

# THE UPHEAVAL IN EUROPE

Described by Charles Henry Meltzer, the Noted Literateur and Critic, Mrs. W. R. Chapman, President of the Rubinstein Club, and Dr. O. P. Jacob, the Berlin Correspondent of "Musical America"

THE following letters will give some idea of conditions in Europe at the outbreak of hostilities.

As will be seen, Charles Henry Meltzer is still firm in the faith. He believes that the great outcome of the war will be to force Signor Gatti-Casazza and other managers to give opera in English. Mrs. William R. Chapman, recently returned from Germany, gives an intimate view of the scenes in Bayreuth when war was declared. As for Dr. O. P. Jacob, who was stranded in Athens, his trouble—outside of money matters—was how to swallow the newspaper report that Egypt had declared war on Germany, while Switzerland had declared war on England.

However, here are the letters:

What Charles Henry Meltzer Writes:

Comfort modern—  
English spoken—  
Men speak German—  
Hotel des Etrangers  
Paris le 16 Aug. 1914

My Dear John C. Freund:

I am on the edge of things—great, tragic, terrible things—and I can't get into the heart of them, without being shot. Scores of other scribes, more able than I have ever been, are waiting and watching, and some of us are eating out our hearts because we are denied the chance of seeing and describing the world-fight.

Twelve days ago I was caught suddenly in the net of fate in London.

You know what took me there—a plan for a "grand" opera in English, book by "Yours truly," music by a composer whose name you have been told and will, I am sure, not publish. All had gone well and I had lingered in London, working on my libretto.

Then wars began and, after two never to be forgotten days of uncertainty, England went in!

I was in Westminster Abbey a few hours before the decision was reached and published. Crowds of quiet and orderly men, women and children were walking up and down between the Houses of Parliament and Trafalgar Square. No cries, no "swank," no bravado! Only a grim, patient, resolute feeling of "If we must, we must!"

It did one good to see the crowd so calm.

And it was just the same in Paris. You would not believe how still and collected the people have been here after a few moments of quite natural heat and rage.

We are living in a perpetual Sunday—no commotion, no excitement and less business.

We who frequent the Café Napolitain sit, write and talk till, at 8 p. m., we are turned out.

We dine, more or less cheerfully, and at 9:30 are again turned out.

It might have pleased or pained you (according to your political taste) to hear the French recruits in Leicester Square and on the Channel boats wrestling with "Rule Britannia" and the "Marseillaise."

Alas! the French—as a nation—sing poorly!

Some of the French artists—who sing charmingly—are wondering if there will be any more cosmopolitan opera seasons in New York. *Qui sait?*

The one bright spot I can see in the tremendous tragedy, so far as music is concerned, is this: If the mobilization of the foreign artists, singers and musicians should upset the present arrangements of our Italian and Anglo-Italian opera managers they may have, at last, to give opera in English a chance in the great American opera houses!

Faithfully,

CHARLES HENRY MELTZER.

Don't know when I can get back. My steamer has been requisitioned. My youngest daughter is in Berlin, unable to get out. It's all fearfully interesting and fearfully trying.

What Dr. O. P. Jacob Writes:

Phalere, Greece,

near Athens.

August 10th, 1914.

Dear Mr. Freund:

From my cable, which I sent yesterday from the American Legation in Athens, you will have understood that I have been brought up to a dead stop here. As soon as I can I shall leave for Italy on the next steamer to be had. From there I shall try my best to get into Germany, probably through Austria.

It may be of interest to note the influence of the war of nations on this seething center, formed by Europe, Asia and Africa.

When I started from Genoa on the 21st of July for a much-needed "trip of repose" I little thought that my journey would terminate in a veritable Odyssey.

Upon our arrival in Alexandria, Egypt, conditions were still in such a state of unsettled fermentation that more than one means for a harmonious solution seemed possible.

What a change had taken place, however, when we arrived in Beirut!

When, on the verge of starting for the interior of Syria, the American consul general of Beirut very emphatically counseled me to desist from making the attempt.

It appeared that the unsettled state of affairs, with the likelihood of Turkey becoming involved in the conflict, was causing a state of utter lawlessness to develop throughout the country, back of Beirut and Damascus.

Besides, this very able representative of our country—rather more efficient than many we send abroad, I am sorry to state—took pains to point out that unless I hurried back to Europe as quickly as possible, I might not be able to get there for several months!

How very right Mr. Hoffis was was clearly proven on the very same day.

Suddenly all banking business in Beirut was stopped!

A rush on everything laying claim to the name of "bank" ensued. All foreign money—other than gold—was flatly refused!

By rare good fortune I succeeded in engaging passage on a Greek steamer going back to Alexandria. All the other lines had stopped their services.

This Greek steamer was literally crowded with Syrian, Armenian and other refugees, hastening to America to escape Turkish conscription.

On the biblical coast of Lebanon torch signals flamed up, during the night, informing the captains that a party of refugees in a rowboat desired to be taken aboard. As far as possible these requests were granted.

In Alexandria we heard that the war of nations was no longer a chimera, but a fact accomplished!

Here again all the banks had closed and no money whatsoever was exchanged.

If you had time to go through the Arabian and Greek quarters and were lucky, you might find an enterprising money changer who would give you four pounds sterling for twenty-five dollars!

As England was not yet involved in the struggle, the Khedivial Mail Line—flying the British flag—still kept up its service.

Scarcely, however, had we left Alexandria for Constantinople on the *Osmanship*, when the captain was distracted between orders and counter-orders from the board of directors in Alexandria. Now he was told to proceed toward Constantinople. Then again came an order not to leave the next port.

It seemed that the German warships *Goeben* and *Bréshau* were cruising about these waters, which gave the directors of the Khedivial Mail Line much cause to worry, lest their largest and best steamer might be captured and looted.

Thus it came about that we were held up in Piræus, the port of Athens, for three days. In the meanwhile the Ottoman Empire seems to have been approaching something of a climax.

It was and is the consensus of opinion that while one might enter Turkey with comparative facility, it would prove an extremely difficult matter to get out again.

Under such unfavorable auspices I considered it more advisable to stop here

and to make the attempt to reach Berlin the other way round, i. e. to go to Italy and to try to get to Germany, through Austria.

This I am about to do, and if all goes well your correspondent will be in a position, in about two weeks, to get you a report on the effect the war seems to have on our artists in Europe.

The effect this war of the powers has produced in the Orient can scarcely be described in one sentence. Even Oriental fatalism seems to have been shaken!

Excitement everywhere, with a strong leaning of the sympathies towards France and England.

That Russia should be an allied power of these two is generally regretted.

There is no limit to the hair-brained reports that are circulated, published and believed.

For instance, a week ago a report appeared in print that Egypt had declared war on Germany and, laughable as it may seem, the astonishing bit of news had time to be born that Switzerland had sent England a declaration of war.

But why comment on these absurdities, which are only a degree more ridiculous than some of the geographical and other impossibilities that are concocted by some of the larger European parties; yes, and even by the International News Bureau.

The real, the authentic facts of this war will not be known till it is over!

O. P. JACOB.

What Mrs. W. R. Chapman (President of the Rubinstein Club) Writes:

BETHEL MAINE, AUG. 29, 1914.

My Dear Mr. Freund:

I have read your editorial in the issue of August 29 on "Some Causes of the World's Greatest War." It covers the subject better than anything I have read since this terrible calamity to all mankind started.

I have just returned from three months in Europe—came through the war zone on that never-to-be-forgotten Sunday, August 2.

Suffered discomforts and hardships, but was preserved from real danger and, with money for all needs, was able to help others less fortunate.

Reached home by S.S. *Athenia* from Glasgow to Montreal, coming in what was known as "second cabin extension," giving us all the privilege of the ship, which was not all that we desired. However, we came safely to port with 500 other American refugees—all thankful to be here! We were in Greece when the fatal shots were fired.

From Greece we went to Trieste, thence to Vienna, to Buda-Pesth, through the Dolomites and the Austrian Tyrol, through Oberammergau and the castle country of Bavaria to Bayreuth, where we remained for the week, hearing "The Ring," the "Dutchman" and the last performance of "Parsifal."

We were sitting at the table with Schumann-Heink when Theodor Scheidl, who sang the part of *Klingsor*, came at the close of the second act to say "Good bye! Off for the war!"

Karl Muck's face was a study as he saw the members of his orchestra leaving, one by one. White as marble, he moved through the corridor to conduct the last act.

A solemn stillness, like that of death, hushed all the audience and, at its close, we fled—fled, with the strains of that wonderful music ringing in our ears—to find the streets alive with soldiers, the trains crowded!

Schumann-Heink begged me to fly at once for safety—to get to London and to America, and we "flew"—by train at 11:20 that night to Nuremberg. Thence, on an eventful trip of over fifty hours to the Hook of Holland.

Our baggage is all there—somewhere! We have not been able even to trace it. Only what we carried in our hands was saved!

We were put on and off trains; were examined again and again—our persons, our papers—bags were thoroughly searched—but we were treated courteously—under military orders.

We arrived in London the day that England declared for war!

We were at the Curzon Hotel, near St. James Park. Here we heard the bugle

call, each hour, for troops; heard the singing and shouting, and saw the crowds in front of Buckingham Palace.

Our booking home was on the *Amerika* of the Hamburg-American Line—useless, of course, under the conditions.

We received every courtesy from the American committee at the Savoy, but could not get the accommodations we required for ten days or more. Then, on their advice, we went to Glasgow, in Scotland, and sailed for home.

We were proud of the systematic, kindly way that the American gentlemen on that committee planned for relief and comfort.

We were proud of the American women who proved themselves equal to the emergencies, who endured every discomfort, showed all possible consideration for others and helped those less fortunate. Many of the cases of suffering were heartrending.

It was the most harrowing experience of a lifetime.

It is awful to witness the sufferings of the people.

I trust that your prophecy may come true. I believe it will.

Your views are of the highest and noblest for the uplift of all nations.

With me, on this trip, which began with the ancient history of Greece and ended in making history for future generations, were my sister, Miss Elizabeth Faulkner of Chicago, and Miss Julia E. Noyes of Portland, Me.

We rejoice to be in our native land once more—the home of the free! With sincere regards, most cordially,

(Mrs. Wm. R.) EMMA L. CHAPMAN.

Death of Georgine von Januschowsky-Neuendorff

Georgine von Januschowsky-Neuendorff, widely known as a dramatic singer in this country and abroad, died on September 6 in Bellevue Hospital, New York. She was sixty-four years old. She made her first appearance on the stage when she was sixteen years old in operetta, and belonged to companies in Stuttgart, Freiberg, Gratz, Vienna and Leipzig, before coming to New York in 1880 as a member of Adolf Neuendorff's Germania Theater Company. Later she sang in light operas in the Abbey and Grau régime of the Metropolitan Opera House, and after that returned to Germany, where she had a great success.

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