikovsky's contacts with Hamburg.¹ In an earlier survey of the letters from German correspondents which have survived in the archives at Klin, Liudmila Korabel'nikova mentioned briefly the existence of a letter from Bignell to Tchaikovsky, in which the violinist asked for help in obtaining employment in Russia.² We are now able to provide a partial publication of Tchaikovsky's reply—the only such letter to Bignell to have come to light so far. It was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg in 1988, and the auction catalogue included the following extracts from this two-page letter written by Tchaikovsky in German:

[...] Ich bin bereit für Ihnen [= Sie] alles was in meiner Macht ist zu machen und wenn zufälliger Weise eine gute Stellung für Ihnen [= Sie] in Moscou [= Moskau] sich finden wird, so werde ich sehr glücklich sein[,] Sie am wärmsten zu empfehlen. Bis jetzt aber, obgleich ich daran sehr lange gedacht habe, sehe ich nicht hier in Moscou [= Moskau], sowie auch in Petersburg eine Stelle die Sie befriedigen kann [= könnte]. Hoffentlich werden wir uns im Sommer sehen und vielleicht bis dahin wird sich etwas finden [...] ³

In English translation:

[...] I am ready to do everything I can for you, and if by chance a good post should turn up for you in Moscow, I will be very happy to recommend you most warmly. For now, though, despite my having given it a great deal of thought, I cannot see any post in Moscow or Petersburg which could satisfy you. Hopefully we shall see one another in the summer, and perhaps something will have turned up by then [...]

Tchaikovsky did not visit Pavlovsk in the summer of 1890, and it is not clear whether he met Bignell again, either in Russia or during his three subsequent visits to Hamburg from 1891 to 1893.

¹ See Peter Feddersen, *Tschaikowsky in Hamburg. Eine Dokumentation* (2006) [= *Čajkovskij-Studien* 8], p. 266.

² Liudmila Korabel'nikova, 'Čajkovskij im Dialog mit Zeitgenossen', *Čajkovskij-Studien* 1 (1995), p. 187–198 (195).

³ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1988), p. 358 (consulted via Google Books).

2. Tchaikovsky to Hugo Bock, 22 December 1885/3 January 1886 [[letter 2839a](#)]

This letter was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg, in 1983, with the catalogue's summary giving its date as "Maidanowo, bei Klin, 22. XII. 1885/3. I. 1886" and explaining that the one-page-long letter in French is addressed to "Hugo Bock, the owner of the music publishing firm Bote & Bock in Berlin, who had apparently expressed his willingness to come to an agreement with his Parisian colleague Mackar which was favourable for Tchaikovsky." A brief extract was included in the catalogue:

[...] Je Vous remercie de tout mon cœur pour l'extrême [= extrême] obligeance que Vous avez bien voulu me temoigner [= témoigner] dans Votre bonne lettre. Je me suis empressé de faire savoir à M. Mackar Votre décision et j'espere [= espère] qu'il Vous en sera très reconnaissant.⁴

In English translation:

[...] I thank you most heartily for the extreme obligingness which you were so kind as to show me in your nice letter. I have hastened to let Mr. Mackar know about your decision, and I hope that he will be very grateful to you for it.

The context of this 'new' letter to Hugo Bock (1848–1932)—previously only two letters from Tchaikovsky to his first German publisher were known—is as follows.

In 1871, thanks to the efforts of Nikolai Rubinstein and Karl Klindworth, the firm of Bote & Bock in Berlin had published Tchaikovsky's overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet*—both the full score and an arrangement for solo piano. This was the composer's first contract with a foreign publisher, and the work chosen would prove most auspicious, since it was precisely the *Romeo and Juliet* overture which won many new admirers for Tchaikovsky in Western Europe during the 1870s. Bote & Bock would also publish the overture's definitive version in 1881.

When, in the summer of 1885, Félix Mackar purchased from Jurgenson the distribution rights to Tchaikovsky's works in France and Belgium, he was of course hoping that this well-known work would henceforth feature in his sales catalogues. Tchaikovsky, however, explained to him in September that "the sole publisher owning the copyright to my overture *Romeo and Juliet* for all countries (including Russia) is Messrs. Bote & Bock."⁵ In a letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 18/30 November 1885, full of various plans to popularize his music in the French capital and beyond, Mackar lamented: "I am very sorry that your *Romeo* overture isn't in my catalogue!" but then went on to propose: "Could you not help me to come to terms with Bote & Bock in Berlin regarding the possibility of acquiring your *Romeo*; or, if that is not possible, at the very least to obtain the right to include it in my catalogue, which would become more complete with this work?"⁶ In his reply from Maidanovo four days later, Tchaikovsky expressed his willingness to help Mackar in this matter: "tell me what I have to do and what I should write to him [Bock]. I don't know Mr.

⁴ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten*, Katalog-Nr. 601 (Marburg, 1983), p. 296, item no. 983 (consulted via Google Books)

⁵ Letter 2762 to Félix Mackar, 8/20 September 1885. *PSSL* XIII, p. 139–141. Mackar, in his letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 2/14 September 1885, had said that he was unsure whether the copyright in the overture was held by Bote & Bock or the firm of Bessel in Saint Petersburg (which had published piano transcriptions of it in 1872). See Mackar's letter in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 147 (Russian translation only).

⁶ Letter from Mackar to Tchaikovsky, 18/30 November 1885. See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 149–150 (Russian translation only).

Bock very well, but he seems to me a delightful person."⁷ In another letter to his French publisher from Maidanovo on 9/21 December, Tchaikovsky explained that he had just sent off a letter to Hugo Bock "in which I urge him to cede to you his rights to *Romeo*," and added: "I hope that this affair will work out."⁸

The letter to Bock which Tchaikovsky sent that day has not come down to us, but we know that the German publisher responded positively to this request from the slightly later letter presented above, in which Tchaikovsky expresses his gratitude to Bock for his readiness to come to terms with Mackar. On the same day that he wrote the above letter to Bock Tchaikovsky also wrote to Mackar from Maidanovo: "As for the Bote & Bock affair, I am enclosing the letter which Mr. Bock has just sent me in reply to mine."⁹ Mackar acknowledged receipt of this in a letter to Tchaikovsky from Paris on 8/20 January 1886: "I have received the letter from Bote & Bock. I am grateful to you for having written to these gentlemen and succeeded in persuading them to accord me the right to include this work in my catalogue."¹⁰ Thus, it seems that Bock, for all his willingness to oblige the composer, was only prepared to go so far: he sold to Mackar the right to distribute the *Romeo and Juliet* overture in France, but retained for his firm the right to publish future editions of this, one of Tchaikovsky's best-loved works.

3. Tchaikovsky to Hans von Bülow, 22 December 1885/3 January 1886 [[letter 2836a](#)]

This letter to Bülow was recorded in the *Tchaikovsky Handbook* (2002) as one of the letters not published in *PSSL*, but whose existence was known to scholars on the basis of extracts included in an auction catalogue in 1926.¹¹ We have not been able to consult this older catalogue, but have subsequently found out that the letter was auctioned again in 1983 by J. A. Stargardt in Berlin, whose catalogue for that year includes the following extracts. Tchaikovsky is writing from his house at Maidanovo to Bülow, who was then in Saint Petersburg as part of his latest Russian tour and had recently, on 14/26 December 1885, conducted the Suite No. 3 at a Russian Musical Society concert in the imperial capital:

Cher maître et ami !

Je crains que Vous ne m'en vouliez un peu de ce que je ne suis pas venu à Petersbourg pour jouir de l'audition de ma Suite sous Votre magnifique direction. Il est vrai que mon frère m'avait transmis Votre invitation mais pour des raisons qu'il serait trop long à compter — il m'était tout à fait impossible de venir. Mais j'espère que Vous ne pouvez pas douter de ma reconnaissance pour tout ce que Vous avez fait pour moi et que rien ne me serait aussi pénible que de mériter Votre mécontentement [...] c'est moi qui suis en pure perte car on me dit de tous côtés que la Suite a été exécutée encore mieux (si cela est possible) cette fois que l'année précédente [...] Ce, qui est tout à fait sur, c'est que dans tous les cas je viendrai à Petersbourg pour Vous [...] serrer la main, quand Vous reviendrez pour la deuxième série de concerts [...]¹²

⁷ Letter 2819 to Félix Mackar, 22 November/4 December 1885. *PSSL* XIII, p. 200–202.

⁸ Letter 2830 to Félix Mackar, 9/21 December 1885. *PSSL* XIII, p. 213–215.

⁹ Letter 2839 to Félix Mackar, 22 December 1885/3 January 1886. *PSSL* XIII, p. 224–225.

¹⁰ Letter from Mackar to Tchaikovsky, 8/20 November 1886. See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 152 (Russian translation only).

¹¹ Cf. *Musiker-Autographen aus der Sammlung Wilhelm Heyer in Köln. Auktionkatalog 6–7 Dec 1926. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis von Georg Kinsky* (Berlin, 1926), p. 105.

¹² J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten*, Katalog-Nr. 601 (Marburg, 1983), p. 296, item no. 984 (consulted via Google Books).

In English translation:

Dear maestro and friend! I fear lest you should be a little angry with me for not having come to Petersburg to enjoy listening to my *Suite* under your magnificent direction. It is true that my brother [Modest] had relayed to me your invitation, but for reasons which it would take too long to spell out, it was quite impossible for me to come. However, I hope that you cannot doubt my gratitude for everything that you have done for me, and that nothing would be more painful for me than to deserve your displeasure. [...] it is I who lose by this completely, because I have been told by everyone that the *Suite* was this time performed even better (if that is possible) than last year. [...] What is completely certain is that I shall come to Petersburg in any case in order to [...] shake your hand when you come back again for the second series of concerts [...]

On 12/24 January 1885, during his preceding Russian tour, Bülow had also conducted the suite's première in Saint Petersburg, achieving a great success for Tchaikovsky's latest work. "These moments are the finest adornment of an artist's life. For their sake it is worth living and toiling," the composer had then written to Nadezhda von Meck.¹³ Although Tchaikovsky missed the suite's second performance under Bülow, he did make good his promise to come to Saint Petersburg for his friend's second series of concerts during that Russian tour of 1885/86 (which was in fact Bülow's last visit to Russia). Thus, on 15/27 March 1886 he heard Bülow as the soloist in his Piano Concerto No. 1—the work that, eleven years earlier, he had dedicated to the German musician who gave its world première in Boston—and he was also able to show him the freshly published score of the *Manfred* symphony, which Bülow was reportedly very impressed by.¹⁴

4. Tchaikovsky to Paul Cossmann, 13/25 February 1889 [[letter 3793b](#)]

On the Artifact website we found a description of a Tchaikovsky autograph signed letter advertised on 25 June 2009 by the auction-house Bolaffi in Turin, Italy.¹⁵ A facsimile of the entire letter, which is just one page long, was included on the website, and we have used this as the basis for the publication of this previously unknown letter. Tchaikovsky was then in Berlin as part of his second European concert tour, and the day after this letter, on 14/26 February 1889, he would conduct the Philharmonic Orchestra in a concert featuring the *Serenade for String Orchestra* and *Francesca da Rimini*. The text of the letter is as follows:

25 Fevrier [= Février] 89

Mon cher ami Paul! De grâce veuillez m'excuser, — je ne puis avoir aujourd'hui le plaisir de déjeuner [= déjeuner] avec Vous. J'ai eu tort de ne pas Vous prendre Votre adresse l'autre jour, — cela m'a empêché [= empêché] de Vous prévenir [= prévenir] à temps! J'ai ce matin une répétition après laquelle il faut absolument que je déjeune chez notre consul. Venez[,] je Vous en prie[,] demain chez moi à 1 heure après midi. Pardon de grâce.

P. Tschaïkovsky

¹³ Letter 2638 to Nadezhda von Meck, 5/17 January 1885. *PSSL* XIII, p. 17–18.

¹⁴ See Marek Bobéth, 'Petr Il'ič Čajkovskij und Hans von Bülow', *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 355–366.

¹⁵ See <http://www.artifact.com/auction-lot/tchaikovsky.-pyotr-ilyich-43-p-1354f85861> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

In English translation:

My dear friend Paul! Please would you excuse me—I cannot have the pleasure of having lunch with you today. I was wrong not to ask you for your address the other day, for this has prevented me from warning you in time! This morning, I have a rehearsal after which it is absolutely necessary for me to have lunch at our consul's. I kindly ask you to call on me tomorrow at one o'clock in the afternoon. Please accept my apologies.

P. Tchaikovsky

The description provided by the auctioneer explained that this letter was "probably addressed to his friend Paul Cossmann (1869–1942), German writer and director of the magazine *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*." That this conjecture is correct, is confirmed by a glance at Tchaikovsky's diary for the following day: "Lunch downstairs at my place. Hendtlass.¹⁶ Cossmann did not come. A stroll. Drunkenness at home. The concert. Not so good. The hall was filled. Left with Cossmann."¹⁷

Paul Nikolaus Cossmann (1869–1942) was the son of the cellist Bernhard Cossmann (1822–1910), who from 1866 to 1870 had taught at the Moscow Conservatory (where Tchaikovsky was his colleague) before he decided to return to Germany with his family. They had settled first in Baden-Baden, but, in 1878, they moved to Frankfurt-am-Main where Cossmann became one of the co-founders of the Hoch Conservatory. At the time of Tchaikovsky's letter Cossmann's son, Paul, was a student at the University of Berlin. Only eleven days earlier, while in Frankfurt, the second stop on his itinerary through Germany, Tchaikovsky had visited Paul's family.

The elder Cossmann had turned up at the rehearsal for his concert there, and it seems that he invited Tchaikovsky to his house afterwards to have dinner, as well as supper later in the evening. The two former colleagues had evidently not met since Cossmann's departure from Russia in 1870. An entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for that day reads: "Dinner at [Bernhard] Cossmann's. He has aged awfully. Pleasing wife and daughters. [...] Home. Unpleasant realization of failure. At Cossmann's. Supper. Their warmth and kindness."¹⁸ Despite some problems at that day's rehearsal and his misgivings about the conservative Frankfurt audience, Tchaikovsky's concert the following day, on 3/15 February 1889, at which he conducted his Suite No. 3, had turned out to be a huge success. He left Frankfurt already the next morning to travel on to Dresden (where he gave another concert before Berlin), but the Cossmanns had seen him off at the railway station, and it is likely that they told him that their son, Paul, was studying in Berlin, and asked him to get in touch with the young man.¹⁹

After his studies Paul Cossmann would go on to become an influential publicist, founding, in 1904, the Munich-based *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*. In this journal he would, among other things, champion the music of his lifelong friend, Hans Pfitzner (1869–1949), the composer of *Palestrina*. (Pfitzner, incidentally was born in Moscow, where his father worked as a violinist in the orchestra of the Bol'shoi Theatre before returning to Germany). After the First World War, Cossmann, who had converted to Christianity in 1905 (both his parents were Jewish), espoused increasingly conservative and nationalistic causes, in

¹⁶ The proprietor of the Hôtel St. Petersburg in Berlin at which Tchaikovsky as usual was staying.

¹⁷ Diary entry for 14/26 February 1889. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 261. In the index, however, Lakond indicates that the Cossmann referred to here is Bernhard Cossmann, whereas it is in fact his son, Paul.

¹⁸ Diary entry for 2/14 February 1889. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 258.

¹⁹ See also the next page of this article, in which Tchaikovsky's letter of 5/17 March 1889 to Mathilde Cossmann is discussed.

particular the so-called 'Dolchstoßlegende' (stab-in-the-back legend) which attributed Germany's defeat in the war to sabotage by socialists, Bolsheviks, Jews, and other dissidents within the country. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, however, Cossmann's staunch opposition to them led to his being arrested by the Gestapo that year. Although subsequently released, thanks to the intervention of Pfitzner, he was arrested again in 1938, before being finally deported to the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1942. He died there of typhus in October of that year, and was remembered by the inmates who survived for his generosity and willingness to help others.²⁰

5. Tchaikovsky to Mathilde Cossmann, 5/17 March 1889 [[letter 3819a](#)]

Iwan Knorr, in his biography of the composer, *Peter Iljitsch Tschaikowsky* (Berlin, 1900), which together with Rosa Newmarch's better-known *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works* (London / New York, 1900), was the first book on Tchaikovsky in any western language, included the facsimile of the first page of a letter by the composer, evidently to give a sample of what his handwriting looked like. Knorr did not indicate who the addressee was. Here is the text:

Mon adresse Parisienne est 14, Rue Richepanse [*written upside down on the page*]

17 mars 1889

Hannovre

Chère et bonne Madame!

Vous devez me prendre pour un ingrat, pour un homme qui oublie trop vite ce qu'il promet, enfin pour un bien triste personnage. Non seulement je ne suis pas venu à Francfort mais depuis plus d'un mois je ne donne signe de vie! Mais voilà ce qui m'est arrivé depuis Berlin. Comme Paul a du vous l'écrire, de Berlin je suis allé à Leipzig et c'est de cette [...] ²¹

In English translation:

My address in Paris is: 14, Rue Richepanse

17 March 1889

Hannover

My dear and good lady!

You must take me to be an ungrateful person, a man who forgets too quickly what he has promised—in short, a quite sorry figure. Not only have I not come to Frankfurt, but for over a month I have not given any sign of life! However, this is what happened to me after Berlin. As Paul must have written to you, from Berlin I went to Leipzig, and it is from this [...]

This letter—or rather, its only extant page—was not included in *PSSL*, but the facsimile from Knorr's book was republished in 2003 in an article by Thomas Kohlhase and Wolfgang Glaabe, who also made some speculations as to who the unidentified addressee might be. In particular, they came to the conclusion that the most likely candidate was the wife of the cellist Bernhard Cossmann, because Tchaikovsky's letter is clearly addressed to a lady living

²⁰ See Johann Peter Vogel, *Hans Pfitzner* (Hamburg, 1989), p. 115. In this biography of Pfitzner, Cossmann is frequently mentioned because both he and his sister Lulu were very close to the composer.

²¹ Iwan Knorr, *Peter Iljitsch Tschaikowsky* (Berlin, 1900), facsimile between p. 64–65.

in Frankfurt, and Knorr, who, like Cossmann, also taught at the Hoch Conservatory there, could easily have borrowed such a letter from his colleague's wife in order to make a facsimile of it for his book.²²

Thanks to the discovery of Tchaikovsky's letter to Paul Cossmann on 13/25 February 1889 (see above), it is now possible to state beyond any doubt that the above letter from Hannover on 5/17 March is indeed addressed to Paul's mother, Mathilde Cossmann, the wife of the cellist. During his brief stay in Frankfurt a month earlier, Tchaikovsky had met the whole Cossmann family (except for Paul, who was away at university in Berlin) and enjoyed their hospitality. The cellist and his wife had also seen Tchaikovsky off on the day of his departure from Frankfurt on 4/16 February, as he duly recorded in his diary: "With Mme Cossmann to the railroad station. Lunch. Knorr, he and his wife, and old Cossmann."²³ The next stops on his itinerary were: Dresden, Berlin (where he met up with young Paul), Leipzig, Geneva, Hamburg, and after a brief rest in Hannover from 5/17 to 7/19 February (where he wrote the above letter of apology to Paul's mother, who had evidently hoped that he would stop over at Frankfurt again), Tchaikovsky left Germany to travel on to Paris and London, the final stops of his concert tour.

Mathilde Cossmann (née Hilb) was the daughter of a Karlsruhe merchant, and like her husband she was Jewish. Hopefully further research will yield more information about her, and there is even a chance that Tchaikovsky's complete letter to her will come to light some day, just like that letter to her son.

6. Tchaikovsky to (on behalf of) Aline Friede, 28 January/9 February 1888 [[letter 3486a](#)]

The following 'letter' was not actually addressed as such to the German mezzo-soprano Aline Friede (1856–1946); rather, Tchaikovsky wrote this 'certificate' attesting to her artistic qualities evidently with a view to providing her with a general letter of endorsement that she could show to opera-house managers and impresarios. It was auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in Marburg in 1988, together with a photograph of Tchaikovsky inscribed for her by the composer on the same day: "an Fräulein Aline Friede, zur freundlichen Erinnerung an P. Tschaikowsky" ("to Miss Aline Friede, as a friendly remembrance of P. Tchaikovsky").²⁴ Tchaikovsky wrote his certificate for Aline Friede in Berlin on 28 January/9 February 1888, the day after the successful concert he had conducted at the city's Philharmonic Society which, among other things, had featured four of his songs performed by the young mezzo-soprano. We publish here the almost complete text of this brief letter as cited in the auction catalogue:

J'ai été on ne peut plus content de ce que Mademoiselle Aline Friede ait eû la bonté de vouloir bien prendre part au Concert de la Philharmonie que j'ai conduit. Cette cantatrice charmante, pleine de goût et de sentiment a été, certes, le plus bel événement du concert. Je suis heureux de pouvoir le lui dire.²⁵

²² Cf. Thomas Kohlhasse and Wolfgang Glaab, 'Čajkovskis Brief vom 17. März 1889 an eine Dame in Frankfurt am Main', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 10 (2003), p. 90–94.

²³ Diary entry for 4/16 February 1889. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 259.

²⁴ From the description in the auction catalogue—see J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1988), p. 292 (consulted via Google Books)—the photograph in question was one of the several prints made by the Hamburg photographer Emil Bieber on 6/18 January 1888. This half-length portrait appears as no. 60 in the Catalogue of Photographs in: Alexander Poznansky and Brett Langston, *The Tchaikovsky Handbook* (2002), vol. 1, p. 497.

²⁵ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1988), p. 292 (consulted via Google Books). Apart from this letter, which was sold together with a copy of the playbill of the concert and a collection of newspaper

In English translation:

I could not be happier over the fact that Mademoiselle Aline Friede was so kind as to agree to take part in the Philharmonic Society concert which I conducted. This charming singer, so full of taste and feeling, was undoubtedly the highlight of the concert. I am delighted to be able to tell her so.

Aline Friede would later change to the soprano repertoire, achieving renown for her interpretation of various dramatic soprano roles, especially in Wagner operas. Her longest engagement was at the Schwerin Court Theatre, where she sang from 1897 until her retirement from the stage in 1911. She subsequently remained active as a concert and oratorio singer, however.

7. Tchaikovsky to Julius Laube, 10/22 January 1888 [[letter 3467a](#)]

On the Artifact website we found a description of an autograph signed letter by Tchaikovsky auctioned on 6 March 1997 by Swann Auction Galleries in New York. This letter in German dated "Hamburg, 22 January 1888" is reportedly three pages long and is addressed to the conductor Julius Laube (1841–1910). Only minimal extracts in English translation were given in the description: Tchaikovsky thanks Laube "for your marvellous performance of my difficult work," and asks him to "conduct at Pavlovsk in the summer."²⁶ Swann Galleries kindly provided us with a scan of the last page (the only scan for this letter in their archives), and we include its text here:

[p. 3:] Wollen wir hoffen[,] dass es so geschehen wird. Ich glaube[,] dass für Die [= die] Direction des [= der] Zarskoe-Selo-Bahn es wäre doch ein grosses Glück wenn Sie und Ihr vortreffliches Orchester in Pawlovsk im künftigen sommer [= Sommer] spielen könnten.

Mit grosser Hochachtung bin ich

Ihr ergebener
Peter Tschaïkovsky²⁷

In English translation:

Let us hope that this is how it will turn out. I think that for the management of the Tsarskoe-Selo railway it would indeed be a great stroke of luck if you and your magnificent orchestra could play in Pavlovsk in the future [or coming?] summer.²⁸

With great respect I remain, yours devotedly,

Peter Tchaikovsky

cuttings with reviews of the latter, and the photograph bearing Tchaikovsky's inscription for Aline Friede, this auction catalogue also advertised on the same page a musical autograph by Tchaikovsky (consisting of two bars: the principal theme of the third movement of the Symphony No. 4) and a letter of 31 August/12 September 1889 to an unidentified male singer (presented further on in this section). It is not clear whether these two items formed part of the same collection as the letter and photograph which Aline Friede received from Tchaikovsky.

²⁶ See <http://www.artifact.com/auction-lot/tchaikovsky.-peter-ilich-199-p-vc65mfvazp> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

²⁷ The facsimile was included in Swann Galleries' catalogue for an auction of autographs on 6 March 1997, where Tchaikovsky's letter was listed as lot no. 231.

²⁸ Pavlovsk was the final stop on the Tsarskoe Selo railway line from Saint Petersburg, which was known as such because at the time of its inauguration, in 1837, Russia's first railway only went as far as Tsarskoe Selo. The line was later extended to Pavlovsk. The railway directors were also responsible for organizing the famous concerts that were given at the magnificent station-building in Pavlovsk during the summer months.

The context of this letter is as follows. As part of his first tour of Western Europe as a conductor of his own works Tchaikovsky had arrived in Hamburg in the evening of 4/16 January 1888, just four days before the concert of his works he was due to conduct at the Philharmonic Society. After his morning rehearsal on 6/18 January Tchaikovsky received a visit from Laube. The latter was originally a military band conductor, but had retired from the army in 1877 and set up his own orchestra in Hamburg which gave popular concerts featuring many works by contemporary composers. In particular, Laube had conducted the first performance in Hamburg of Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* symphony.²⁹ So it is no surprise that Tchaikovsky accepted Laube's invitation to come and listen to him conduct his orchestra at the Wintergarten (or Ludwigsgarten) concert-hall on the evening of 6/18 January. Tchaikovsky went to the Wintergarten together with Vasilii Sapel'nikov, who was to be the soloist in his Piano Concerto No. 1 two days later. An entry in Tchaikovsky's diary for 6/18 January reads: "We listened to Laube's orchestra; he came over during the intermission."³⁰

On 9/21 January, the day after his own concert at the Philharmonic Society, which, with the exception of the Serenade for String Orchestra, was not received so warmly by the conservative audience, Tchaikovsky went again to the less stuffy Wintergarten venue where Laube conducted a matinee concert featuring the overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Italian Capriccio*, as well as organizing a luncheon in his honour.³¹ Thus, in the above letter—probably his first to Laube—Tchaikovsky was thanking the conductor for the previous evening's concert in his honour. By "your marvellous performance of my difficult work" he was almost certainly referring to the *Romeo and Juliet* overture, since the *Italian Capriccio*, though written with much gusto and inspiration, is a less 'complex' work.

As for the invitation proffered to Laube in this letter to come to Pavlovsk with his orchestra in the summer, Tchaikovsky did indeed succeed in securing an engagement for Laube and his orchestra at this most fashionable of summer retreats of the Russian aristocracy. From 1888 to 1891 these musicians from Hamburg would perform at the Pavlovsk summer concerts, as well as in other Russian towns. The occasion of Laube's first engagement in Pavlovsk, in the summer of 1888, prompted a very interesting letter (again in German) from Tchaikovsky to the conductor in which he urged Laube to programme a number of works by Glinka, and, more surprisingly perhaps, some works by his 'antagonists' in the 'Mighty Handful'.³²

8. Tchaikovsky to Sophie Menter, 8/20 August 1893 [[letter 5004a](#)]

This letter to Sophie Menter, which was not previously registered in Tchaikovsky scholarship, was published in abridged form in an auction catalogue of J. A. Stargardt in Marburg who sold the autograph in 1974. The catalogue's description gives the date of this letter, which is 2 ¼ pages long in total, as "Klin, 8/20 August 1893."

The German pianist and composer Sophie Menter (1846–1918) was one of Tchaikovsky's closest non-Russian friends in the last years of his life, and he was her guest at Itter Castle in the Tyrol on two occasions: in the autumn of 1892, when he stayed at her home for just over a fortnight, and for a week in June 1893, when, on his way back to Russia from

²⁹ For more information on Julius Laube and his championing of Tchaikovsky's music, see Peter Feddersen, *Tschaikowsky in Hamburg. Eine Dokumentation* (2006) [= *Čajkovskij-Studien* 8].

³⁰ Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 224.

³¹ Cf. Tchaikovsky's diary entry for 9/21 January 1888 in *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 224.

³² See letter 3587a to Julius Laube, 10/22 June 1888, first published by Thomas Kohlhase in: *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 219–222; also in Peter Feddersen, *Tschaikowsky in Hamburg. Eine Dokumentation* (2006) [= *Čajkovskij-Studien* 8], p. 60–61.

Cambridge, he decided to visit her and her pupil Vasilii Sapel'nikov, who was living with Menter at the time and often accompanied her on her travels. During Tchaikovsky's visit to Odessa at the start of 1893, Menter had appeared as a soloist in two of the five concerts that he conducted there: on 16/28 January, when she played a selection of his piano pieces, and on 23 January/4 February, when she premiered her single-movement work for piano and orchestra, *Ungarische Zigenuerweisen*, that Tchaikovsky had orchestrated for her during his stay at Itter Castle the previous year. The full score of Tchaikovsky's own Concert Fantasia for piano and orchestra, which was published shortly afterwards, in March 1893, would carry a dedication to Sophie Menter.

Four letters from Menter to Tchaikovsky have survived in the archives at Klin, two of which have been published—including the one to which Tchaikovsky is replying in the letter of 8/20 August 1893 presented below. In her letter from Castle Itter, which bears no date but can be dated to early/mid August, she had thanked him for an earlier letter of his in which he informed her that he had accepted an offer from Francesco Berger (1834–1933), secretary of the London Philharmonic Society, to come to London in May 1894 to conduct his new symphony (that is, the as yet unfinished Symphony No. 6) at a concert in the British capital in which Menter would also play several works for piano and orchestra under his direction.³³ She had also answered his question as to which works she wanted to play under his direction at a forthcoming Russian Musical Society concert in Saint Petersburg, scheduled for January 1894, but asked him to give her the exact dates in January so that she could fit her other engagements around those. She also added: "I've received an enquiry from Copenhagen asking whether it might not be possible for me or Sapel'nikov to convince Tchaikovsky to go there together with us. I do not dare to extend to us this understandable wish of the Danes, since you already know how happy we would be to be there together with you. Perhaps it could be combined with London or with Itter?"³⁴ Here is Tchaikovsky's reply to her from Klin:

Liebe Gnädigste!

Meine Concerte (dass heisst diejenige[,] wo ich dirigiere) in Petersburg, mit Ihnen und Wassil, sind am 15 und 19 Januar 1894, Russischen Stils.

Ist Wassil noch in Itter? Sagen [Sie] ihm dass mit Ihnen und ihm gehe ich sehr gern überall wo Sie auch gehen! Bin zu müde wegen der Simphonie, kann nicht mehr schreiben. Küsse Ihre Hand!

P. Tschaikowsky
(Doctor)[...]³⁵

In English translation:

My dear lady! My concerts (that is, those in which I am conducting) in Petersburg, with your participation and Vasilii's, are on 15 and 19 January 1894, Russian style.

Is Vasilii still in Itter? Tell him that with you and with him I am very glad to go wherever you go too! I'm too tired because of the symphony, I can't write any more. I kiss your hand!

P. Tchaikovsky
(Doctor) [...]

³³ Letter 4974a to Sophie Menter, written at Klin on 19/31 July 1893, was first published by Thomas Kohlhasse in: *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 11 (2004), p. 50–51. ³³ Tchaikovsky had written to Berger on the same day, in a letter that was published in *PSSL* XVII, p. 129.

³⁴ Letter from Sophie Menter to Tchaikovsky, early/mid August 1893. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 204 (in the original German), p. 70–71 (Russian translation).

³⁵ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1974), p. 149, item no. 555 (consulted via Google Books).

At the time of writing this letter, Tchaikovsky had almost completed the orchestration of his newest work, the Symphony No. 6, which was costing him a lot of effort because of his quest for perfection, but which four days later, when the symphony was at last complete (except for the tempi and markings), he would describe to his brother Anatolii in the following terms: "I am very proud of my symphony, and think that it's my best composition."³⁶

As in the case of the 'English' letter to Ekaterina Laroche of 11/23 August 1893 presented above (see [Section I](#)), Tchaikovsky added beneath the signature of this letter to Sophie Menter the honorary title which he had recently been awarded at the University of Cambridge. Again, he did so for humorous effect, because in her letter to the composer Menter had teased him about it, warning him to be careful when walking across the drawbridge at her castle during his next visit to Itter: "After so many distinctions it is easy to lose one's sense of balance...."³⁷

Tchaikovsky's untimely death on 25 October/6 November 1893 meant that all these plans for concert appearances together with Menter and Sapel'nikov in Saint Petersburg in January, and in London in May 1894, came to nothing. Nevertheless, Menter did give a concert in Saint Petersburg on 29 January/10 February 1894, for which she chose to play her *Ungarische Zigenuerweisen* in Tchaikovsky's orchestration as a tribute to her late friend.³⁸

9. Tchaikovsky to Selma Rahter, 12/24 September 1891 [[letter 4475a](#)]

This letter was sold at Sotheby's, London, on 1 December 2005 (where it was advertised as being from the collection of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau); it was subsequently auctioned again by J. A. Stargardt in Berlin, on 21–22 November 2006.³⁹ The description of the autograph on the Sotheby's website reads: "written in German, to Frau Bahter [= Rahter], about his opera 'Eugene Onegin', expressing his gratitude at their friendship, extending his condolences at the loss of her husband, noting with pleasure that their business relationship will continue, and saying that he will see the family again, as he is performing his opera in Hamburg in the winter". It is clearly addressed to Selma Rahter (née Winter), the widow of the music publisher Daniel Rahter (1828–1891), who had died in April.⁴⁰ Alongside the description was a facsimile of the last page of this two-page letter, and this is the basis for our partial publication:

[p. 2:] [...] christlichen Verbindung bleibe. Da meine Oper in diesem Monate in Hamburg gegeben wird, so werde ich Sie Alle wiedersehen.

Bis dahin (ich komme warscheinlich [= wahrscheinlich] im Sommer) drücke ich Ihnen mit herzlichstem Grusse die Hände. Bitte die liebe Frau Delapré herzlich zu grüssen. Ich umarme Daniel und alle Kinder!

³⁶ Letter 5009 to Anatolii Tchaikovsky, 12/24 August 1893. *PSSL* XVII, p. 164–165.

³⁷ Letter from Sophie Menter to Tchaikovsky, early/mid August 1893. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 204, p. 70.

³⁸ Cf. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 71, n. 3. The conductor at this concert was Eduard Krushevskii (1857–1916).

³⁹ See the Sotheby's website: http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetailPrintable.jsp?lot_id=4JM8Y (last accessed on 12 December 2010); and J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten: Auktion am 21. und 22. November 2006* (consulted via Google Books).

⁴⁰ For more details about Tchaikovsky's warm relations with Daniel Rahter (who, in 1888, had acquired the distribution rights to the composer's works in Germany and Austria-Hungary) and his family, whom he always called on during his visits to Hamburg from 1888 onwards, see: Thomas Kohlhase and Peter Feddersen, 'Der Briefwechsel des Hamburger Verlegers Daniel Rahter mit P. I. Čajkovskij 1887–1891', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 8 (2001), p. 47–122; and Peter Feddersen, *Tschaikowsky in Hamburg. Eine Dokumentation* (2006) [= *Čajkovskij-Studien* 8].

Auf Wiedersehen[,] liebe, gute, hochgeschätzte Frau Rahter.

Ihr ergebenster
P. Tschaikovsky

In English translation:

[...] remain [in ?] Christian union. Since my opera is going to be performed in Hamburg in that month, that means I shall see you all again.

Until then (I shall probably come in the summer) I shake your hands with a most heartfelt greeting. Please give my kind regards to dear Mrs. Delapré⁴¹ I embrace Daniel and all your children!⁴²

Good-bye, dear, kind, and highly-esteemed Mrs. Rahter.

Yours most devotedly,
P. Tchaikovsky

The opera *Evgenii Onegin* would receive its first performance in Germany at the Hamburg Opera Theatre on 7/19 January 1892. Tchaikovsky, who had originally been engaged to conduct the performance himself, pulled out after the dress rehearsal because he found it difficult to follow the German libretto, and the opera was conducted instead, to his great satisfaction, by the young Gustav Mahler (1860–1911). It is not clear whether Tchaikovsky found the time to call on Selma Rahter and her children during his very brief stay in Hamburg on that occasion (from 6/18 to 9/21 January 1892).

10. Tchaikovsky to Friedrich Sieger, 1/13 August (?) 1889 [[letter 3914a](#)]

A compilation of letters to the Swiss composer and conductor Volkmar Andreae (1879–1962) published in Zurich in 1986 contains an appendix listing the items in Andreae's collection of autographs. Among these we find a reference to an autograph letter by Tchaikovsky dated "Moscow, 13 August 1889; 1 page, 8vo" whose contents are briefly summarized as: "Will come on 6 December; Greetings to Madame Sieger."⁴³ This letter is not listed in the inventories of the Volkmar Andreae collections at the Music Department of the Zentralbibliothek Zürich (ZBZ) and the Stadtarchiv Zürich.⁴⁴ Ruth Häusler and Daniel Gloor of the ZBZ have confirmed that Tchaikovsky's letter is not held there, but have kindly offered to try to ascertain whether it is to be found in the Zurich municipal archives.

However, already the sparse information we have is sufficient to identify its addressee as Friedrich Sieger (1848–1924), a Frankfurt-based lawyer and member of the board of directors of that city's musical society (the *Museums-Gesellschaft*). This is not just because of

⁴¹ An elderly lady called Mme Laprée lived with the Rahters at their house in Hamburg, but it is not clear what her relation to the family was. In letter 3816 to Daniel Rahter of 5/17 March 1889 Tchaikovsky had also sent her his regards. See 'Der Briefwechsel des Hamburger Verlegers Daniel Rahter mit P. I. Čajkovskij 1887–1891', p. 72–73.

⁴² Daniel and Selma Rahter had four children: Daniel (1873–1925), Ludwig (b. 1874), Hermine (b. 1877), and Selma (1879–1957). The eldest son, Daniel, would eventually come to manage his late father's publishing house, now relocated to Leipzig.

⁴³ See Ernst Lichtenhahn, Margaret Engeler et al., *Briefe an Volkmar Andreae: ein halbes Jahrhundert Zürcher Musikleben 1902-1959* (Zurich, 1986), p. 414. In the original German: "Tschaikowsky, Pjotr, 1840-1893, russischer Komponist. E. Br. m. U. Moskau, 13. August 1889, 1 S. 8°. Kommt am 6. Dezember; Grüße an Madame Sieger."

⁴⁴ These inventories are available online at:

<http://www.zb.unizh.ch/spezialsammlungen/musikabteilung/nachlaesse/index.html.de> and <http://amsquery.stadt-zuerich.ch/detail.aspx?ID=11575> respectively.

the "greetings to Madame Sieger" it contains, but also because a number of letters from Sieger to the composer have been published in *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (Leningrad, 1970), and among these is the letter to which Tchaikovsky is clearly replying here.

Sieger had been involved in the organization of the *Museums-Gesellschaft* concert in Frankfurt on 3/15 February 1889 at which Tchaikovsky conducted his Suite No. 3 and received ovations which came as a great surprise to him in view of the conservative tastes of the Frankfurt public.⁴⁵ Having established that the composer was indeed willing to come to Frankfurt again that winter and conduct a more extensive programme of his works (Sieger was counting, in particular, on *Francesca da Rimini* and the Piano Concerto No. 1 with Vasilii Sapel'nikov as the soloist), this genuine enthusiast of Tchaikovsky's music wrote to him on 13/25 July 1889, asking him to choose one of the three possible dates for his concert at the *Museum-Gesellschaft*: "8 November, 6 and 20 December [1889, NS]."⁴⁶

The information presented above shows that Tchaikovsky, in his reply, chose 24 November/6 December 1889 as the date for what was hoped would be his second concert in Frankfurt. Unfortunately, this did not work out, and although Tchaikovsky accepted subsequent invitations from Sieger to give concerts in Frankfurt in March 1890 and February 1891, other commitments prevented him from keeping these promises too and the composer in fact never visited Frankfurt again after his sole concert there in February 1889.

As for the date of Tchaikovsky's letter provided in that brief reference—"Moscow, 13 August 1889"—it could be either OS or NS. On both 1/13 August and 13/25 August 1889 Tchaikovsky was at his house in Frolovskoe; given that he usually wrote his address as "Frolovskoe, near Moscow" in letters to foreign correspondents from this period, that would explain why the place of writing was (not entirely accurately) recorded there as Moscow. We have opted for 13 August being a NS date, that is just nineteen days after Sieger's letter to which Tchaikovsky is replying here (rather than the thirty-one days' interval entailed if 13 August is taken to be OS), since the composer was usually very prompt in attending to his business correspondence. To confirm this conclusively we would need to consult the full text of Tchaikovsky's letter.

11. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent, 4/16 March 1889 [[letter 3813a](#)]

This letter, auctioned by R.R. Auction in October 2000, may well turn out to be addressed to a non-German correspondent, but it is listed in the section for Germany because the description in the auction catalogue gives its date as "16 March 1889," and, assuming this to be NS, it was written when Tchaikovsky was in Hamburg—in fact, on the day after he conducted his Symphony No. 5 at the Hanseatic city (the work's first performance in Germany).

All that we know about this letter is the catalogue description, from which the relevant part is cited here: "Rare and desirable ALS signed 'P. Tschaikowsky,' one page, 4.5 x 7, embossed personal letterhead, March 16, 1889. Untranslated letter, in French, to a friend. Tchaikovsky encloses a photograph and sends greetings to his friend's wife as well."⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See, for example, letter 3786 to Petr Jurgenson, 5/17 February 1889. *PSSL XV-A*, p. 42.

⁴⁶ Letter from Friedrich Sieger to Tchaikovsky, 13/25 July 1889. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 61–62. This is the first of four letters from Sieger published there (in Russian translation only). Apart from the letter presented above, three other letters from Tchaikovsky to Sieger are known to Tchaikovsky scholars (two of which were published in *PSSL XV-A*, p. 38 and p. 185–186; and the third in *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 5 (1997), p. 11).

⁴⁷ R.R. Auction. *Catalog 254 (October 2000)*, item no. 680. Also on the company's website:

12. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent, 31 August/12 September 1889 [[letter 3927a](#)]

This letter was advertised by J. A. Stargardt for sale at an auction in Marburg in 1988 at which the 'certificate' written by Tchaikovsky on behalf of Alina Friede (see above) was also offered. It is not clear whether its addressee, described in the catalogue summary as "ein befreundeter Sänger," that is a (male) singer and friend of Tchaikovsky's, was related to Alina Friede in some way, but the fact that the other Tchaikovsky items in that catalogue date from the years 1888 to 1889 and have a German context suggest that this letter, too, was addressed to a German correspondent. It is reportedly three pages long and is dated "31 August/12 September 1889" (Tchaikovsky was then in Kamenka putting the final touches to the score of *The Sleeping Beauty*, the orchestration of which he had begun while at his house in Frolovskoe three months earlier). Our partial publication here is based on the extracts provided in the auction catalogue:

[...] le fait est que depuis 15 jours je suis en voyage et Votre lettre a pris bien du temps pour me rattrapper. A mon très grand regret, je ne puis Vous fournir une invitation pour un des concerts symphoniques de la Société Impériale Musicale Russe de la saison prochaine, car toutes les invitations sont faites et nous avons déjà un soliste pour chœur de nos concerts. Peut-être pourriez Vous jouer cet hiver à Petersbourg? [...] Quant à la saison suivante, celle de 1890-1891, je me réjouis de pouvoir recommander à la Direction de la Société Imperiale un artiste de votre merite et j'espère que cela s'arrangera [...] ⁴⁸

In English translation:

[...] the fact is that I have been away for the last 15 days, and your letter took quite a while to catch up with me. To my very great regret, I cannot provide you with an engagement for one of the Imperial Russian Musical Society's symphonic concerts during the coming season, because all the engagements have already been made and we already have a soloist for the chorus at our concerts. Perhaps you would like to perform in Petersburg this winter? [...] As for the next season, that of 1890/91, I am delighted to be able to recommend to the Imperial Society's board of directors an artist of your merit and I hope that this will work out [...]

If the letter to which Tchaikovsky is replying has survived in the archives at Klin, it should be possible to identify the (German ?) singer in question.

http://www.rrauction.com/past_auction_item.cfm?ID=3013625 (last accessed on 12 December 2010). Attention was also drawn to this letter by Ronald de Vet and Thomas Kohlhasse in 'Die vom Auktionshaus RR Auction (USA) in den Jahren 1996–2009 im Internet versteigerten autographen Briefe...', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 17 (2010), p. 12–18 (17), who suggested that it might in fact be addressed to Félix Mackar in Paris.

⁴⁸ J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1988), p. 292 (consulted via Google Books).

VII. Great Britain

(George Bainton, George Henschel, Francis Arthur Jones, Ethel Smyth, unidentified)

1. Tchaikovsky to George Bainton, 8/20 March 1892 [[letter 4635](#)]

In the Special Collections Department of the Sibley Music Library at the University of Rochester, New York, there is an autograph letter by Tchaikovsky which was published for the first time in 1979 in the Soviet edition of the composer's correspondence, with the recipient described only as "an unidentified person".¹ The Sibley Music Library's online record for this letter was as follows: "Date: 1892.03.08/20; Origin: St. Petersburg; Language: French; Addressee and destination: Unknown; Subject: Thanks for complimentary letter. Sends affectionate greeting to "Edgar" [Leslie]. Cf. Musical Autographs Collection."² Intrigued by this information, and believing at first that it might be a letter to one of the many friends Tchaikovsky made during his tour of America in the spring of 1891, we asked David Peter Coppen, the Special Collections Librarian, if he could provide us with scans of this letter, and he kindly agreed. The text corresponded exactly with the version published in *PSSL*:

[p. 1:] S^t Petersburg
8/20 Mars 1892

Cher Monsieur !

Je viens de recevoir Votre si aimable lettre et m'empresse de Vous exprimer ma vive gratitude pour toutes les manifestations de Votre sympathie qu'elle contient. Combien il est doux pour moi d'apprendre que ma musique a des amis si chauds et si bienveillants dans un pays [p. 2] éloigné. Laissez moi Vous serrer amicalement la main et veuillez embrasser de ma part le cher Edgar, auquel je souhaite bonheur, prospérité et réussite dans tout ce qu'il entreprendra pendant sa vie, que je désire longue et fructueuse pour lui, sa famille et son grand pays.

Bien à Vous

P. Tschaïkovsky

Pardon de répondre en français — j'écis si mal en anglais !!

In English translation:

Dear Sir! I have just received your ever so kind letter, and hasten to convey to you my keen gratitude for all the manifestations of your sympathy which it contains. How sweet it is for me to find out that my music has such ardent and well-wishing friends in a distant country. Allow me to shake your hand cordially, and please embrace on my behalf dear Edgar, to whom I wish happiness, prosperity, and success in everything that he undertakes in the course of his life, which I wish may turn out to be long and fruitful for him, his family, and his great country.

Yours sincerely,

P. Tchaikovsky

Forgive me for replying in French — my written English is so poor!!

¹ See letter 4635, *PSSL* XVI-B, p. 51–52.

² The URL of the relevant finding aid is: <http://www.esm.rochester.edu/sibley/specialc/letter/> (last accessed on 11 December 2010).

At first glance the text of this letter might seem to suggest an addressee from the United States rather than one from England: Tchaikovsky speaks of a "distant" and "great" country, both of which epithets (if the latter is taken to refer to territorial extent) would more naturally fit America. Moreover, the record for this letter at the Sibley Music Library had filled in the name "Leslie" after "Edgar," and there happens to be an American song-writer called Edgar Leslie (1885–1976).³ Could the letter therefore be addressed to the father of Edgar Leslie, who would have been six at the time of Tchaikovsky's visit to America?

The key to identifying the letter's true addressee was provided by one part of the library's record that we had initially overlooked: after supplying the name "Leslie" the record adds: "cf. Musical Autographs Collection." Turning to the relevant finding aid for that collection, it emerged that the Sibley Music Library also holds a musical autograph by Grieg, consisting of four bars from a "Norwegian Wedding March," and inscribed: "Edgar Leslie from a friend of musical children, his name is Edvard Grieg. Bergen, Norway 1 April, 1892."⁴ Typing the search terms "Grieg Edgar Leslie" into Google Books turned up a reference to Lionel Carley's book *Edvard Grieg in England* (2006), in which there is the following very relevant paragraph, which we quote here in full:

Among other reminders of England in the spring of 1892 was a letter from George Bainton of Coventry, explaining how proud he was of the musical abilities of his young son:

"I have a little boy, Edgar Leslie Bainton by name, who, though, only twelve years of age, has developed remarkable musical power, and gives promise of a useful musical career. He has for you and your compositions an enthusiastic appreciation. You are, indeed, one of the enthusiasms of his life. "

The doting father had given to his son an album containing 'a few autograph letters and pieces of manuscript by great musical Composers' and asked him if Grieg might be willing to add to it on a scrap of paper. 'I write this the more gladly because in our home your music is as familiar as the most familiar friend, and loved with a very special admiration.' One hopes that Grieg may have obliged, in spite of the fact that this kind of request was an often irritating commonplace for him, for young Edgar Bainton (1880–1956) went on to become a fine composer, from works in smaller forms through to operas.⁵

Thanks to the Sibley Music Library's detailed records and, in particular, to the archivist there having linked the "Edgar Leslie" on the dedication of Grieg's musical autograph to the "Edgar" mentioned in Tchaikovsky's letter, we can confidently state that Tchaikovsky received a similar request from Rev. George Bainton (1847–1925), a Congregationalist minister in Coventry, England, and father of the composer Edgar Leslie Bainton; and that, like his Norwegian friend and colleague, Tchaikovsky willingly complied with the request—resulting in the above letter from Saint Petersburg on 8/20 March 1892. Rev. Bainton's letter to Grieg from Coventry is dated 6/18 March 1892,⁶ and so he must have written to Tchaikovsky somewhat earlier (bearing in mind the time needed for letters to travel from

³ Cf. the Wikipedia article: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edgar_Leslie (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

⁴The URL of the finding aid is: <http://www.esm.rochester.edu/sibley/specialc/findaids/browse.php?id=95>, where Grieg's autograph is listed as Record #18 (last accessed on 11 December 2010).

⁵ Lionel Carley, *Edvard Grieg in England* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 205–206.

⁶ Lionel Carley, *Edvard Grieg in England* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 443, n. 60. George Bainton's letter to the Norwegian composer is held at Bergen Public Library, and facsimile images of the original letter can be viewed on the website of The Grieg Archives:

[http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/cgi-bin/websok-grieg?mode=vt&ccl=\(\(\(Bainton,+George%2fpe+eller+George+Bainton,%2fpe+\)+og+\(ff%3dbb\)\)+\)+&st=a&kolonner=brev&sortering=aar](http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/cgi-bin/websok-grieg?mode=vt&ccl=(((Bainton,+George%2fpe+eller+George+Bainton,%2fpe+)+og+(ff%3dbb))+)+&st=a&kolonner=brev&sortering=aar) (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

England to Russia, especially if Bainton didn't have Tchaikovsky's exact address). He may well have used a similar text as in his letter to Grieg, but one hopes that the "enthusiasm" for Grieg's (and Tchaikovsky's) music that this "doting father" ascribed to his young son, Edgar, was no less genuine for that! On the basis of these dates the staff at the Klin House-Museum may be able to locate George Bainton's letter to Tchaikovsky in the archives there.

What is not clear is whether Tchaikovsky also sent a musical autograph for young Edgar (as he willingly did, for example, in the case of another British correspondent, Francis Arthur Jones—see below); if so, it does not seem to have survived together with the letter to Edgar's father. As for Tchaikovsky's apology that his written English was "so poor!!", the humorous letter to Ekaterina Laroche of 11/23 August 1893, published here for the first time as well (see [Section I](#)), might lead one to conclude otherwise.

2. Tchaikovsky to George Henschel, 18/30 June 1888 [[letter 3597a](#)]

For this letter from Tchaikovsky to the German-born British musician George Henschel (1850–1934), an all-rounder who in his day was successful in almost every musical field—as a baritone, conductor, piano accompanist, and composer—and who would be knighted in 1914, we have only a brief description published on the Sotheby's website for an auction which was held in London on 25 May 2001:

Autograph letter signed ('P. Tschaikovsky'), written in German, to Georg Henschel, expressing pleasure that after twelve years of silence he has at last heard from him and sending his regards to Frau Henschel. 1 page, 8vo, printed monogram in upper left-hand corner, Klin, 18/30 June [18]88, mounted with a photographic reproduction.⁷

It is not clear whether this letter was among those letters to Henschel from the "composers Gounod, Liszt, Massenet, Rubinstein, Saint-Saëns, and Tchaikovsky" that, together with other autographs from famous artists and writers, were sold at auction by Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge on 2 June 1919.⁸

Still, the fact that Tchaikovsky and George Henschel exchanged letters in 1888 confirms what was already known about their friendship from the lively memoirs of Henschel himself, as well as from the biography of him written by his daughter Helen Henschel (1882–1973), who would also become a professional singer.⁹ The two men had first met in Moscow, in 1875, when Henschel was invited to Russia to sing in concerts in both capitals. During a supper at Moscow's famous Hermitage Restaurant after one of these concerts, they had a heated argument over Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem*, with Henschel trying in vain to defend the German composer, a good friend of his, against Tchaikovsky's attacks on what he perceived to be Brahms's presumptuousness.¹⁰ This did not prevent Henschel and Tchaikovsky from parting as friends, though, even if they did not stay in touch over the following thirteen years.

⁷ See the Sotheby's website: http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=354HQ (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The letter was listed as lot no. 213.

⁸ Cf. George S. Bozarth, *Johannes Brahms and George Henschel. An Enduring Friendship* (Sterling Heights, MI, 2008), p. 283.

⁹ See George Henschel, *Musings and Memories of a Musician* (London, 1918) and Helen Henschel, *When Soft Voices Die. A Musical Biography* (London, 1949). Relevant excerpts from these memoirs are quoted in David Brown, *Tchaikovsky Remembered* (London, 1993), p. 97–98, p. 187–188.

¹⁰ George Henschel, *Musings and Memories of a Musician* (London, 1918), p. 60–61.

Shortly before the above letter, on 1/13 December 1887, Henschel had conducted the first performance in England of the Slavonic March,¹¹ and it seems that reading the newspaper reviews of Tchaikovsky's successful first conducting tour of Western Europe, which began with a concert in Leipzig on 24 December 1887/5 January 1888 and concluded with one in London on 10/22 March 1888, prompted Henschel to write to the composer.

At the time of his reply to Henschel Tchaikovsky was probably not yet personally acquainted with his friend's wife, the American soprano Lilian Henschel (née Bailey; 1850–1934), but he would visit the Henschels at their house in London during his last visit to England in June 1893, occasioned by his award of an honorary doctorate of music by the University of Cambridge.

3. Tchaikovsky to George Henschel, 3/15 June 1893 [[letter 4951b](#)]

Immediately after that visit to England in June 1893 Tchaikovsky made his way to Paris, where he would spend a few days before returning, via Itter in the Tyrol (where, again, he rested for a few days in the company of Sophie Menter and Vasilii Sapel'nikov), to Russia. It was from Paris that he wrote the following letter to George Henschel. This two-page letter in German, auctioned by J. A. Stargardt in 1979, is dated "Paris 15. VI. 1893" according to the auction catalogue's summary, and our partial publication is based on the extract given there:

[...] Ich habe mich in London photographieren lassen, aber die Portraits sind nicht fertig. Also ich werde Ihnen eine Photographie aus Russland schicken. Bitte aber: schicken [Sie] mir die Ihrige und wenn es möglich ist auch einen [= ein] Portrait von Ihrer Frau; ich bin in Sie [= sie ?] vollständig verliebt und es wird mir einen ungeheuren [= ein ungeheures] Vergnügen machen! [...]¹²

In English translation:

[...] I had my picture taken in London, but the portraits aren't ready yet. So I'll send you a photograph from Russia. I would, however, ask you to send me yours and, if possible, also a portrait of your wife; I am altogether in love with her, and it will give me tremendous pleasure! [...]

It seems that in a later letter to Henschel from Russia that summer which has not come down to us, Tchaikovsky did indeed make good his promise to send a print of that photograph with an inscription for his friend's wife. For in the biography of Henschel written by his daughter Helen (1882–1973), when recalling Tchaikovsky's visit to their London house in the summer of 1893, she mentioned how "I do possess a personal remembrance of Tschaikovsky—the photograph he gave to my mother, inscribed: 'A Madame L. B. Henschel, de la part de son fervent admirateur, P. Tschaikovsky'."¹³

4. Tchaikovsky to Francis Arthur Jones, 5/17 February 1893 [[letter 4856a](#)]

This remarkable letter has already been published—though it was too late for it to be included in *PSSL*—but so much new material has recently come to light about its context,

¹¹ Cf. Gerald Norris, *Stanford, the Cambridge Jubilee, and Tchaikovsky* (Newton Abbot, 1980), p. 365.

¹² J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (1979), p. 281 (consulted via Google Books).

¹³ Helen Henschel, *When Soft Voices Die. A Musical Biography* (London, 1949), p. 73.

and, in particular, the identity of Tchaikovsky's correspondent, that it fully deserves the space it is accorded here. Firstly, about the location of the autograph: until this summer, when it was auctioned by Sotheby's in New York, on 17 June 2010,¹⁴ the autograph was held at the James S. Copley Library in La Jolla (California). It was in a book dedicated to the history of this library that Tchaikovsky's letter, which is written in French, was first published in 1983, though only in an English translation and without any attempt to identify the addressee (the letter opens simply: "Monsieur...").¹⁵

The composer's grand-niece Kseniia Davydova was able to obtain a photocopy of the letter from the James S. Copley Library, and it was on the basis of this photocopy that her colleagues at the Tchaikovsky House-Museum, Polina Vaidman and Liudmila Korabel'nikova, were able to present the first publication of this letter in the original French as part of an article in *Sovetskaia muzyka* in 1990 dealing with some of the new letters and documents that had been found since the conclusion of *PSSL*. Moreover, Drs. Vaidman and Korabel'nikova were able to trace, in the Klin archives, the letter to which Tchaikovsky replied on 5/17 February 1893, as well as a later one from the same correspondent. On the basis of these two letters they gave the following information about Tchaikovsky's correspondent: that he was

an Englishman called Francis Arthur Jameson, who wrote to the composer (in English) on two occasions: on 4/16 January and 15/27 February 1893. In his first letter Jameson told Petr Il'ich about an article he was preparing on the creative process of composers, and asked him for a small fragment from one of his manuscripts, as well as to answer a number of questions which were enclosed. He pointed out that he had already obtained such information and autograph samples from Grieg, Saint-Saëns, Massenet, Gounod, and a number of English composers. [...there follows a Russian translation of these questions...] At the end of his letter Jameson promised to send Tchaikovsky what he had written to ensure that it met with his approval.¹⁶

They then presented the original French text of Tchaikovsky's reply to this correspondent, but with one important piece missing—namely, the musical autograph which Tchaikovsky willingly provided (presumably this was not included in the photocopy given to Kseniia Davydova by the James S. Copley Library). We now present Tchaikovsky's letter in full again, on the basis of the earlier publication, but now together with the enclosed musical autograph (a facsimile of which was included on the Sotheby's website alongside the description of the letter):¹⁷

5/17 Février 1893
Klin, près de Moscou

Monsieur,

Je viens de rentrer chez moi après un voyage de plusieurs mois, — ce qui Vous expliquera le retard involontaire de ma réponse. Veuillez m'excuser aussi de ce que je Vous répons en français, car quoique je le comprenne — je n'écris pas en anglais.

Voici donc ma réponse.

1) Je compose toutes les esquisses [= esquisses] de mes compositions en faisant ma promenade quotidienne [= promenade quotidienne] de deux heures; je les écris sur un petit calepin et je les mets en ordre, rentré chez moi.

¹⁴ See the Sotheby's website: http://www.sothebys.com/app/live/lot/LotDetail.jsp?lot_id=159603915 (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The letter was listed as lot no. 429 in sale no. N08698.

¹⁵ See Richard Reilly, *Promise Kept. The Story of the James S. Copley Library* (San Diego, 1983), p. 115–116.

¹⁶ 'Golosa iz Klinskogo doma: Pis'ma i dokumenty', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1990), no. 6, p. 91–96 (92).

¹⁷ We have not been able to consult full scans of the letter ourselves, and have used the transcript provided in that 1990 article, so spelling errors in the French text may not necessarily be Tchaikovsky's own.

2) Le piano ne m'est pas absolument nécessaire et j'ai composé bien de choses sans en avoir un à ma disposition (par exemple en voyage, pendant les grandes traverses maritimes), mais cet instrument facilite quelquefois le développement de mes idées musicales.

3) Ma meilleure œuvre selon moi est mon opéra "La Dame de Pique".

4) Certainement que je crois possible des compositions commandées, et d'ailleurs l'histoire nous enseigne que bien des chefs d'œuvres ont été faites par commande.

5) Je n'ai jamais songé aux raisons qui expliquent pourquoi l'Angleterre qui a produit de grands poètes, n'a que très peu de grands musiciens, mais il me semble que l'opinion que la race anglosaxone [= anglo-saxonne] est peu douée pour la musique, ne peut être considérée [= considérée] comme définitive. Qui sait si elle ne produira [= produira] pas un Shakespeare musical? Vous avez déjà [= déjà] en ce moment un musicien qui promet énormément et dont le talent est très sérieux, — c'est C. V. Stanford.

6) La faculté créatrice est un don précieux de la nature. Elle ne peut être obtenue par le travail et l'étude, mais seulement perfectionnée par la science musicale, d'ailleurs purement empirique;

7) Je travaille depuis 9 jusqu'à 8 ½, jamais la nuit.

Voici, Monsieur, les réponses, que je m'empresse de Vous donner en Vous priant de m'excuser [= excuser] d'avoir été peut-être un peu trop bref, mais je n'ai pas malheureusement le temps de Vous écrire plus longuement.

Vous me demandez de Vous envoyer two or three bars. Je ne sais pas au juste ce que veut dire bar: ligne ou page? Probablement c'est de lignes qu'il s'agit, et je Vous les envoie très volontiers.

Recevez, Monsieur, l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments.

P. Tchaikovsky

Veillez excuser ma mauvaise écriture, — je suis très pressé



[Facsimile of "Queen of Spades" excerpt by courtesy of Sotheby's]

In English translation:

Sir, I have just returned home after travels lasting several months, which accounts for the involuntary delay of my reply.¹⁸ Would you also excuse me for replying to you in French: for, although I understand English, I cannot write in that language.

¹⁸ Tchaikovsky had left Klin on 26 October/7 November 1892, travelling to Saint Petersburg for the final rehearsals and premieres of *Iolanta* and *The Nutcracker* on 6/18 December. Six days later, he had left for Europe, travelling to Montbéliard in Switzerland to visit his childhood governess Fanny Dürbach; then, via Paris, to Brussels, where he conducted a concert of his works on 2/14 January 1893; and from there he had

Here, then, is my reply:

1) I compose all the sketches of my compositions while taking my daily walk of two hours; I write them down in a little note-book and put them into order once I get back home.

2) The piano isn't absolutely essential for me, and I have composed a great deal of things without having one at my disposal (for example, while travelling, during long sea-crossings¹⁹); still, this instrument does sometimes facilitate the development of my musical ideas.

3) My best work, as I see it, is my opera *The Queen of Spades*.

4) I certainly do believe that commissioned works are possible, and, moreover, history teaches us that a great many masterpieces were in fact made to order.

5) I have never thought about the reasons as to why England, which has produced several great poets, has only a few great composers, but it does seem to me that the view according to which the Anglo-Saxon race has little talent for music, cannot be considered a definitive one.²⁰ Who knows if it will not perhaps bring forth a musical Shakespeare? As it is, you already now have a musician of enormous promise and whose talent is very significant—namely, C. V. Stanford.²¹

6) The creative faculty is a precious gift of Nature. It cannot be acquired by work or study, but can only be perfected by musical learning, which, moreover, is purely empirical;

7) I work from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p. m.; never at night.

So here, Sir, are the replies which I hasten to give to you, whilst also apologizing for having been perhaps a little too concise: the fact is that I unfortunately do not have the time to write to you at greater length.

You ask me to send you two or three bars. I do not know exactly what bar means: a line or a page? It probably refers to lines, and I send you these most gladly.

Please accept, Sir, the assurance of my finest sentiments.

P. Tchaikovsky

Please excuse my poor handwriting: I am in a great rush.²²

After presenting the original French text of the above letter (without the musical autograph) and a Russian translation (made by Kseniia Davydova), Drs. Vaidman and Korabel'nikova then added:

In his second letter (again written in English, with apologies for not knowing French), Jameson thanked Petr Il'ich for the autograph he had sent and asked him to clarify from which work the excerpt was taken. It is unclear whether Tchaikovsky replied to this second letter... For the time being all that we have is the address which F. A. Jameson gave to Tchaikovsky: "The Cedars Brixham South Devon England"²³

travelled to Odessa, where in the course of a fortnight he conducted a series of concerts. After a short visit to Kamenka he finally returned to Klin on 3/15 February, i.e. two days before he wrote this letter.

¹⁹ Thus, Tchaikovsky, for example, made a number of sketches for his abortive Symphony in E flat major during the return voyage from America in May 1891.

²⁰ In the nineteenth century, and later too, England was often referred to by the Germans, in particular, as "*das Land ohne Musik*" ("the country without music").

²¹ Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924) was in fact Irish-born, though he lived and worked in England for most of his life. It was he who initiated the proceedings whereby later that year, in June, Tchaikovsky would be awarded an honorary doctorate of music by the University of Cambridge. For more details about this, see Gerald Norris, *Stanford, the Cambridge Jubilee, and Tchaikovsky* (Newton Abbot, 1980).

²² Tchaikovsky had just begun composing his Symphony No. 6.

²³ *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1990), no. 6, p. 93.

The facsimile of the musical autograph provided on the Sotheby's website shows that it was in fact an excerpt from the finale of *The Queen of Spades*. As for the question as to whether Tchaikovsky did reply to his correspondent's second letter, this has recently also been clarified (see the next letter presented in this section).

To return to his reply to the first letter, though: it was on the basis of the information provided in this 1990 article that Tchaikovsky's correspondent was succinctly recorded in the *Tchaikovsky Handbook* (2002) as "Jameson, Francis Arthur. Englishman"²⁴ Indeed, extensive trawling through the various genealogical databases that have become available online in recent following years, turned up no traces whatsoever of a man by the name of Francis Arthur Jameson being born, marrying or dying in England or Wales, or showing up in any of those nations' decennial censuses from 1851 to 1911. Moreover, it was established that the house known as *The Cedars* (which apparently still exists in Brixham) was unoccupied at the time of the 1891 census, then listed in the occupation of a "Mrs Jones" in 1893, before becoming the private residence of a family named Ellis at the close of the nineteenth century. There still remained the possibility that Jameson might have been a Scotsman, Irishman or American, who only briefly stayed in Devon, perhaps as a guest of that "Mrs Jones" in 1893. However, it was very frustrating not to be able to find out anything specific about him, and all these speculations were threatening to turn the whole matter into something out of a Sherlock Holmes story—one that might conceivably be entitled "The Adventure of the Mysterious Lodger"...

In the course of our research the possibility was eventually raised that Drs. Vaidman and Korabel'nikova might have misread the name of Tchaikovsky's correspondent. That this was in fact the case, was confirmed thanks to Bergen Public Library's excellent internet resource: The Grieg Archives, where digital versions (facsimiles and transcripts) of some 5,700 letters written by and to the Norwegian composer have been made available online.²⁵ Since Tchaikovsky's correspondent claimed to have been in touch with Grieg, among other composers, it made sense to look through the alphabetical index of Grieg's correspondents provided on this internet resource. This revealed that a certain "Jones, Francis Arthur" had corresponded with Grieg in 1892, and turning to the letter itself which he wrote to Grieg in that year showed conclusively that we had found our man. We quote in full the text of his letter to Grieg because, judging from the translation of his questions given in that 1990 article, he had asked the Russian composer much the same questions as he had Grieg:

Young Men's Christian Association
Market Street
Torquay
Devon
England

June 22/92

Dear Sir,

Would you kindly give me your help in the following matter. I am at present engaged in writing an article for one of the most popular magazines on "How Composers compose" illustrated with facsimile reproductions of a small portion of their MS. I have already obtained the help of all the English and French composers, and I wish to know if you will kindly send me your reply to the following questions—

What method have you when composing?

Do you consider the Art of composition one which can be learned and cultivated?

Which of the composers is your favourite?

²⁴ *The Tchaikovsky Handbook* (2002), vol. 2, p. 316

²⁵ See the website of The Grieg Archives at: <http://bergenbibliotek.no/digitale-samlinger/grieg/engelsk/grieg-intro-eng>. There are also photographs of Grieg, facsimiles of the scores of his compositions, and even recordings of some of these!

And will you also send me two or three bars of music in your autograph which will be returned to you, if you so desire, when finished with by the publishers.

I should be most grateful to you if you would thus give me your help, and I should have much pleasure in forwarding you a copy of the journal containing the article.

I trust you will forgive my not being able to send you a stamped envelope for reply.

An early answer would greatly oblige me as the publishers are anxious to get the matter in print.

Kindly address as follows:

F. A. Jones
Y.M.C.A.
Market Street
Torquay
Devon

I remain

Yours faithfully
Francis Arthur Jones.²⁶

The facsimile of the letter shows that, whilst the rest of the letter is written in a beautifully clear handwriting, the signature is quite difficult to read, which explains why the surname on his two letters to Tchaikovsky at the Klin archives was misread as "Jameson." Although no letter from the Norwegian composer to Jones appears on the website of The Grieg Archives, we do know that, like his Russian friend and colleague, he complied with this rather unusual request, because Jones did finally publish his article and included Grieg's replies to his questionnaire (more on this below).

Having the true name of Tchaikovsky's correspondent, further research yielded the following information about him: Francis Arthur Launcelot Jones was born on 3/15 May 1871 at Saltney, a suburb of Chester, but was only baptised in Chester itself six years later. His father, William Jones, was Welsh, and recorded variously as a coal & iron manufacturer and shipping merchant. Francis's mother Anne (or "Nannie") was of Irish stock, and after she was widowed in the 1870s she became a lodging house proprietor. In 1881 the family resided at 29 Nicholas Street in Chester, but ten years later Mrs. Jones was found running a lodging house at 2 Park Terrace, Torquay, in Devon. At this census her son Francis, then 19, was described as a "tutor." By 1901 the family had relocated again, this time to Battersea, in south London, where they resided at 31 Prince of Wales Road. Francis, along with several siblings, was still living with his mother, and was now described as "Journalist (author)". Mrs. Jones was still at the same address in 1911 (which is the most recent census to have been made available), along with two of her daughters, but Francis was nowhere to be found. However, on checking the US immigration records, it was found that one Francis A. Jones arrived in New York from Dover on the "SS Zeeland" on 29 August/11 September 1909, and gave his address as "Prince of Wales Road, Battersea, London". The American census of 1910 suggests that he in fact he first settled in the USA in 1902, and returned to Britain at least twice for short visits.

Alongside his career as a journalist for *The Strand Magazine* and the *Wide World Magazine*—a career which saw him rise to the position of editor and American representative of these two British monthly illustrated publications—Francis Arthur Jones found the time to write two books, one of which reflected his abiding interest in music: *Famous Hymns and their Authors* (London, 1902). The other was a biography: *Thomas Alva Edison: Sixty Years of an Inventor's Life* (New York, 1907). The 1910 US census found him at the *Hotel*

²⁶ Letter from Francis Arthur Jones to Edvard Grieg, 10/22 June 1892. Bergen Public Library, The Grieg Archives. Facsimiles and transcripts of the letter available online at: <http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/cgi-bin/websok-grieg?mode=p&tnr=214892&st=a>.

Cumberland in New York, described as a "magazine editor", and this is the last verifiable reference we could find. He never seems to have married or have had children, and by 1910 he still hadn't taken US citizenship. There are indications that he was still living in New York around 1930, now working as a literary agent, but these have to be investigated further.

5. Tchaikovsky to Francis Arthur Jones, 28 February/12 March 1893 [[letter 4878a](#)]

In his first letter to Jones on 5/17 February 1893 Tchaikovsky mentioned *The Queen of Spades* as his best work, and quite naturally it was an extract from this opera that he chose to include as an autograph. As is clear from the facsimile of the musical autograph, he did not actually write above the notes the title of the work from which it was taken, as he otherwise did when providing such autographs (see, for example, the letter to Édouard Bergson of 28 April/10 May 1888 in [Section VIII](#)). Maybe he assumed that Jones knew the opera, or would infer that this is where the quotation came from.

However, Jones clearly did not recognize it, even though the full score of *The Queen of Spades* was available in print, having been published by Jurgenson in Moscow in August 1891, but then again he was not a professional musician and the first production of the opera in England would not take place until 1915 anyway. This explains why, in a second letter to Tchaikovsky from Brixham on 15/27 February 1893, as already mentioned above, Jones asked him to clarify the provenance of the musical quotation. At the time of the 1990 article by Polina Vaidman and Liudmila Korabel'nikova which first brought to light the existence of this British correspondent's letters in the Klin archives, it was not clear whether Tchaikovsky actually replied to this second letter.

The recent sale of a Tchaikovsky autograph letter by R.R. Auction on 13 January 2010 has revealed that he did reply to Jones's query, albeit without being able to give him a definitive answer. This letter was published in the *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* (2010) on the basis of the facsimile image provided on the auctioneer's website, but the identity of the addressee was unknown at the time.²⁷ We publish the letter here in its full context, with the addressee identified as Francis Arthur Jones, and also having obtained permission to use the facsimile from the present owner (thanks to Bobby Livingston of R.R. Auction who made this enquiry on our behalf):

Klin, 28 Février/12 Mars 1893

Cher Monsieur !

Vous me demandez d'où est tiré le fragment que je Vous ai envoyé ? Malheureusement j'ai complètement oublié quelle est la phrase musicale que je Vous ai communiquée.

Veillez me le faire savoir.

Bien à Vous,

P. Tschaïkovsky²⁸

In English translation:

²⁷ See Thomas Kohlhase and Ronald de Vet, 'Ein bisher unbekannter Brief Čajkovskijs – Klin, 28. Februar / 12 März 1893 – an einen "Cher Monsieur"', *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 17 (2010), p. 11.

²⁸ *R.R. Auction. Catalog 353 (January 2010)*, item no. 716. Also on the company's website. See http://www.rrauction.com/past_auction_item.cfm?ID=3192528 and http://www.icollector.com/Pyotr-Ilyich-Tchaikovsky_i9203961 (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

Dear Sir! You ask me about where the fragment I sent you is taken from. Unfortunately I've completely forgotten what musical phrase I communicated to you.

Please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

P. Tchaikovsky

Judging from the fact that only two letters from this correspondent have reportedly survived in the Klin archives,²⁹ it seems that Jones, after receiving Tchaikovsky's reply above, didn't want to risk posting back the original autograph to the composer for identification, or he perhaps felt too embarrassed to trouble Tchaikovsky again.

He also does not seem to have forwarded for the composer's approval a copy of what he had written about him, as he had promised. On the other hand, this may have been simply because Jones wrote up his article when it was too late to send Tchaikovsky a copy: "How Composers Work" by F. A. Jones appeared in two instalments in the February and April 1894 issues of *The Strand Magazine* respectively, with the section on Tchaikovsky in the latter issue, that is six months after the composer's untimely death in Saint Petersburg on 25 October/6 November 1893.

In the introduction to his article Jones explained the reasons that had led him to interview by correspondence a number of British and European composers in the course of 1892–93:

It has always appeared to me a curious fact that whereas one so often sees facsimile reproductions of the MSS. of famous authors and others, it is a comparatively rare occurrence to come across the compositions of musical composers treated in the same way, and I therefore determined to undertake the work of placing before the readers of this magazine portions of the MSS. of some of the foremost composers of the day, together with their opinions relative to that art of which they are the masters.³⁰

Some of these composers did not answer, and it seems that the shy and reticent Dvořák was among them, as we learn from a research paper by Marie Palmquist on the Czech composer:

'Do you consider the English a musical nation...?' asks Francis Arthur Jones of Dvořák in a September 1892 letter (*Antonín* 364). Commissioned by *Strand Magazine*, Jones was assigned to explore 'How Composers Compose' (364), and sent Dvořák a list of questions about his habits, preferences, and opinions on the artist's own compositional processes. Dvořák's correspondence from that year do not cite a response, and it is likely that he did not reply to such an editorial request.³¹

Among the other composers whom Jones, in his first letter to Tchaikovsky, mentioned as having complied with his request, Massenet's response for some reason did not find a place in the published version of his article. However, Saint-Saëns's reply did appear, and Grieg's

²⁹ Again, cf. *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1990), no. 6, p. 92.

³⁰ F. A. Jones, 'How Composers Work', Part I, *The Strand Magazine*, vol. 7, no. 38 (February 1894), p. 206–211 (206).

³¹ Marie Palmquist, "'I studied with the birds, flowers, trees, God, and myself': Antonín Dvořák's Spillville summer of 1893' (Music Dept., Luther College, 25 April 2008). Available at the following URL: <http://mariepalmquist.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/marie-sr-paper.doc> (last accessed on 12 December 2010). *Antonín* stands for: Antonín Dvořák, *Correspondence and Documents, Correspondence Received (1885-1892)*, vol. 6, transl. Eliska Novakova (Prague, 1997).

response was presented in the first instalment, together with a facsimile reproduction of an excerpt from the work that he considered his best: the Violin Sonata No. 2, Op. 13.³²

The order of presentation that Jones chose for the various composers that he did include in his article was a purely alphabetical one, and, as chance would have it, Tchaikovsky (spelt Tschaikowsky, as was usual then) came last in this 'ranking.' Here is the relevant section of the index to the 1894 volume of *The Strand Magazine*:

COMPOSERS WORK, HOW. By F.A. Jones.

Part I.—With facsimiles of the MSS. of Sir Joseph Barney, John F. Barnett, Jacques Blumenthal, F. H. Cowen, Alfred R. Gaul, Charles Gounod, Edward Grieg, and Chas. H. Lloyd..... 206

Part II.—With facsimiles of the MSS. of Meyer Lutz, A. C. Mackenzie, Titto Mattei, Hubert Parry, Ebenezer Prout, Rubinstein, Saint-Saëns, Stanford, Strauss, Berthold Tours, and P. Tschaikowsky..... 428.

From the section of Jones's article which is devoted to Tchaikovsky, and which we quote in full below, it is clear that he faithfully reproduced the answers which the composer had sent him in his letter of 5/17 February 1893, adding only a few poetic touches:

P. TSCHAIKOWSKY

Klin, near Moscow, was the home of one of the busiest of men. It is here that the late Russian composer Tschaikowsky lived and worked, devoting the greater part of the day to his art. Nine o'clock every morning found him hard at work, and it was one before he stopped for a light lunch. Two hours every afternoon were rigidly set aside for one of the few recreations in which he used to indulge, viz., walking; and it was during these daily strolls that most of the sketches of his pieces were conceived, and entered into a note-book which was always forthcoming. Home was reached soon after four, and from five to half-past eight was employed in arranging and setting in order the sketches jotted down during the walk.

A piano, he considered, is not absolutely necessary, and he composed much without the use of one. For instance, on a journey, or long voyage, or when rusticating in some primitive, far-away little hamlet, where the peacefulness and quietude are suggestive of composition, but where the running brook does duty for a piano and you fit your melodies to the sighing of the wind among the fir-trees. Still, the instrument helped sometimes the development of his musical ideas, and generally when convenient he made use of one. "I believe," he said, "the creating power of music to be a precious gift of Nature, which cannot be obtained by work and study, but only improved and lighted by musical sciences, besides being purely *empèrique* [*sic*].["] With the belief that composers often work better and produce finer results when put under a certain amount of pressure the professor³³ agrees, pinning his belief on history, which tells us of many masterpieces being done thus.

"I have never thought," he resumed, "of the reasons explaining why England, who produced such great poets, has had, comparatively speaking, but few musicians. It seems to me that the idea that the English are not gifted for music cannot be considered as 'definitive.' Who knows that a musical Shakespeare will not be produced? You have already men of much promise and whose work is very serious."

Of his own compositions, Tschaikowsky considered his opera "La Dame de Pique" the best work he had ever done, an opinion which is shared by many of his admirers.³⁴

³² F. A. Jones, 'How Composers Work', Part I, *The Strand Magazine*, vol. 7, no. 38 (February 1894), p. 206–211 (210–211). The section on Grieg is also cited by Lionel Carley in his book *Edvard Grieg in England* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 218, with a reproduction of the facsimile on the opposite page.

³³ "Professor" is used here in the sense of 'music professional,' in the same way that someone writing in German might refer to a notable composer as 'Meister.'

³⁴ F. A. Jones, 'How Composers Work', Part II, *The Strand Magazine*, vol. 7, no. 40 (April 1894), p. 428–434 (433–434).

The above text was immediately followed by a facsimile of Tchaikovsky's autograph extract from *The Queen of Spades*. For all the other composers covered by Jones in his article, the works their musical autographs were taken from are identified in some way or other—Jones either names the work explicitly (e.g. "Of his many compositions, Grieg gives his preference to his famous sonata for the violin, Op. 13, a few bars of which are here given"), or assumes that his readers will be familiar with the tune (e.g. in the section on Johann Strauss: "The music is taken from one of his well-known waltzes"). Besides, many of the composers wrote the work's title at the top of the musical sketch in addition to their signature. Tchaikovsky, however, did not indicate the work's title on the musical autograph that he sent to Jones together with his letter of 5/17 February 1893. In his subsequent letter of 28 February/12 March, as we saw above, he offered to clarify the autograph's provenance if Jones could remind him of the musical phrase in question. Either Jones did not take up this offer (for the reasons mentioned above), or if he did, Tchaikovsky failed to reply, or Tchaikovsky's reply (if there was one) did not reach him, but in any case it cannot be doubted that if Jones had known that the musical autograph was from *The Queen of Spades* he would have said so explicitly.

The fact that this quotation from the finale of Tchaikovsky's opera comes directly after the sentence referring to how the composer considered *The Queen of Spades* his best work, and closes the section on Tchaikovsky—as well as Jones's article as a whole—would then just be a coincidence. Alternatively, Jones may well have eventually guessed that Tchaikovsky had sent him an excerpt precisely from the work of which he was most proud, and he deliberately placed the autograph after this reference to *The Queen of Spades*.

6. Tchaikovsky to Ethel Smyth, 30 March/11 April 1889 [[letter 3832a](#)]

Tchaikovsky first met the English composer Ethel Smyth (1858–1944) at Adolph Brodsky's house in Leipzig on 19/31 December 1887, shortly before the opening concert of his first European conducting tour, which he had entered upon with some trepidation. However, the warm Russian atmosphere at the Brodskys' house, and his meetings there with such friendly foreign colleagues as Grieg, Brahms (who turned out to be not at all the conceited celebrity he had been expecting!), and also Miss Smyth, then still a student at the Leipzig Conservatory, did much to put Tchaikovsky at ease. In the incomplete diary-article about his conducting tour which he wrote a few months later, Tchaikovsky would recall his meeting with Ethel Smyth and spoke of her great promise as a composer. However, he could not resist poking fun at what he perceived to be typical English "eccentricities"—perhaps encouraged by his reading of Dickens, one of his favourite authors—and among these he listed her attachment to her dog, Marco (a splendid, but somewhat unruly St. Bernard), and her "incredible, incomprehensible veneration, nay, passion for the enigmatic musical genius of Brahms."³⁵

Smyth was rather "amused," as she put it, to come across Tchaikovsky's ironic remarks about her when she read Rosa Newmarch's book *Tchaikovsky: His Life and Works* (London, 1900), which included an English translation of that diary-article. In her first book of memoirs, published in 1919, she would fondly recall her meetings with Tchaikovsky in Leipzig many years earlier, as well as the advice which he had given her regarding

³⁵ From Tchaikovsky's *Autobiographical Account of a Tour Abroad in the Year 1888*. PSSL II, p. 333–364. This fascinating account is available in a German translation edited by Ernst Kuhn in: Peter Tschaikowsky, *Musikalische Essays und Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 2000); and in various English editions, including on the Tchaikovsky Research website (<http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/Works/Articles/TH316/index.html>).

orchestration.³⁶ As an appendix to her book she also included the full text of a letter which Tchaikovsky wrote to her in London on 30 March/11 April 1889, just before the concert he conducted that evening at the Saint James's Hall. For some reason, this letter was not brought to the attention of Soviet scholars, and it was not incorporated into *PSSL*. Outside Russia, however, it has been republished a number of times, including in later editions of Ethel Smyth's memoirs, as well as in Gerald Norris's book on Tchaikovsky's visit to Cambridge in 1893, which also covers Tchaikovsky's contacts with England in general.³⁷ In order to bring this remarkable letter to the attention of contemporary Tchaikovsky scholars, we publish its text here on the basis of scans of the autograph which is held in the archives of a Canadian university:

[p. 1:] 11 Avril 1889

Chère, bonne, et très respectée Miss Smyth!!!

J'ai conservé de Vous le plus sympathique [= sympathique] souvenir et je voudrais bien profiter de Votre si aimable invitation! Mais, chère Mademoiselle, — je pars demain, vendredi à 8h. 20m. et il m'est tout à fait impossible de venir vous trouver chez Vous. Espérons que j'aurai plus de chance [p. 2] la fois prochaine quand je viendrai à Londres. Quoique[,] à vrai dire[,] je doute fort que je reviendrai, vu qu'il n'y a pas moyen de faire bien les choses quand on [n']a que deux répétitions[,] et quand le chef d'orchestre a à peine le temps de faire son devoir pour les autres morceaux du programme!

Enfin, — espérons que je reviendrai, et alors mon plus cher vœu sera celui [p. 3] d'aller Vous trouver chez Vous. Je pars demain pour Marseille, où je prends le bateau à vapeur qui va directement au Caucase, — ce sera une traversée de 15 jours!!

Il y a un mois j'ai vu M. Brodsky et sa chère femme et, cela va sans dire, nous avons beaucoup parlé de Vous. A Hambourg j'ai passé une journée entière [p. 4] avec Votre idole Johannes BRAHMS!!!! Il a été charmant pour moi. C'est un homme bien sympathique [= sympathique], quoique mon appréciation de son talent ne corresponde pas à la vôtre!

C'est bien dommage que Vous ne serez pas au concert de ce soir. Au revoir, chère Mademoiselle. J'espère que Vous avez composé de bien belles choses, et je vous souhaite toute espèce de prospérité

P. Tschaikowsky

[written upside down at the top of p. 1:]

J'espère que Votre cher chien va bien.

In English translation:

Dear, kind, and much esteemed Miss Smyth!!! I have retained the most agreeable recollection of you and I would very much like to make use of your ever so kind invitation! But, dear Mademoiselle, I am leaving tomorrow, that is, on Friday at 8:20 a.m., and it is simply impossible for me to come to see you at your house.³⁸ Let us hope that I shall have better luck the next time I come to London. Although, to be honest, I doubt very much that I shall come back, given that there is no way of doing things

³⁶ See Ethel Smyth, *Impressions that Remained* (London, 1919), p. 167–168. This book has been recently reprinted by Brousson Press (2008). Relevant extracts are quoted in: David Brown, *Tchaikovsky Remembered* (1993), p. 190–191.

³⁷ Gerald Norris, *Stanford, the Cambridge Jubilee, and Tchaikovsky* (Newton Abbot, 1980), p. 333–334 (in English translation only).

³⁸ Earlier that year, Ethel Smyth had completed her studies in Leipzig and returned to England for good.

properly when one has no more than two rehearsals, and when the [resident] conductor hardly has any time to do his duty with regard to the other pieces on the programme!³⁹

Anyway, let us hope that I shall return, and then my most cherished wish will be to come to see you at your house. Tomorrow I am leaving for Marseille, where I shall take the steamship which goes directly to the Caucasus. It will be a sea-crossing of 15 days!!

About a month ago, I saw Mr Brodsky and his dear wife, and it goes without saying that we talked a lot about you.⁴⁰ In Hamburg I spent a whole day with your idol Johannes BRAHMS!!!! He was delightful towards me.⁴¹ He is a very agreeable man, even though my appreciation of his talent does not square with yours!

It really is a pity that you will not be at this evening's concert. Goodbye, dear Mademoiselle. I hope that you have composed some really fine things, and I wish you every possible happiness.

P. Tschaikowsky

I hope that your dear dog is well.

Tchaikovsky's next visit to London would not take place until the summer of 1893, when he conducted, at the Saint James's Hall again, the first British performance of his Fourth Symphony on 20 May/1 June 1893 before travelling on to Cambridge to collect his honorary doctorate in music. He does not seem to have met Ethel Smyth in the course of what was to be his last stay in England, as she would otherwise surely have mentioned it in her memoirs.

7. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent, 30 March/11 April 1889 [[letter 3832b](#)]

This previously unknown letter is part of a manuscript collection at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Tchaikovsky wrote it on the same day as his letter to Ethel Smyth presented above, shortly before the concert he conducted at the Saint James's Hall in London that evening. In his diary Tchaikovsky noted how after the rehearsal in the morning and lunch with Vasilii Sapel'nikov, the soloist in the Piano Concerto No. 1, he had gone back to his hotel and written some "letters," unfortunately without specifying to whom.⁴² Our publication is based on the facsimile of this one-page letter made available at Wake Forest University's digital archive:

Londres 11 Avr[il] [18]89

Je me souviens parfaitement de Vous, cher Monsieur, et serais on ne peut plus content de Vous revoir, — mais demain matin, le 12, je pars pour la Russie et ce n'est pas cette fois-ci que je pourrai profiter de Votre trop aimable offre.

³⁹ At the Philharmonic Society concert that evening in the Saint James's Hall Tchaikovsky conducted his Piano Concerto No. 1 (soloist Vasilii Sapel'nikov) and the Suite No. 1. At that same concert the society's resident conductor, Frederick Cowen, conducted Mozart's Symphony No. 39, the overture to William Vincent Wallace's opera *Lurline*, and accompanied three arias. Tchaikovsky had been given just two rehearsal slots. See Gerald Norris, *Stanford, the Cambridge Jubilee, and Tchaikovsky* (Newton Abbot, 1980), p. 332–333.

⁴⁰ Tchaikovsky had visited Adolph Brodsky and his wife Anna at their house in Leipzig on 18 February/2 March 1889, though he did not conduct a concert in the city during this second European concert tour.

⁴¹ Brahms had prolonged his stay in Hamburg by an extra day in order to attend, on 28 February/12 March 1889, the first rehearsal for the concert three days later at which Tchaikovsky was to conduct the first German performance of his Symphony No. 5. After this rehearsal the two composers had had lunch together and emptied a few bottles of wine.

⁴² Diary entry for 30 March/11 April 1889. See *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 270.

Recevez donc l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments et au revoir, j'espère!
Tout à Vous

P. Tschaikowsky⁴³

In English translation:

I remember you perfectly, dear Sir, and would be tremendously glad to see you again, but tomorrow morning, on the 12th, I am leaving for Russia, so it is not on this occasion that I can take up your all too kind offer.

Receive, then, this assurance of my finest sentiments, and till we meet again—I hope!

Yours sincerely,

P. Tchaikovsky

If the letter to which Tchaikovsky is replying here has survived in the archives at Klin, it may be possible to identify its addressee, who was evidently resident in Great Britain.

⁴³ See <http://hdl.handle.net/10339/1442> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

VIII. Poland

(Édouard Bergson, unidentified)

1. Tchaikovsky to Édouard Bergson, 28 April/10 May 1888 [[letter 3558a](#)]

On the website of Christie's we found a description of an autograph letter in French by Tchaikovsky that the firm had auctioned in London on 3 December 2003. This letter, addressed to a certain "Édouard Bergson", was described there as "a letter of abject apology, with a fine musical quotation sent as a peace-offering"; a low resolution image of the musical autograph itself was also provided: it consisted of six bars from the overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet*, as Tchaikovsky himself had written at the top, and was identified further in the auctioneer's summary as being the string passage at bars 192–198 immediately following the second theme.¹

Thomas Venning of the Book Department at Christie's kindly offered to pass on our request for a complete scan of the letter and musical autograph to the purchaser. The latter, who wishes to remain anonymous, very generously provided us with images of this previously unrecorded letter and allowed us to publish its text which is as follows:

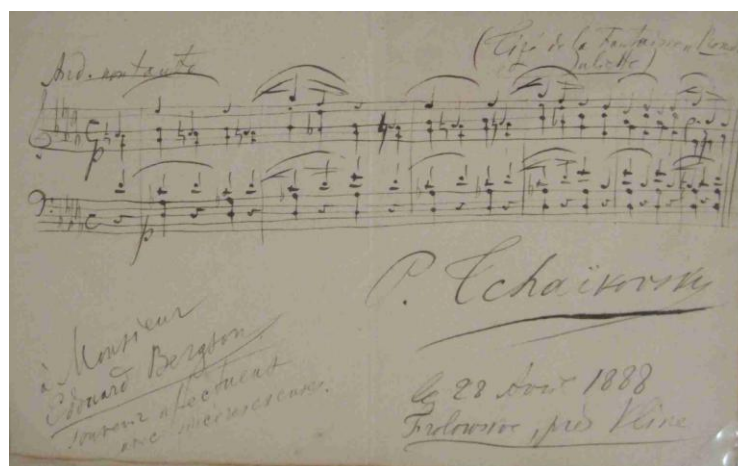
[p. 1:] Московская губ.
г. Клин, с. Фроловское.
28 Апр. 1888

Monsieur !

Je suis tout honteux de répondre à une lettre, écrite le 10 Fevrier [= Février] et dont le contenu était [= était] si flatteur pour mon amour propre d'artiste, presque trois mois plus tard !!! Je ne saurai[s] Vous dire combien je suis tourmenté par la conscience de ma faute envers Vous, — mais je ne sais vraiment comment cela s'est fait. Mes amis pourraient Vous attester que je ne pêche jamais par l'inexactitude ou l'incivilité, et je Vous dirai très fran- [p. 2] chement que j'avais tout bonnement égaré Votre lettre parmi d'autres papiers et que ce n'est qu'aujourd'hui qu'elle est tombé[e] sous mes mains fortuitement. Je m'empresse, Monsieur, de satisfaire Votre désir, je Vous réitère mes vives excuses et Vous prie de croire aux meilleurs sentiments de Votre serviteur dévoué [= dévoué].

P. Tchaïkovsky

[p. 3]



¹ See the Christie's website:

http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?from=searchresults&intObjectID=4195273&sid=f63ad8f3-e344-4ccf-9880-dc4000cc5c6c (last accessed on 12 December 2010). The item appeared as lot no. 48 in the Music Sale of 3 December 2003.

In English translation:

[*Address and date written in Russian:*] Moscow province, town of Klin, village of Frolovskoe. 28 April 1888.

Sir! I am quite ashamed to be replying to a letter which was written on the 10th of February, and whose contents were so flattering for my artist's pride, almost three months later!!! I cannot tell you how tormented I am by the sense of my fault with regard to you, but I truly do not know how this happened. My friends would be able to attest to you that I never make myself guilty of inaccuracy or impoliteness, and I shall tell you very frankly that I quite simply mislaid your letter among some other papers, and that it is only today that it has fallen into my hands by chance. I hasten, Sir, to satisfy your wish, I reiterate to you my vivid apologies and ask you to believe in the finest sentiments of your devoted servant.

P. Tchaikovsky

[Autograph musical quotation]

(Taken from the fantasia
Romeo and Juliet)

to Monsieur
Edouard Bergson
an affectionate souvenir
with sincere apologies

P. Tchaikovsky
28th of April 1888
Frolovskoe , near Klin

The reasons why this letter has been placed in the section for Poland will now be explained.

In an article entitled 'Letters to Tchaikovsky: A dialogue with his times', Liudmila Korabel'nikova included a short list of the names (just the surnames beginning with A and B) of Tchaikovsky's correspondents who wrote to him asking for autographs and signed photographs, together with the names of the places they were writing from, in order to give an idea of just how geographically wide-ranging the composer's contacts were. The list includes: "E. Bergson (Warsaw)."² This indicates that in the archives at Klin the letter from Bergson to which Tchaikovsky was replying has survived, but we have not had the opportunity to consult that document as yet.

However, we were able to find out a little more about Édouard Bergson and to confirm that he lived in Warsaw thanks to The Grieg Archives at Bergen Public Library, because the facsimile of a letter from this same correspondent to Grieg, dated "Varsovie, le 24 Janvier 1888", can be viewed online on that internet resource. In his letter to Grieg, Bergson, writing in perfect French, explains that he is the owner of "a collection of quite rare autographs" and requests the Norwegian composer "to do me the honour of enriching it with your name, whose glory is well-known and admired in my country" by sending just "a few words in reply." "For you they are just a bagatelle, but for me they are of an inestimable value," he added. At the bottom of the letter is Bergson's address: "Varsovie, Pologne, Rue Bergae, No. 3."³ There used to be a street in Warsaw called Ulica Fiodora Berga, now

² Liudmila Korabel'nikova, 'Pis'ma k Chaikovskomu: dialog s epokhoi', *Sovetskaia muzyka* (1990), no. 6, p. 103–114 (111).

³ Letter from Édouard Bergson to Grieg, 12/24 January 1888. Available online at The Grieg Archives: [http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/cgi-bin/websok-grieg?mode=vt&ccl=\(\(\(bergson,+edouard*%2fpe+eller+edouard+bergson,*%2fpe+\)+og+\(ff%3dbb\)\)+\)&st=a&kolonner=brev&sortering=aar](http://www.bergen.folkebibl.no/cgi-bin/websok-grieg?mode=vt&ccl=(((bergson,+edouard*%2fpe+eller+edouard+bergson,*%2fpe+)+og+(ff%3dbb))+)&st=a&kolonner=brev&sortering=aar) (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

apparently renamed Ulica Romualda Traugutta, but we would need the assistance of a Polish speaker to see if there is anything on Bergson in the Warsaw census records for that period.⁴

Whether or not Grieg replied to this autograph-hunter's request remains to be established. As for Tchaikovsky, he not only wrote a few words for Bergson's collection, but even sent a musical autograph from one of his best-loved works which had done so much to establish his reputation in the West—most recently confirmed and heightened even further by his first European conducting tour, in which the *Romeo and Juliet* overture featured in the programme of two of his concerts (with the Berlin Philharmonic on 27 January/8 February and at the Rudolfinum in Prague on 7/19 February 1888), and was also one of the works played by Julius Laube and his orchestra to honour Tchaikovsky during his visit to Hamburg on 9/21 January 1888 (see the letter to Laube presented above).

It is not surprising that Tchaikovsky "mis-laid" Bergson's letter of 10 February (presumably NS) from Warsaw, which was probably addressed care of Jurgenson's in Moscow and which may well have been forwarded to him in Germany or Prague, since he would hardly have had time to attend to it then. Only after his return to Russia from this hectic conducting tour, which had been followed by an almost three weeks' stay in Tiflis with his brother Anatolii and his family, did Tchaikovsky get round to answering Bergson's letter. The date of his reply—28 April/10 May 1888—indicates that he wrote it just four days after moving into the new house that he had rented at Frolovskoe. From another letter written around that time we know that Tchaikovsky spent the first few days in his new house putting his papers into order,⁵ and that is evidently when Bergson's letter also turned up.

2. Tchaikovsky to an unidentified male correspondent, 28 January/9 February (?) 1892 [[letter 4606a](#)]

The J. A. Stargardt catalogue for its auction of autographs in Marburg in 1977 features a letter written by Tchaikovsky "after his concert tour to Warsaw to an official of the Government General there regarding a passport matter." Only a German translation of a brief extract from this two-page letter, previously unnoticed by Tchaikovsky scholars, was included in the catalogue, and the English text below has been translated from the German:

[...] I have just returned from my trip abroad. In accordance with what we agreed I am sending you my foreign passport and the *ukase* of my discharge [?], with the request that you forward these [...]⁶

The date of this letter given in the catalogue's summary—"Klin 22. I. 1892"—is problematic, because on 22 January/3 February 1892 Tchaikovsky had not yet returned home from his recent travels, which had seen him travel to Kiev (for a Russian Musical Society concert of

⁴ Édouard Bergson also exchanged letters with Charles Darwin in October 1875 and wrote to the great naturalist again in November 1878. See the catalogue of Bergson's correspondence with Darwin on the website of the Darwin Correspondence Project: <http://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/namedef-405> (last accessed on 12 December 2010). Unfortunately, transcripts of these letters have not been added yet. These might have provided additional information on Bergson and his occupation.

⁵ Cf. letter 3555 to Anatolii Tchaikovsky, 25 April/7 May 1888. *PSSL* XIV, p. 417–418.

⁶ See J. A. Stargardt, *Autographen aus allen Gebieten* (Marburg, 1977), p. 235 (consulted via Google Books). The German translation is: "...Gerade eben bin ich von meiner Auslandsreise zurückgekehrt. Unseren Abmachungen entsprechend schicke ich Ihnen meinen Auslandspaß und den Ukas meiner Demission, mit der Bitte, sie weiterzuleiten ...". It is not entirely clear how the terms 'ukas' (in Tsarist Russia *ukase* was generally used to refer to an imperial decree or proclamation) and 'Demission' (i.e. resignation, discharge) are to be understood in the context of a passport granted for travelling abroad.

his works which he conducted there on 21 December 1891/2 January 1892); Warsaw (for a concert of his works on 2/14 January 1892); then, after a brief stop in Berlin, Hamburg (where he attended the German première of *Evgenii Onegin* conducted by Gustav Mahler on 7/19 January) and Paris (where he rested for a few days before returning to Russia). The auctioneers must clearly have misread a number in the date of this letter. We have dated it here provisionally to 28 January/9 February 1892, since that is the day on which Tchaikovsky arrived back at his home in Maidanovo, near Klin, from that particular tour.

No other known letters from around this date refer to this matter, but it seems that Tchaikovsky had failed to present his foreign passport to the relevant authorities in Warsaw (then part of the Russian Empire) before travelling on to Berlin, and that he now had to make good this omission. As for the official to whom Tchaikovsky is writing, it is unlikely that he was actually of Polish birth, given the Tsarist government's policy towards the Polish lands under its rule which, among other things, involved the establishing of a loyal local bureaucracy by posting ethnic Russians there, but we have included this letter in the section for Poland on the basis of the place of residence of Tchaikovsky's correspondent.

IX. United States

(E. Elias, W. S. B. Mathews, Marie Reno)

1. Tchaikovsky to E. Elias, 27 November/9 December 1889 [[letter 3976b](#)]

This letter forms part of the Miklós Rózsa Collection of Rare Letters at the Thornton School of Music in the University of South California. The description given on the online finding aid for this collection is as follows:

TCHAIKOVSKY, P. I. A.L.S. 1 page Moscow, 9 December 1889. To E. Elias. On his blue Cipher stationery. In French. An apology for not answering sooner. On verso: 4 double bars of music from 'Andante Cantabile' 9 Dec. 1889. Large signature.¹

We have not been able to find out anything about this correspondent so far, and the letter is included in the section for the United States simply because of the geographical location of the autograph. It is quite possible that Elias was not an American at all, because Tchaikovsky had not yet undertaken the concert tour to the United States that would win him so many new friends and admirers.

The head of the Music Library at USC kindly passed on our request for a scan of the letter to the University Archivist on 12 January 2011.

2. Tchaikovsky to W. S. B. Mathews, 13/25 April 1893 [[letter 4915a](#)]

Very soon after Tchaikovsky had returned to Russia from his tour of America in the spring of 1891, specific plans were mooted by the Music Hall Company in New York to invite the composer to the United States again. In particular, it was hoped that, apart from conducting his own works and those of other Russian composers, he would this time also bring a Russian choir with him to perform some Orthodox sacred music.² Tchaikovsky, however, was unable to come to terms with the concert organizers regarding his fee, and he did not visit America again.

Apart from New York, offers also reached Tchaikovsky from Chicago, where a World Fair styled the "Columbian Exposition" was due to be hosted in the summer of 1893—a major international event that was directly related to the festivities held across the United States on 12/24 October 1892 to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America. Tchaikovsky received an invitation to the Chicago World Fair already in May 1892, but the proposed terms had again proved unacceptable.³ On 10/22 March 1893, however, the organist and music journalist William Smyth Babcock Mathews (1837–1912) wrote to Tchaikovsky from Chicago to ask him if he would like to take part in the "musical congress" that was to be held during the World Fair that summer, and, in particular, to give a lecture on the state of music in Russia. Mathews' letter to the composer has survived and was published in a Soviet compilation of Tchaikovsky's correspondence with various foreign musicians.⁴

¹ See <http://www.usc.edu/libraries/archives/arc/findingaids/rozsa/index.html> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

² See, for example, Walter Damrosch's letter to Tchaikovsky of 22 June/4 July 1891 in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 208, p. 90; and also the section entitled 'To America Again?' in: Elkhonon Yoffe, *Tchaikovsky in America* (New York / Oxford, 1986), p. 153–205.

³ See letter 4682 to Theodore Thomas, 5/17 May 1892. *PSSL XVI-B*, p. 88.

⁴ See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 94.

Tchaikovsky's reply to Mathews declining his invitation has also been published before—as long ago as 1894, in Mathews' own Chicago-based magazine *Music*, namely as a facsimile of the original in French together with an English translation—but that publication seems to have escaped the attention of Tchaikovsky scholars and was not included in *PSSL*. Here is the text of this letter:

Kline, près Moscou
13/25 Avril 1893

Très respecté Monsieur

J'ai reçu l'invitation de venir assister au Congrès [= Congrès] musical de Chicago, que Vous avez eu l'extrême attention de m'envoyer. Je Vous remercie cordialement pour l'honneur que Vous avez bien voulu me faire, mais malheureusement mes affaires et ma santé m'empêchent [= m'empêchent] d'entreprendre ce trop lointain voyage et je dois renoncer au plaisir d'admirer les merveilles de Votre exposition. Soyez certain, Monsieur, que je le regrette infiniment.

Recevez l'assurance de ma profonde estime.

P. Tschaïkovsky⁵

In the English translation given in Mathews' magazine:

Very respected Sir, I have received the invitation wishing me to take part in the Musical Congress at Chicago, which you have the extreme attention to send me. I thank you cordially for the honour intended, but unfortunately my affairs and my health do not permit me to undertake so extended a journey, and I am obliged to renounce the pleasure of admiring the marvels of your exposition. Be certain that I greatly regret my inability.

Receive the assurance of my profound esteem.

P. Tchaikovsky

Although Tchaikovsky did not come to Chicago that summer, his music was to be represented at the Columbian Exposition because the Czech-born, but Russian-based, conductor Vojtěch Hlaváč (Voitekh Glavach; 1849–1911) conducted a series of "Russian concerts" there which featured a number of works by Tchaikovsky, including the festival overture *The Year 1812* and the *Italian Capriccio*.⁶

3. Tchaikovsky to Marie Reno, 17/29 April 1891 [[letter 4368a](#)]

Marie Reno (ca.1845–1915) was born Sara Kaufmann in Prussia, but emigrated to the United States with her husband, Morris Reno (1833–1917), in the early 1860s. The latter became a successful real-estate broker in New York, and both he and his wife were also active in musical circles. When, in 1891, Marie's husband became president of the management company of the city's new Music Hall (which now bears the name of its founder, Andrew Carnegie), Tchaikovsky was invited to participate in the opening night's concert on 23 April/5 May 1891, as well as to conduct his works at two later symphonic concerts there, and at Baltimore and Philadelphia.

⁵ *Music* [Chicago] 6 (1894); in one of the issues between May and October, p. 83. We have only been able to consult this volume of the magazine online—its contents have been digitized by Google Books, with the following identifying URL: <http://www.archive.org/details/musicamonthlyma06unkngoog> (last accessed on 12 December 2010)—and it is not clear in which particular monthly issue of the 1894 volume Tchaikovsky's autograph letter was reproduced.

⁶ See *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 95, n. 1.

When Tchaikovsky arrived in New York on 14/26 April he was greeted at the landing-pier by a welcoming party including Morris Reno and his youngest daughter Alice (then just twenty years old). In the carriage that then drove him to the Hotel Normandie he was seated "alongside the pretty Miss Alice," as he noted in his diary later that evening.⁷ Alice unwittingly became responsible for a good deal of confusion, since a reporter for the *New York Daily Tribune* who had seen Tchaikovsky get into the carriage together with her concluded that she must be his wife and described her as such in his article announcing the composer's arrival. Other newspapers repeated this description, and very soon Tchaikovsky found himself asked by many of the visitors who called on him at his hotel over the following days what his wife thought of New York!⁸

This misunderstanding would subsequently become a running joke in the letters exchanged between Tchaikovsky and Alice's mother. Six letters from Marie Reno to the composer are preserved in the archives at Klin,⁹ but until now it was generally assumed that those he wrote to her had not survived. The emergence of three letters to Marie Reno, therefore, adds considerably to our knowledge of Tchaikovsky's contacts with America which he kept up long after returning home.

The first of these letters was sold in June 1998 by L'Autographe SA in Geneva. Only a summary with brief quotations is given in the company's catalogue. What is particularly interesting about this one-page letter is that it was written in English—a language that Tchaikovsky otherwise preferred not to use in writing (see the letter to George Bainton of 8/20 March 1892 above)—and that it contained an original musical autograph. The summary in the catalogue reads as follows (the auctioneer's own words have been translated from French into English, but the catalogue's style of presentation has been retained):

New York, 29.IV.1891. Paper bearing his address: « 154 West 73rd Street ». An extraordinary missive, containing a **line of music**, addressed to « *Dear Mistress Reno* » in order to thank her for having invited him to dinner «... *with you and your so sympatrical daughters. I hope it was not the last time!* ». The composer signs « *yours devoted — P. Tschaïkovsky* », and then, by way of providing a self-illustration as it were, improvises at the bottom a few notes on the words: « *A very old Gentleman* »!¹⁰

In his diary, Tchaikovsky described at length the dinner party which the Renos had hosted in his honour that very evening. It was only his fourth day in America, but Tchaikovsky could already appreciate how almost everything in this country seemed to be done on a grander scale than elsewhere. "The table was almost covered with flowers," he noted. "Beside each lady's service lay a bouquet, while for the men there were lilies of the valley, which each inserted into his button-hole after being seated. Near the service of each lady stood my portrait in a graceful frame. The dinner started at seven-thirty o'clock and finished exactly at eleven. I write this without the least exaggeration; such is the custom here. To recount all the courses is impossible. In the middle of the dinner, an ice was served in some kind of small boxes to which were attached small slates, with pencils and sponges, on which excerpts from my works were finely written in pencil. Then I had to write my autograph on these slates. The conversation was very lively."¹¹

⁷ Diary entry for 14/26 April 1891. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 298.

⁸ Diary entry for 23 April/5 May 1891. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 310.

⁹ Cf. *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 99. Just one of those six letters has been published there (in Russian translation only). There are also four letters from Morris Reno to the composer in the archives at Klin, two of which have been published in that collection as well, but, in contrast to Marie's correspondence with Tchaikovsky, the letters from her husband deal mainly with business matters.

¹⁰ *L'Autographe SA Catalogue* 23, item no. 150; available online at:

<http://www.autographe.org/catalogues/CAT23.pdf> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

¹¹ Diary entry for 17/29 April 1891. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 303.

4. Tchaikovsky to Marie Reno, 12/24 December 1891 [[letter 4572a](#)]

No less grand was the way in which the Reno family bade farewell to Tchaikovsky on his last full day in America, on 8/20 May 1891. As he noted in his diary later that evening, a few hours before his early departure from New York harbour on board the *Prince Bismarck*: "Went to Reno for lunch in a carriage. More than ever they, i.e. Mme. Reno and the three daughters, were full of enthusiastic cordiality toward me. The oldest (Anna, who is married) presented me with a splendid cigar case. Mme. Reno with lots of eau de Cologne; Alice and her sister with cookies for the journey."¹²

Not surprisingly, Tchaikovsky felt obliged to write to the Renos shortly after his return to Russia on 20 May/1 June 1891 in order to thank them for all their hospitality. This letter has not come to light, but it is referred to in Mrs. Reno's subsequent reply to the composer from New York on 16/28 June. She informed him, moreover, that everyone in the family was thinking of him, hoping that he would come to New York again soon. At the end of her letter she called Tchaikovsky jestingly her "dear son-in-law," alluding to that misunderstanding spread by the New York papers.¹³

Several more letters were evidently exchanged over the following months, but the only one from Tchaikovsky to Mrs. Reno during this period that we know about is a two-page letter dated: "Maidanovo, 12/24 December 1891." Like the letter discussed above, it was also auctioned by L'Autographe SA of Geneva, apparently in 1996 (though this needs to be verified). This letter is written in French, and we quote the summary of it given in the catalogue's description, where the addressee, however, was not identified:

Message écrite à la hâte — peut-être comme rajout à une lettre — informant son correspondant qu'il s'apprête à quitter Maidanovo : «... je quitte mon refuge et commencerai bientôt mes pérégrinations...» ; la correspondance devra donc être adressée à son éditeur «... P. Jurgenson, à Moscou, pour remettre à Mr P. T. — Il sera toujours au courant de mes changements de domicile...». Tchaïkovski suggère qu'on demande à «... ma petite femme de m'écrire ; elle peut écrire en Allemand. Je le comprends parfaitement...». Puis, après avoir signé de ses initiales, il termine la lettre en envoyant ses souvenirs aux couples Hyde, Damrosch et «Cargegie» [Mme et Mr Andrew CARNEGIE !].¹⁴

In English translation:

Message written in haste, perhaps as an addendum to an earlier letter, informing his correspondent that he is preparing to leave Maidanovo: "...I am leaving my refuge and will soon begin my wanderings"; letters to him were therefore to be addressed to his publisher, "... P. Jurgenson in Moscow, to be forwarded to Mr. P. T.—He will always be informed of my changes of address...". Tchaikovsky suggests that his correspondent should ask "...my little wife to write to me; she can do so in German. I understand the language perfectly...". Then, after having signed with his initials, he finishes the letter by sending his regards to Mr and Mrs Hyde,¹⁵ Mr and Mrs Damrosch,¹⁶ and Mr and Mrs "Cargegie" [Mrs and Mr Andrew CARNEGIE!¹⁷].

¹² Diary entry for 8/20 May 1891. Quoted from *The Diaries of Tchaikovsky* (1973), p. 332.

¹³ Marie Reno's letter of 16/28 June 1891 to Tchaikovsky can be found in: *Chaïkovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 99 (in Russian translation only).

¹⁴ *L'Autographe SA Catalogue 38*, item no. 151; available online at:

<http://www.autographe.org/catalogues/CAT38.pdf> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

¹⁵ During his stay in New York Tchaikovsky had also enjoyed the hospitality of Edwin Francis Hyde (1842–1933), president of the New York Philharmonic Society, and his wife on several occasions.

¹⁶ As one of the directors of the Music Hall Company, the German-born American conductor Walter Damrosch (1862–1950) had played a key role in inviting Tchaikovsky to America. He and his wife Margaret (née Blaine; 1867–1949) are also mentioned several times in the composer's American diary.

The allusion to "my little wife," that is to Alice Reno, makes it clear that this letter is addressed to her mother. What remains to be established is whether any letters from Alice to the composer have survived in the archives at Klin.

5. Tchaikovsky to Marie Reno, 5/17 May 1892 [[letter 4681b](#)]

For the latest of the three letters to Mrs. Reno to have come to light so far we can provide the complete text because the autograph is held at the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum in America, and the museum's director kindly provided scans of the original letter. Interestingly, Tchaikovsky wrote it on the very same day that he moved into his new two-storey house at Klin, his last permanent residence and now the site of the Tchaikovsky House-Museum. Here is the letter's text:

[p. 1:] Klin, près Moscou
5/17 Mai 1892

Chère, bonne, excellente Madame!

Votre bonne lettre est parvenue à son adresse presque juste le 25 Avril/7 Mai. Vous ne sauriez croire combien j'ai été touché de Votre bon souvenir et aussi de ce que Vos charmantes filles aient pensé à moi. Je n'ai pas répondu tout de suite parce-que j'étais très affairé à ce moment[-]là et forcément j'ai dû remettre le plaisir de Vous répondre et de Vous remercier jusqu'à mon retour chez moi après [p. 2] un séjour d'un mois entier à Moscou. Me voila arrivé dans mon petit coin et la première chose que je fais, c'est de Vous écrire. Je Vous ai écrit très rarement pendant cet hiver — mais certainement j'ai souvent pensé à Vous. Ce n'est pas la paresse qui m'empêchait [= empêchait] de prendre la plume en main et envoyer de mes nouvelles à mes meilleurs amis de l'Amérique [= Amérique] — mais c'est que tantôt j'étais en voyage, tantôt je travaillais avec acharnement pour terminer à temps mes deux nouvelles œuvres. Maintenant elles sont terminées et seront repré- [p. 3] -sentées à S^t Petersburg [Pétersbourg] en Novembre. C'est un opera [= opéra] intitulé „Iolande“ et un ballet „Casinoisette“ qui formeront un seul spectacle.

De temps en temps j'avais de Vos nouvelles par l'entremise du petit Conus et de Brodsky. J'apprends par Votre lettre que Vous passez l'été en Europe. Serez Vous à Vienne? On me fait des propositions pour y conduire un grand concert — mais je ne sais pas encore quand cela aura lieu. Qui sait? — peut être [= peut-être] [p. 4] je Vous y rencontrerai. Que je serais content de Vous voir, de serrer les mains de M^{lle} Paula et de ma chère petite femme. Je sais que cette lettre arrivera à New-York quand Vous n'y serez plus. Mais j'espère qu'on Vous l'enverra. M^{me} Margulies vient elle avec Vous? Je Vous en prie, chère Madame, remerciez de ma part Vos filles pour la preuve touchante de leur bon souvenir, saluez Votre mari et croyez dans l'affection [= à l'affection] sincère et chaude de Votre ami dévoué

P. Tschaïkovsky

In English translation:

Dear, kind, good lady! Your kind letter reached its destination almost exactly on 25 April/7 May.¹⁷ You cannot imagine how touched I was by your kind remembrance of me, and also by the fact that your charming daughters had thought about me. I didn't reply at

¹⁷ Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919), the Scottish-born American multimillionaire and philanthropist, had financed the building of the new Music Hall in New York that would eventually bear his name. He and Tchaikovsky had immediately struck up a friendly rapport.

¹⁸ Mrs. Reno had evidently sent Tchaikovsky a letter to congratulate him on his 52nd birthday. It would be interesting to check whether it is among the six letters from her to the composer that have survived in the Klin archives.

once because I was very busy at that particular moment, and I perforce had to defer the pleasure of replying to you and thanking you until I returned home after spending a whole month in Moscow.¹⁹ Anyway, here I am now in my little corner, and the first thing I do is to write to you. I have written to you but very infrequently this winter—yet I have assuredly thought of you very often. It was not laziness which prevented me from taking pen into hand and sending news of myself to my best friends in America, but rather the fact that now I would be travelling, now I would be working frenziedly in order to finish my two new works on time. They have now been completed and will be staged in Saint Petersburg in November. They are an opera entitled *Iolanta* and a ballet, *The Nutcracker*, which will together make up a single evening's performance.

From time to time I would receive news of you through little Conus and through Brodsky.²⁰ Now I find out from your letter that you will be spending the summer in Europe. Will you be coming to Vienna? I have been made some offers to conduct a big concert there, but I don't know yet when it will take place.²¹ Who knows, perhaps I shall meet you there? How happy it would make me to see you, to shake hands with Mlle Paula²² and with my dear little wife.²³ I know that this letter will arrive in New York when you are no longer there. However, I hope that it will be forwarded to you. Is Mme Margulis²⁴ coming with you? I beg you, dear Madame, thank your daughters on my behalf for that touching proof that they remember me kindly, give my regards to your husband, and believe in the sincere and warm affection of your devoted friend,

P. Tchaikovsky

It does not seem that Mrs. Reno and her daughters were in Vienna at the time of Tchaikovsky's very brief stay there later that summer (6/18–9/21 September 1892), and in any case they would not have been able to hear him conduct his own works again because he cancelled his concert already after the first rehearsal due to the unsuitable nature of the venue.

¹⁹ From 6/18 April to 29 April/11 May 1892 Tchaikovsky had been in Moscow where he lent a hand to Ippolit Priianishnikov's private opera company by conducting three of their productions: Gounod's *Faust*, Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon*, and his own *Evgenii Onegin*, in one performance of each opera.

²⁰ In October 1891, the violinist Adolph Brodsky had taken up the post of concertmaster of the New York Symphony Society Orchestra, while his younger colleague, Iulii Conius (known outside Russia as Jules Conus) was appointed assistant concertmaster.

²¹ The organizing committee for "The International Exhibition for Music and Drama" which was to take place in Vienna later that summer had invited Tchaikovsky to conduct a concert of his works there. Tchaikovsky's letter accepting this offer has also come to light recently (see the letter of 9/21 August 1892 to Albert Gutmann in [Section II](#) above). However, when he arrived in Vienna on 6/18 September 1892 and conducted the first rehearsal three days later, he was so dissatisfied with the venue that he cancelled the concert.

²² The Renos' middle daughter, Paula Maud (1868–1909), known after her marriage in 1895 as Paula Reno Hicks.

²³ i.e. the Renos' youngest daughter Alice (b. 1871), who would later marry a Signor Bocconi and move to Italy. For the origins of the soubriquet "my dear little wife," see the commentary for the preceding letters.

²⁴ The Renos' eldest daughter, Anna (1865–1929), who was married to Leon Margulis, the secretary of Morris Reno. Four letters from Leon Margulis to Tchaikovsky have survived in the archives at Klin, two of which have been published in: *Chaikovskii i zarubezhnye muzykanty* (1970), p. 92–93 (in Russian translation only).

New locations for previously published letters

The Musée des Lettres et Manuscrits (MLM), which was established in Paris in 2004, has a collection of autograph letters by Tchaikovsky, some of which are on display as facsimile images in a permanent section of its website dedicated to the composer.¹ Inspection of these facsimiles has revealed that a number of letters which were published in *PSSL* on the basis of photocopies in the Klin archives, and the location of whose autographs was reported to be unknown, have ended up in this museum. The letters in question are:

- letter 1801 to Eduard Nápravník, 3/15 July 1881 (*PSSL* X, p. 160)
- letter 3475 to Édouard Colonne, 14/26 January 1888 (*PSSL* XIV, p. 341–342)
- letter 3674 to Eduard Nápravník, 21 September/3 October 1888 (*PSSL* XIV, p. 538–539)

The last of these letters to Nápravník was also published by Thomas Kohlhase in the third *Čajkovskij-Studien* volume (1998) on the basis of a facsimile provided by its owner at the time, who also allowed the facsimile of the first page to be reproduced there.²

It also seems that the autograph of Tchaikovsky's letter 2453a to Alfred Bruneau of 11/23 March 1884, acquired by the Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft in 1996 and published for the first time in the third volume of *Čajkovskij-Studien* together with a facsimile of the first page,³ has been subsequently acquired by the Musée des Lettres et Manuscrits.

Unfortunately, repeated enquiries by e-mail to the museum for more information on their collection of Tchaikovsky letters—and also to point out that they have indicated the year of the letter to Colonne incorrectly—have not been answered as yet.

The autograph of Tchaikovsky's letter 4293b of 6/18 January 1891 to Friedrich Sieger, the director of the Museums-Gesellschaft in Frankfurt-am-Main, which was published for the first time in the *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* (1997),⁴ has changed location, though it still remains in Frankfurt. Previously held in the archives of the Museums-Gesellschaft, it was recently transferred to the Institut für Stadtgeschichte in the same city.⁵

¹ See <http://www.museedeslettres.fr/public/sous-thematique/piotr-ilitch-tchaikovski/32> (last accessed on 12 December 2010).

² See *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 228–232.

³ See *Čajkovskij-Studien* 3 (1998), p. 200–202.

⁴ See *Tschaikowsky-Gesellschaft Mitteilungen* 5 (1997), p. 11.

⁵ As confirmed by an e-mail from Claudia Schüßler of the Institut für Stadtgeschichte on 24 November 2010.

Chronological list and details of the 55 letters by Tchaikovsky presented in this article

("FP" = first complete printed publication / "NP" = new publication / "PP" = partial publication, including summaries in auction catalogues; page(s) of the article in which the letter is presented; owner of the autograph where known; summary of contents)

123a. Tchaikovsky to **Milii Balakirev**, Saint Petersburg; from Moscow, November (?) 1868 (PP): p. 5–8. Tchaikovsky thanks Balakirev for undertaking to perform the *Dances of the Chambermaids* from Act II of *The Voevoda* in Saint Petersburg, and sends his regards to Rimskii-Korsakov.

508a. Tchaikovsky to **Joseph Dupont**, Brussels; from Moscow, 25 October/6 November 1876 (FP): p. 20–21. Musée des lettres et manuscrits, Paris (France). Tchaikovsky discusses which orchestral works of his would be most suitable for Dupont to present at a concert in Brussels.

534a. Tchaikovsky to **Édouard Colonne**, Paris; from Moscow, 11/23 January 1877 (FP): p. 29–30. Schubert Club Museum, Saint Paul (Minnesota, USA). Tchaikovsky discusses with Colonne his plans for a concert of his works in Paris.

598a. Tchaikovsky to **Anton Door**, Vienna; from Kamenka, 6/18 September 1877 (PP): p. 15–16. Tchaikovsky thanks his former colleague and friend for his attempts to secure performances of his works in Vienna, and also informs him about his recent marriage.

1306a. Tchaikovsky to **Iurii Messer**, Moscow; from Kamenka, 4/16 October 1879 (PP): p. 12–13. Tchaikovsky discusses the proofs of the Suite No. 1 and his opera *Evgenii Onegin*.

2677a. Tchaikovsky to **Lucien Guitry**, Saint Petersburg; from Saint Petersburg, 1/13 April 1885 (NP): p. 39–41. Tchaikovsky tells Guitry how much he had enjoyed his performance as Kean in Alexandre Dumas père's play based on the life of the great English actor, and urges him to play Hamlet or Romeo at his next benefit performance, promising to write an overture or entr'actes for that staging.

2680a. Tchaikovsky to **Lucien Guitry**, Saint Petersburg; from Moscow, 8/20 April 1885 (FP): p. 41–43. Tchaikovsky explains to Guitry that he cannot show him around Moscow because of other commitments.

2836a. Tchaikovsky to **Hans von Bülow**, Saint Petersburg; from Maidanovo, 22 December 1885/3 January 1886 (PP): p. 57–58. Tchaikovsky apologizes for not having come to Saint Petersburg to hear Bülow conduct his Suite No. 3 at the Russian Musical Society's third symphonic concert on 14/26 December 1885.

2839a. Tchaikovsky to **Hugo Bock**, Berlin; from Maidanovo, 22 December 1885/3 January 1886 (PP): p. 56–57. Tchaikovsky thanks Bock for ceding the European distribution rights to the *Romeo and Juliet* overture to his French publisher Mackarr.

2964a. Tchaikovsky to **Pauline Viardot-García**, Paris; from Paris, 4/16 June 1886 (PP): p. 47–50. Tchaikovsky apologizes for having missed an invitation to dinner at her house, but promises to come to a future soirée.

2999a. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified correspondent**, Paris ?; from Maidanovo, 8/20 July 1886 (PP): p. 51–52. Tchaikovsky praises the arrangements of his works made by an unidentified French musician, who was keen to have them published by Jurgenson in Moscow.

3177a. Tchaikovsky to **Mariia Klimentova-Muromtseva**, Saint Petersburg; from Maidanovo, 10/22 February 1887 (PP): p. 9. Tchaikovsky apologizes to Klimentova for not being able to come to the capital to hear her sing because he had to work on *The Enchantress*.

3177b. Tchaikovsky to **Louis Diémer**, Paris; from Maidanovo, 10/22 February 1887 (FP): p. 34–36. Tchaikovsky thanks the pianist for agreeing to take part in the recital of his works organized by Mackar at the Salle Erard in Paris on 11/23 February 1887.

3192a. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**, Paris; from Saint Petersburg, 2/14 March 1887 (PP): p. 52–53. Tchaikovsky thanks his correspondent (who may perhaps be the violinist Marsick) for his "friendly lines" about the recital of his works that had taken place at the Salle Erard in Paris on 11/23 February 1887.

3433a. Tchaikovsky to **Jean-Théodore Radoux**, Liège; from Saint Petersburg, 11/23 December 1887 (PP): p. 22–23. Médiathèque Musicale Mahler, Paris. Tchaikovsky thanks Radoux for his intention of performing the Symphony No. 1 (?) at Liège.

3467a. Tchaikovsky to **Julius Laube**, Hamburg; from Hamburg, 10/22 January 1888 (PP): p. 62–63. Tchaikovsky thanks Laube for conducting two of his works the previous evening, and invites him to bring his orchestra to Pavlovsk in the summer.

3486a. Tchaikovsky to (on behalf of) **Aline Friede**, Berlin; from Berlin, 28 January/9 February 1888 (PP): p. 61–62. Tchaikovsky provides a written attestation of this mezzo-soprano's fine qualities.

3507a. Tchaikovsky to **Pauline Viardot-García**, Paris; from Paris, 25 February/8 March 1888 (PP): p. 50–51. Tchaikovsky asks Mme Viardot to invite Marie de Benardaky to her musical soirée the following evening.

3558a. Tchaikovsky to **Édouard Bergson**, Warsaw; from Frolovskoe, 28 April/10 May 1888 (FP): p. 85–87. Tchaikovsky sends this autograph collector a musical quotation consisting of six bars from the overture-fantasia *Romeo and Juliet*.

3597a. Tchaikovsky to **George Henschel**, London; from Frolovskoe, 18/30 June 1888 (PP): p. 71–72. Tchaikovsky expresses his pleasure at hearing from Henschel again after several years.

3687a. Tchaikovsky to **Adolf Čech**, Prague; from Frolovskoe, 5/17 October 1888 (NP): p. 25–27. Musée royal de Mariemont, Morlanwelz (Belgium). Tchaikovsky discusses details of the forthcoming production of *Evgenii Onegin* in Prague.

3787a. Tchaikovsky to **Jules Massenet**, Paris; from Dresden, 5/17 February 1889 (FP): p. 43–45. Musée des lettres et manuscrits, Paris (France). Tchaikovsky tells Massenet that he is delighted by his acceptance of the offer to conduct a Russian Musical Society concert in Moscow during the following season.

3790a. Tchaikovsky to **Désirée Artôt-Padilla**, Berlin; from Berlin, 10/22 February 1889 (NP): p. 19–20. Tchaikovsky replies to the singer that he had not forgotten about her invitation to dine with her the following day.

3793b. Tchaikovsky to **Paul Cossmann**, Berlin; from Berlin, 13/25 February 1889 (FP): p. 58–60. Tchaikovsky apologizes for not being able to have lunch with Cossmann that day because he had a rehearsal, but invites him to call on him the following day.

3813a. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**; from Hamburg, 4/16 March 1889 (PP): p. 67. Tchaikovsky replies to a friend and encloses a photograph.

3819a. Tchaikovsky to **Mathilde Cossmann**, Frankfurt; from Hannover, 5/17 March 1889 (NP): p. 60–61. Tchaikovsky apologises for not having been in contact since their meeting in Frankfurt.

3832a. Tchaikovsky to **Ethel Smyth**, London ?; from London, 30 March/11 April 1889 (NP): p. 81–83. McMaster University, Archives and Research Collections, Hamilton (Ontario, Canada). Tchaikovsky apologizes for being unable to accept her invitation and mentions his recent meetings with the Brodskys and with Brahms in Germany.

3832b. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**, London ?; from London, 30 March/11 April 1889 (FP): p. 83–84. Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem (North Carolina, USA). Tchaikovsky apologizes for having to decline an invitation.

3914a. Tchaikovsky to **Friedrich Sieger**, Frankfurt; from Frolovskoe, 1/13 August 1889 (PP): p. 66–67. Tchaikovsky agrees to come to Frankfurt again that year to conduct a second concert of his works there.

3927a. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**, Germany ?; from Kamenka, 31 August/12 September 1889 (PP): p. 68. Tchaikovsky apologizes for not being able to secure an engagement for this singer as a soloist at one of the Russian Musical Society's concerts featuring choral works in the coming season.

3933a. Tchaikovsky to **Jules Massenet**, Paris; from Moscow, 12/24 September 1889 (PP): p. 45–47. Tchaikovsky begs Massenet to keep his promise to conduct a Russian Musical Society concert in Moscow.

3976b. Tchaikovsky to **E. Elias**; from Moscow, 27 November/9 December 1889 (PP): p. 89. University of Southern California, Thornton School of Music, Los Angeles (California, USA). Tchaikovsky includes a musical autograph consisting of four bars from the *Andante cantabile*.

3999a. Tchaikovsky to **Robert Bignell**, Hamburg; from Moscow, 8/20 January 1890 (PP): p. 55. Tchaikovsky promises to do everything he can to help Bignell obtain suitable employment as a violinist in Russia.

4368a. Tchaikovsky to **Marie Reno**, New York; from New York, 17/29 April 1891 (PP): p. 90–91. Tchaikovsky thanks Mrs. Reno for inviting him to dinner at her house, and includes an improvised musical sketch on the words "A Very Old Gentleman".

4475a. Tchaikovsky to **Selma Rahter**, Hamburg; from Maidanovo, 12/24 September 1891 (PP): p. 65–66. Tchaikovsky sends Mrs. Rahter his condolences on the death of her husband and mentions the forthcoming production of *Evgenii Onegin* at Hamburg.

4572a. Tchaikovsky to **Marie Reno**, New York; from Maidanovo, 12/24 December 1891 (PP): p. 92–93. Tchaikovsky informs Mrs. Reno of his changes of address, tells her to ask her daughter Alice to write to him, and sends greetings for other friends in America.

4606a. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**, Warsaw; from Maidanovo, 28 January/9 February (?) 1892 (PP): p. 87–88. Tchaikovsky encloses with this letter to a Tsarist official in Warsaw his foreign passport (recently used to travel abroad) and other documents.

4635. Tchaikovsky to **George Bainton**, Coventry; from Saint Petersburg, 8/20 March 1892 (NP): p. 69–71. University of Rochester, Sibley Music Library, Rochester (New York, USA). Tchaikovsky thanks his correspondent for his kind words and wishes that his young son, Edgar, may have a long and fruitful life.

4681b. Tchaikovsky to **Marie Reno**, New York; from Klin, 5/17 May 1892 (FP): p. 93–94. The Karpeles Manuscript Library, Santa Barbara (California, USA). Tchaikovsky tells her how busy he had been over the last months and says that he hoped to meet her and her family in Vienna that summer where he was due to conduct a concert.

4739a. Tchaikovsky to **Louis Gallet**, Paris; from Klin, 23 July/4 August 1892 (FP): p. 36–39. Tchaikovsky asks Gallet to resume work on the versification of *La Courtisane*, adding that he is impatient to receive the libretto of Acts II and III.

4749a. Tchaikovsky to **Albert Gutmann** (as chairman of the organizing committee for the International Exhibition for Music and Drama), Vienna; from Klin, 9/21 August 1892 (FP): p. 16–18. Schubert Club Museum, Saint Paul (Minnesota, USA). Tchaikovsky accepts the invitation to conduct a concert in Vienna in September and makes suggestions for the programme.

4782b. Tchaikovsky to **Édouard Colonne** (?), Paris; from Klin, 9/21 October 1892 (PP): p. 30–32. Letter of recommendation for a young Russian pianist.

4802a. Tchaikovsky to **Ekaterina Laroche**, Saint Petersburg; from Saint Petersburg, 9/21 November 1892 (FP): p. 9–11. Tchaikovsky confirms who else apart from him will be coming to dinner at her house.

4837a. Tchaikovsky to **Józef Wieniawski**, Brussels; from Brussels, 30 December 1892/11 January 1893 (NP): p. 23–24. Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels (Belgium). Tchaikovsky asks Wieniawski when he could come to dine with him.

4845a. Tchaikovsky to **Eugénie Vergin Colonne**, Paris; from Paris, 7/19 January 1893 (NP): p. 32–34. Tchaikovsky asks Mme Colonne to support his recommendation of the young violinist Aleksandr Pechnikov so that her husband would engage him for one of the Châtelet concerts.

4856a. Tchaikovsky to **Francis Arthur Jones**, Brixham (Devon, England); from Klin, 5/17 February 1893 (NP): p. 72–78. Tchaikovsky answers Jones's questions about his working methods and other musical matters, and encloses a musical autograph from the finale of *The Queen of Spades*.

4878a. Tchaikovsky to **Francis Arthur Jones**, Brixham (Devon, England); from Klin, 28 February/12 March 1893 (NP): p. 78–81. Tchaikovsky replies to Jones's request for clarification on which work the musical autograph sent in his previous letter was taken from.

4915a. Tchaikovsky to **W. S. B. Mathews**, Chicago; from Klin, 13/25 April 1893 (NP): p. 89–90. Tchaikovsky declines an invitation to take part in the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in the summer of 1893.

4951b. Tchaikovsky to **George Henschel**, London; from Paris, 3/15 June 1893 (PP): p. 72. Tchaikovsky promises to send Henschel his latest portrait with an inscription for his friend's wife.

5004a. Tchaikovsky to **Sophie Menter**, Itter; from Klin, 8/20 August 1893 (PP): p. 63–65. Tchaikovsky mentions the dates of his concert engagements in Saint Petersburg in January 1894, and adds that he is too tired to write a longer letter because of his work on the Symphony No. 6.

5004b. Tchaikovsky to **Vasilii Sapel'nikov**, Itter; from Klin, 8/20 August 1893 (PP): p. 14. Tchaikovsky mentions the dates of his concert engagements in Saint Petersburg in January 1894, as well as his plans for a European tour together with Sapel'nikov and Sophie Menter later in 1894.

5006a. Tchaikovsky to **Ekaterina Laroche**, Saint Petersburg; from Klin, 11/23 August 1893 (FP): p. 11–12. The Karpeles Manuscript Library, Santa Barbara (California, USA). Tchaikovsky writes in English (!) to announce he will conduct the first Russian Musical Society concert in Saint Petersburg on 16/28 October.

5065d. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent** [Saint Petersburg?]; from [Saint Petersburg?], 17/29 March [1886?] (FP): p. 53–54. Tchaikovsky confirms that he will come at the specified hour, but explains that his brother, Modest, cannot because he had already accepted another invitation to lunch.

5065e. Tchaikovsky to an **unidentified male correspondent**; from Moscow [= Maidanovo?], 14/26 March [1892?] (PP): p. 27–28. Tchaikovsky expresses interest in his correspondent's compositions and sends his regards to the violinist František Ondříček.

5065f. Tchaikovsky to **Adolph Brodsky**; [n.p.], [n.y.] (PP): p. 8. Columbia University Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New York (USA).

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