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Karl Kaub an Familie Marx in London. Paris, Dienstag, 1. Mai 1866

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Vermutlich von Marx' Hand: Anstreichungen mit schwarzer Tinte auf der ersten und dritten Seite („Our international“ bis „men“ und „Creamer“ bis „ways“).

Von unbekannter Hand: Vermerk „Mai i. 66“, mit schwarzer Tinte auf der vierten Seite unten am rechten Rand quer.

In die Schreibweise Kaubs wurde behutsam, allein dem Textverständnis dienend, eingegriffen. Sämtliche Eingriffe sind ausgewiesen.

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| 33, Rue des trois Couronnes, du Temple

Paris Mai 1/1866
Sunday afternoon.

My dear friends,

Mohr must be made of a goodish bit of stuff.—Tossed about, for half a lifetime, as he has been, from wave to shore, from shore to wave—but wretched little amusement and far too much hard work—to this, to have been badly afflicted for something like a tenth part of a century, by continued sickness, and yet to hold his head up and walk again, like a man ... this seems more than one can do, without the aid of magic powers. But there are occasions, at which men seem much alike—if looked at from a goodly distance. For example we all are always ready to believe any thing, however improbable it may seem, if it only chances to fit our likeings. I tell you, it fits mine—and I should like to see you well. I was exceedingly pleased to hear you are out of all

danger now and even better, as you ever was before. So told me Schily^a at least, who had some correspondence from Rhinländer^b—I believe.

If you but could do as you liked, it would be infinitely better for you to live altogether somewhere on the sea side, or in some other merry place, than in that nasty London. It will never do for any one that once had serious wreck of health. Besides this, there is, in such an accumulation, too much cause for you, to meet with anger and annoyance ... Come on, I shall talk to you now, like an old man. But don't laugh.—In my high opinion, there is, in every man's life, a decided period, when he rejoices to study and to learn, whatever it will cost him; learn more and more, and all he meets, he takes to heart, as so much of a useful lesson.

There comes then, inevitably too—another period, when he gets sick of any further learning and often even, should like to know of many things, far less. He now rejoices in forgetting. These two periods are however seldom sharply trenched, but to the contrary, so closely often interweave, at the ends and beginning of each of them, that most peoples are not aware of an existing change, even if it exists for years and years. Some catastrophe than, in their life, that does come on like a thunderstorm in spring, does set them suddenly on the alarm—they perceive the accomplished change, they think the effect to be the cause, believe the world to have grown worse, of what it ever was before—grow dull and never smile, as on the eve, the day of which they lay their heads on chaps ... I do believe, that my good Mohr is one of those, who, by the life they had to lead, must long have reached the highest pitch in studying mankind. His philosophy must be formed. He needs no more to know, and would do well, if he could but forget. He must have passed his learning phase, when he thought, that every new deception he was subjected to, that every false friend he broke with, was worthy lesson for a future time, and he would profit of. No—them self same lessons, in the present day, will make one heartsick and spoil the blood. And crowded London is sure not a place, where one could soon forget, what he has seen there most. One wants a merry land for this, a deep blue sea—a lovely shore, the jolly boulevards, et du petit bleu. But all this wanting, you have dull hours, the physik-battle takes the place of books and the pipe, you do not enjoy your life by half, and almost wish that you should be no more. I have felt all this as well, and therefore feel with each one, that does feel like I.

Our international, I fear, was not much either, as a sweet deception. What you have told me in your letter,^d I never should have dared to believe. It must have much affected you. It did not much affect me, as I am still a little in my learning mood, and think of taking it ad notam.^f Some more of these events, and with same effect, I think, I will be able as well, to kick myself out of this phase. Creamer^h,^gOdgers^j, Howel^k, all these immolating, selfdenying, generous, intelligent and I know not what all—creatures, that looked so streight at each man's face, and were so bold, because they said: they know they were in truth—I see—they showd no better than the rest of men.

| They wagg'd their tale as long as they smelled crap, that seemed quite close at hand. I for my part, I dare not exactly blame any one, that does things out of interest. But one thing I hate—and this is, if people do it in to showy and to unclean a manner. Do nothing without an interest, but at least hide it, and do it in a decent manner. To look for interest, I think, is so general and natural a disposition, that you will find it to be the motive power for all and every one, from the meanest animal, through mankind, the saints all and the angels, together with our good old man in heaven. As to him, we are told, he lived a huge tremendous part of his eternity, in stern lazyness and annoyance, until at last he grew so dammedably sick and tired of it, nothing but gaping and scratching his head, that he made up his mind to put a step to it—and made the world. His interest then was, to get some sport—need man to be ashamed? In fact; motive, reason, interest, are all but different words for the very selfsame thing. A man gives a poor beggar a “bob” he sais; he followd the generous motive of doing good to others. This sounds well! At the same time if he questiones himself closely, he will find, that he had the interest before all, to quench his interieur uneasiness, which he was sure, as he has found on former occasion, he would have felt and be troubled with, that would have cost him an hour and half's of sleep, or more, had he not given the shilling away—uneasiness resulted by means of a particular sentimental education, some

others are fully free of. All may be reduced to interestedness, and I consider it mere proudness of one, to believe himself exempt of it. But I admit of a difference in the sort of interestedness. I find that the meanness of a man's interest, increases in direct ratio to the closeness it is stationed, to the hand of those that want to attain it. For example:—The prussian Hussars—those who give no pardon, but are always glad to take it—stand in the roaring battle. A lieutenant is taken prisoner, because his horse has kicked him off. The commanding general calls for volunteers to free him, of two drummers that hold him. As none comes out of the file he offers 15 jute Jroschen to bring him hither. A patriotic “Hinterpommer” spurs his fiery steed and fetches the swooning lieutenant back, tied to his horse's tail ... etc. The fellow may have had different interests for doing this heroic action. The nearest interest was the fifteen “jute Jroschen”—the second: the leaden decoration he is sure to get, the third: the applause of the multitude together with the gentle stroke on his cheek by the astonished general, the fourth: that he will go to heaven for it and the fifth: that, should he ever get himself in trouble, by stealing a cotton pocket handkerchief of his corporal, he would have the probability, instead of being otherwise shot, to be pardoned to 150 lashes only. You clearly see: the first interest—about the money—was the vilest; the following grew nobler and nobler ... Creamer¹ and Odgers^m, I believe had an interest, to be international, which was very close at hand: The applause of the multitude to which he belonged, and personal prospects. They care, beyond this a “damme” for their class. They were as good Englishmen as any bourgeois, and thought little about continental affairs, which only may bear a very remote interest indeed. Up to now, I found the great heap of working men as creatures, that can no further be trusted, as the profit is within the reach of their mouth, and even then you want a deal of persuasion to make them bite. They fell off.—They will come to again, and—believe me—the same may fall off again. Never trust them far! I hate faithlessness more than death. In matters of importance one should never give his word, unless he feels himself man to fall with it. There are occasions in life, when we may—in the worst of cases—fail ... where unlooked for circumstances laid rocks in our ways ... There are others—we dare not fail, whatever unlooked for events will thunder down our might. Where I feel myself to weak—I never promise.

I waited with this letter, as I thought your Hamburg Kaufmannⁿ, would make his apparition. Up to now, no such thing has called on me.

I have seen your friend Chily^p. He is well, and conveys his amities. He told me, that he had written a letter for you, but, it had been laying by for some time, and then, when he came to read it once again, he made up his mind to write another. So it rested. He is not like I—I send them away whatever nonsense it will once contain. I know, friends will be indulgent. He promised to make up for his neglectfulness. He asked me, whether I kept Becker's^s monthly journal^{t,r}. I had the misfortune of saying I found it to dry for my taste. He seemed much vexed about this, and meant; that since I am in the money making line, it is not surprising, I find all other things dry. He is agent for this our friend Becker's^v journal. He is agent for a german “Unterstützungs-Verein” etc. We made the matter moist again, by some glasses of small beer. He is a right charming man, obliging to everyone, only, as far as I can judge—but shallow in politics.

| III | The new invention, I had spoken to you about in my last letter,^w is still a most mysterious affair. Baron Gablenz^x, with whom we had chiefly to do in the matter, as he was told to have the “sack”, wanted a price to be made before hand, as he had already been taken in somewhere else, and when we told him, together with the condition, that half the money should be paid at once, the other half, the day before the trial, as it is usual with all inventors—who never like else paying, should the invention prove bad—he found us to dear and to sharp for his sweet taste. He expected we wanted to work and be out of pocket “pour l'amour de ses beaux yeux”^y—because we would have the honour to starve pour Monsieur le Baron ... However it is quite likely we shall nevertheless get something to do with it, through some other of the noble protectors—who pay before hand naturally—and who are less miserly than Baron Gablenz^{ac}. Hang the fellow!

Paris is putting on its sunday coat, and is beautifying in every corner for the coming exhibition, in 67.^{ad} The building will be placed on the champ de Mars, of an oval construction and of stupefying demensions. If you should pay me a visit to Paris you will be surprised.

We have had very hot weather already and a blue sky is more of a common think than in London. I think that ten years of blue sky are quite worth a lifetime of dull weather as you see in your quarter.

My kind regards to M. Fox^{ae}. He kept good—did not he?—T'is only pity he is so afraid to kill a king. We all have our weak places.

Why did you not tell me how your work^{af} is progressing? Do you not like the tune?

My compliments to friend Lessner^{ah}—if you see him. He is as earnest a fellow as one to be found. I believe him to be the only one, of working men, that could be trusted to the fullest extend. There is no false string in him.

My kindest love to all of you. I know Mohr has no time for writing such every day's talk as I do. I shall never trouble him. But good Jenny^{ai} may do me the kindness, from time to time, if she happens to have an hour, that else would be lost to all, and write a word or two to one that holds you dear.

How is my philosopher Laura^{al?ak}? Still pensive? How l'ange bleue du Nord—little Thoussy. How your good mother^{ao. an} Did you have such good cake again as last year on Christmas? You remember, how I immolated myself in eating it—but it was stronger than I. What has become of Mistress' Marx's brother^{araq?}? The rattelsnake killer. I earnestly hope he aquired his health again.

It says in a very old song^{at} “Je höher die Glocken, je schöner's Geleut—Je weiter das Dirnderl, je größer die Freud'.” It is a remarkable thing, that with the increase of distance, simular minds draw closer and closer. I remember, when I first left my fathers house, where I had passed a very dull youth, as dull as any boy may have passed one—it was perhaps the most happy hour of my life, when I saw the town vanish at a distance. I tell you: I was never so fortunate to know, what love to on's parents is. I hated my father^{au}, I barely once knew my mother^{av} and the world became my home. But a few miles distance, a few years time, soon mended all, and as misfortune had long created the similarity of mind in me and them—soon space between us, brought us closer to each oneother. We grew friends, and were no less sorry, for what has passed in younger days, when we had to part for ever. I remember I wept.

It seems to me, that you, who had as well not always sunshine in your garden, are simular to me, however great a difference may be, in our ways of walking through the mud. The little distance that came now between, makes me think we are old cousins and knew' anothers for these twenty years.

If you look at a fine country, from the hight of some mountain top, down at the distance in a peaceful vale—Your eye will grow voratious at the sight. Go down from your hill, look close at the play—see the cowdung in the roads, the roughness of the path, the sweating pasants, a heap of lousy children, a stinking pool before each peasant's house a drunken woman bowing to the cross—you will look back in full disgust and see the hill wherever you stood, as beautiful as you did see the dale before ... I think there is no dale so deep, and no hill so high, we have more or less looked closely to. We need never fear to loose our humour at the sight. We will, I hope, be able to look ever from the longest distance at each other, however near we might yet be. Won't that be the style?—all right! Ich habe Durst bekommen über dem vielen Schreiben. Fare you well. Sonstige Neuigkeiten gibt's jetzt kaum u. die meisten Sachen bleiben beim alten.

Grüße mir auch Kaetchen^{ax aw}.

Auf baldige Antwort hofft Euer Freund

Ch. Kaub

Erläuterungen

- a) Schily, Viktor (Victor) (1811-1875)
- b) **Georg Friedrich Rheinlaender^c**.
- c) Rheinlaender (Rheinländer), Georg Friedrich (1826-nach 1865)
- d) Der Brief (Marx o. J. Marx an K. Kaub, zw. 17.3. u. 1.5.1866) von Marx (bzw. vermutlich Jenny Marx) an **Kaub^e**, geschrieben zwischen 17. März und 1. Mai 1866 (siehe auch K. Kaub an Familie Marx, 17.3.1866), ist nicht überliefert.
- e) Kaub, Karl
- f) zur Kenntnis (lat.).
- g) **William Randall Cremer^f**.
- h) Cremer, William Randall (1838-1908)
- i) Cremer, William Randall (1838-1908)
- j) Odger, George (1820-1877)
- k) Howell, George (1833-1910)
- l) Cremer, William Randall (1838-1908)
- m) Odger, George (1820-1877)
- n) **Theodor Menke^g**. Siehe auch L. Kugelman an Marx, 30.3.1866 und Marx an L. Kugelman, 6.4.1866).
- o) Menke, Theodor Heinrich (-)
- p) **Victor Schily^h**.
- q) Schily, Viktor (Victor) (1811-1875)
- r) „Der Vorbote“ⁱ (Genf).
- s) Becker, Johann Philipp (1809-1886)
- t) Der Vorbote
- u) Der Vorbote
- v) Becker, Johann Philipp (1809-1886)
- w) Siehe K. Kaub an Familie Marx 17.3.1866.
- x) Gablenz, Ludwig von (1814-1874)
- y) Nach **La Grange^j** in **Molières^{aa}** Komödie „**Les Précieuses ridicules^{ab}**“. Szene 15: „Mais ils n'auront pas l'avantage de se servir de nos habits pour vous donner dans la vue; et si vous les voulez aimer, ce sera, ma foi, pour leurs beaux yeux. Vîte, qu'on les dépouille sur le champ.“
- z) La Grange
- aa) Molière (1622-1673)
- ab) [Zotero Link für: „Les Précieuses ridicules“](#)
- ac) Gablenz, Ludwig von (1814-1874)
- ad) Die Weltausstellung 1867 in Paris.
- ae) Fox André (gen. Fox), Peter (1831 oder 1832-1869)
- af) Gemeint ist hier **Karl Marx: Das Kapital^{ag}**; siehe Erl. zu Marx an J. Ph. Becker, zw. 9. u. 15.1.1866.
- ag) [Zotero Link für: Karl Marx: Das Kapital](#)
- ah) Leßner, Friedrich (1825-1910)
- ai) **Jenny Marx^{aj}** (Tochter).

- aj)** Marx (Tochter), Jenny (1844-1883)
- ak)** Laura Marx^{am}.
- al)** Marx, Laura (1845-1911)
- am)** Marx, Laura (1845-1911)
- an)** Jenny Marx^{ap}.
- ao)** Marx, Jenny (1814-1881)
- ap)** Marx, Jenny (1814-1881)
- aq)** Edgar von Westphalen^{as}.
- ar)** Westphalen, Edgar von (1819-1890)
- as)** Westphalen, Edgar von (1819-1890)
- at)** Abgewandelter Text des deutschen Volksgesanges: Je höher der Kirchturm desto schöner das Geläut, je weiter mein Schätzel desto größer die Freud.
- au)** Kaub [Vater] (-)
- av)** Kaub [Mutter] (-)
- aw)** Vermutlich Helena Demuth^{ay}.
- ax)** Demuth, Helena (1820-1890)
- ay)** Demuth, Helena (1820-1890)

Kritischer Apparat