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Laura und Paul Lafargue an Karl Marx in Ramsgate. Paris, Mittwoch, 17. August 1870

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Soweit aus der Fotokopie zu ersehen ist, besteht der Brief aus einem Bogen und einem Blatt weißem, leicht vergilbtem Papier. L. Lafargue hat fünf Seiten vollständig, die sechste zu zwei Dritteln beschrieben; P. Lafargues Zeilen sind darunter im unteren Drittel der sechsten Seite notiert. Schreibmaterial: schwarze Tinte.

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Absender: Laura Lafargue

Absender: Paul Lafargue

Schreibort: Paris

Schreibdatum: 1870-08-17

Empfänger: Karl Marx

Empfangsort: Ramsgate

Schlagworte: Privates - Marx (Familie, Gesundheit, Finanzen), Frankreich, Krieg Deutschland-Frankreich, Frankreich

| My dear Challey,

We were delighted to hear that you are rather better & hope that the sea-air may completely set you up again.

Paul^a has just started in search of lodgings: we are obliged at last to turn out. The houses surrounding the fortifications are about to be pulled down & people here are beginning to look out for the Prussians. We shall stay a few days longer at Paris in order to put our furniture into security & to make ready for our journey to Bordeaux. We cannot of course think of letting Schnappy^b in Paris while in a state of siege: & even had we ever intended stopping here, we should have had to change our minds in the end, as all the “bouches inutiles” are going to be expelled from Paris. Schnaps & myself come under this category; Paul is supposed to be “une

bouche utile”. It is certain, that were Fritz^c’s future subjects to bring cakes with them, he would make a terrible havoc amongst them.

Paris continues to offer the most ludicrous & the most shameful spectacle. The Cafés are crowded nightly; refreshments are consumed at a fearful rate to the sounds of music anything but military. Bands of soldiers pass along the streets while the “moblots” ridiculous in their warlike accoutrements | swagger to make themselves conspicuous, promising to make mince-meat of the enemy so soon as he shall show himself. They still however declare that he dares not; Paris preparing him a “tombeau” outside her walls.—And the crowd gives a shout or two and moves on.—

These brave moblots refuse however to come to blows anywhere but within Paris & insisted on being transported from Chalons to St Maur where at present they make merry, attracting flocks of sightseers.

—At the same time the walls were placarded last night with notices that all the “bouches inutiles” would be turned out on the first occasion that might offer.—This announcement left the Parisians in much the same state as before; they are getting used to excitement & rather like it.

Not a few of them are looking forward as a treat to the coming visit: the director of a theatre declared the other day that he was waiting to bring out his new piece for the arrival of the Prussians; that they liked plays & that he hoped to reap a famous harvest on the occasion. The beauties of the Boulevards are impatiently awaiting the invaders; a certain part of the population, as Johannard^d said to Paul^e, will | certainly make themselves a pleasure of promenading the Prussians about Paris, to show them all that is worth seeing in the city. And yet there was a moment when the bourgeois all took to the cholera, so panicstruck & terrified were they. There was but one cry: Arms & munition & Paris made able to defend itself.—They offered themselves up, body & soul for their country & yet when invited to put a shoulder to the wheel & to work at the trenches, not a man appeared.

As for the workmen, strange to say, they seem to be in a state of lethargy; several to whom Paul^f spoke, declared that the great mass look upon the whole business as something which does not concern them. And in the meanwhile they are being butchered & by & bye will be starved. How they allowed the first few days following upon the defeats of the French army to slip by without making a move, is a miracle, for everything was in their favour. The “Gauche” itself had demanded arms, telling the people to take them if they were not given them. A body of sailors commanded by the government to fire upon the crowd, refused positively to obey. The soldiers on guard at the gates of the Corps Législatif, pointing to their Arms & addressing the workmen said: “Nous ne pouvons pourtant pas vous les donner”; a very cordial invitation to the men to come & take them.—And nobody stirred. At a meeting held at the house of Jules Simon^g, the Gauche accused the workingmen of their indifference & their calm demeanour. Combault^h answered that if the Gauche wanted to do something, they must begin by giving their demission in a body, & in that case they might count upon a movement among the workmen. You can imagine the indescribable indignation called forth by this proposition. Do you suppose, roared all the great & the little Gambettaⁱ’s that we want to be shut up at St Pélagie? Allons donc!—And really that was an absurd supposition, considering those gentlemen’s avowed love of liberty.

—This meeting like all the rest passed off without result. At present, everything seems smooth enough at the surface, & people look quietly on while the unfortunate men of the Vilette affair are being shot down.—

| The Press is making furious onslaughts of late against the Times^j accusing that paper of being sold to Bismarck^k & of being as usual in the service of the highest bidder. “Times is money”, they say. —Lowe^l being a member of the English Cabinet & at the same time an editor of the Times, Paul^m fancies this might be an occasion for attacking the whole Gladstoneⁿ party. If you think so, would you send him some particulars useful for the purpose.—However, as France is not in a position just now for provoking any government capable of mediating in its favour, I

don't suppose the Press would be likely to publish anything of the kind.—But you will judge & let Tooley^o know. That gentlemen is wild at the idea of giving up his house & garden in which latter he has done wonders, pruning, planting & spoiling trees & vegetables & flowers. Our walls are covered with grapes which we are obliged to leave behind us. Tooley feels inclined to kill the old **Guillaume^r**.

| I should like to bake him & the old **emperor^s** in a pie with **Fritz^t** on the crust in the shape of an ornament. Unfortunately, the royal mess would be uneatable.—

Goodbye, my dear Challey, I hope my talk has not given you a fresh attack of rheumatism. Words, I know, are wind.—With kisses from **Schnappy^u** & myself & love from all,

Believe me your affectionate

Kakadou

Thanks for all the letters & papers.

Nous quittons lundi ou mardi notre maisonnette et probablement peu de jours après Paris, car les Parisiens ne tarderont pas à voir les arriver; quoiqu'ils ne peuvent croire que les prussiens seraient assez idiots pour venir chercher leur tombeau sous les murs de Paris; il faut vous dire que les Parisiens comptent aujourd'hui plus que jamais aneantir tous les ennemis, rien qu'en soufflant dessus: il est vrai que **Palikao^v** a si bien menti, qu'ils sont intimement persuadés que **Bazaine^w** les a battus à plate couture et que **Mac-Mahon^x** va les achever; ce n'est pas étonnant **Louis Noir^y** le frère de **Victor^z** a écrit un livre intitulé: **L'art de battre les Prussiens^{aa}**; Louis Noir est un figariste ex-zouave, ainsi vous devez juger de la profondeur du livre = **Trochu^{ab}** est aujourd'hui le maître de la situation – on le dit entre les mains des jésuites.

Erläuterungen

- a) Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)
- b) Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)
- c) Friedrich III. (1831-1888)
- d) Johannard, Jules (1843-1882)
- e) Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)
- f) Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)
- g) Simon, Jules (1814-1896)
- h) Combault, Amédée Benjamin Alexandre (1837-1884)
- i) Gambetta, Léon (1838-1882)
- j) The Times
- k) Bismarck-Schönhausen, Otto von (1815-1898)
- l) Lowe, (seit 1880) 1st Viscount Sherbrooke of Sherbrooke, Robert (1811-1892)
- m) Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)
- n) Gladstone, William Ewart (1809-1898)
- o) Spitzname für **Paul Lafargue^p** in Anspielung auf **John Lawrence Toole^q**.
- p) Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)
- q) Toole, John Lawrence (1830-1906)
- r) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)
- s) Wilhelm I. (1797-1888)

- t)** Friedrich III. (1831-1888)
- u)** Lafargue, Charles Étienne (31.12.1868-1872)
- v)** Cousin-Montauban, comte de Palikao, Charles (1796-1878)
- w)** Bazaine, Francois Achille (1811-1888)
- x)** Mac Mahon, duc de Magenta, Marie Edmé Patrice Maurice de (1808-1893)
- y)** Noir, Louis (1837-1901)
- z)** Noir, Victor (1848-1870)
- aa)** [Zotero Link für: L'art de battre les Prussiens](#)
- ab)** Trochu, Louis Jules (1815-1896)

Kritischer Apparat