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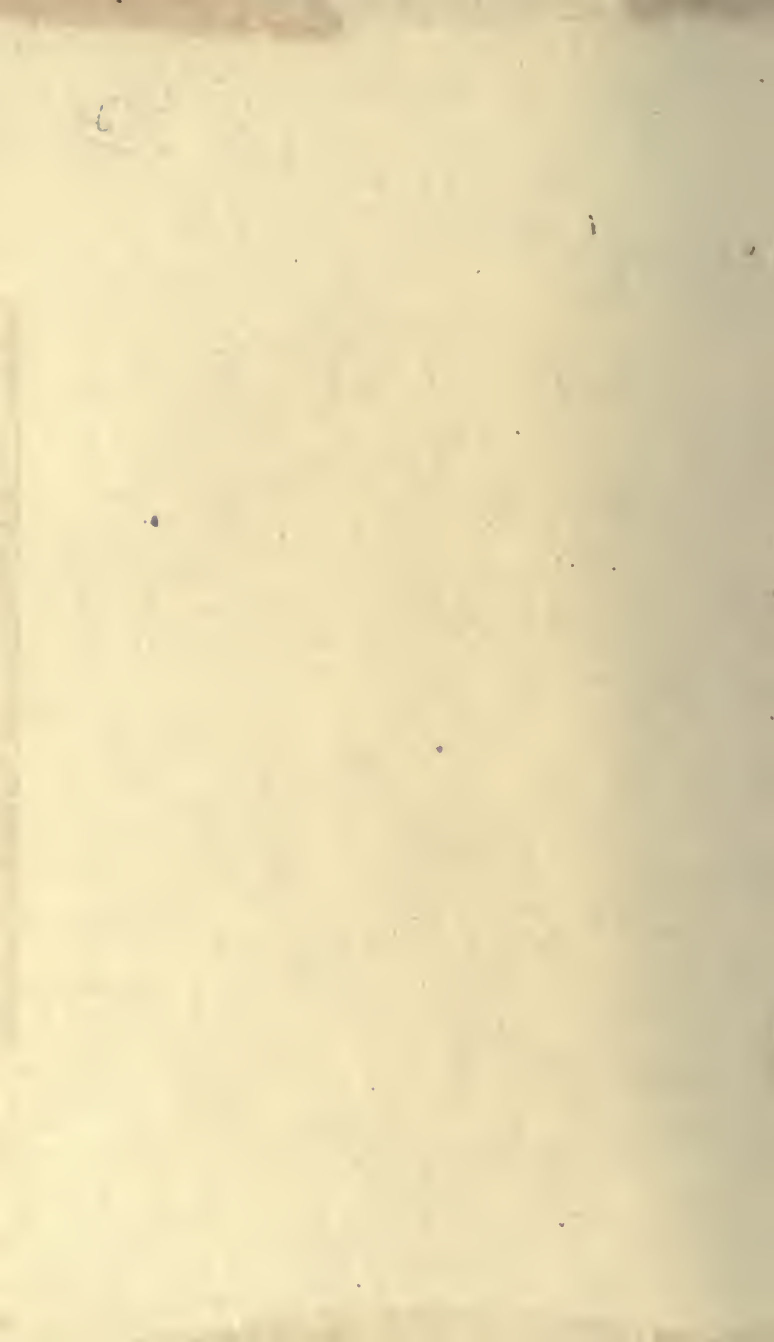

RECOLLECTIONS OF COUNTESS THERESA BRUNSWICK

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THE COUNTESS THERESA BRUNSWICK IN HER 28TH YEAR.
From a Painting by LAMPI.

RECOLLECTIONS OF

COUNTESS THERESA BRUNSWICK

(BEETHOVEN'S "UNSTERBLICHE GELIEBTE")

BY

MARIAM TENGER

TRANSLATED BY GERTRUDE RUSSELL

WITH PORTRAITS.

London

T. FISHER UNWIN

PATERNOSTER SQUARE

MDCCCXCIII

DEM KAISERL. OESTERREICHISCHEN OBERSTEN RITTER

LUDWIG VON SCHWARZMAN

UND

DEM KÖNIGL. PREUSSISCHEN GEHEIMEN LEGATIONSRATH

DR. ROBERT HEPKE

IN TREUER FREUNDSCHAFT

GEWIDMET

VON DER VERFASSERIN.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND GERMAN EDITION.

WHEN the Beethoven Festival at Bonn in the spring of 1890 led me to write down my personal remembrances of the "Immortal Beloved," I had not yet read Alexander Wheelock Thayer's work, "The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven." I am therefore only now able, after this has been done, to pay the tribute of admiring recognition to his able and far-reaching investigations, which have led him to a conclusion which, if it has been frequently attacked, is nevertheless just.

The Author has shown, with a probability bordering on certainty, that of all the women whom Beethoven knew, Countess Theresa Brunswick *alone* could have been the "Immortal Beloved" to whom the great master had written the letter of the 7th of July, which was found among his possessions.

Thayer has suggested that Beethoven was engaged to the Countess, and that their marriage was in prospect. It gives me special pleasure and satisfaction to be able to clear away all doubts on this point, through having received certain communications from the lips of the Countess Theresa *herself*, who was so motherly a friend to me.

Deeply do I regret the loss of my diaries, which would have been a valuable authority and help for my present sketch of this admi-

rable woman, to whom I always looked up with the greatest reverence.

However, I think that little of importance has escaped me; for I still have a lively recollection of her, both in middle life and extreme old age, with her grace of form and demeanour, and that engaging expression in her face — and all my meetings and talks with her are so deeply graven in my heart. Even now, when I am old, her friendly conversations with me, from which I learned so much about music and art, rise vividly in my memory. Thus I am enabled to enrich the present second edition of my little work.

Furthermore, I should like to assure my readers that everything here recorded has been written down conscientiously, and only

so far as I was sure of my memory, and I may lay claim to perfect confidence on this point.

In the second volume of his work—which unfortunately he is still prevented from finishing on account of illness—Thayer describes the picture of a lovely young woman, which was originally found among Beethoven's possessions.

About the year 1863 this picture still belonged to Beethoven's heirs. Thayer says definitely that he believes the Countess Theresa Brunswick to have been the original of this portrait. This also proves to be founded on fact.

A short chapter at the end of this little work deals with the history of this picture.

I dedicate the story to two old friends, enthu-

siastic admirers of Beethoven, who have often stood by me in word and deed, and to whom I am sure this dedication will give pleasure.

MARIAM TENGER.

November, 1890.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

COUNTESS THERESA BRUNSWICK.

IN an old writing-table—what, indeed; was not old in the Schwarzspanier house in Vienna, where Beethoven lived!—there was found, among other important papers, a letter dated the 6th of July, the letter to the "Immortal Beloved." The year and address were not given, as in so many of Beethoven's letters.

The portrait of a woman was found in the same room, with the following dedication in her own hand: "To the rare genius, to the

great artist, to the good man, from T. B." It was with this picture in his hand, talking to himself and moved to tears, that Baron Spaun, one of the great master's warmest admirers, found him one day in the last year of his life. It has been widely conjectured, but also much disputed, that the Countess Theresa Brunswick *was* the "Immortal Beloved" to whom Beethoven's letter of the 6th of July was addressed. I am able to bear witness to the fact from personal knowledge. The letter was written to the Countess Theresa Brunswick on the 6th of July, 1806, from the little Hungarian watering-place, Füred, on the Plattensee, which in after years—after Beethoven's death—she sought out in order to see the room which he had then occupied. The great master had gone there from Martonvásár, the family estate of the Brunswicks, where he often went on a visit, and where before his journey to Füred, in May, 1806, he became secretly engaged to Countess Theresa. This she told me herself.

Only her brother, Count Franz, with whom Beethoven stood on terms of the closest friendship, was in the secret. It was he who enabled the lovers to carry on a correspondence during the many years of their engagement. Beethoven's letter, then, of the 6th and 7th of July to the "Immortal Beloved" dates from the early period of his engagement with her. We here give the letter in its three parts, word for word, from the original manuscript in the Royal Library in Berlin, as the central object of interest from which our story springs.

Beethoven writes:

"6th July, morning.

"My angel, my all, my soul.—a few words only to-day, and those with pencil (with thine)—after to-morrow it is uncertain where I shall be, what a wretched waste of time this is—why this deep sorrow where necessity speaks—can our love live except by sacrifices, in not

asking for all, is thine the power to change it, that thou art not wholly mine, I not wholly thine—O God behold the beauty of nature, and let that calm thy mind concerning the inevitable—love rightly demands all, so it is with *me and thee*, with *thee and me*—but thou forgettest so easily that I must live for *myself* and for *thee*—were we not wholly united in heart the pain of this would affect thee as little as it would me.—my journey was fearful—I only arrived here yesterday morning at 4 o'clock, as the horses failed, the post-master chose another route, but such a fearful road, at the last station but one they warned me against travelling by night, tried to frighten me about a forest, but that only made me more determined—and I was wrong, the carriage could not but break down on that miserable road, a mere rough country track, without such postillions, as I had, I should have been left on the road—

"Esterhazy with eight horses, had the same

misfortune on the other, the usual road to this place as I had with four—but after all I had a certain amount of pleasure, as I always have when I get over anything successfully.—now to pass quickly from outward to inward things, we shall probably see each other again soon, and to-day I cannot tell thee of all the reflexions on my own life which I have been making during the last few days—could but our hearts be always in close communion I should not think of such things my heart is full to tell thee much—ah—There are moments, when I find that language is nothing—be of good cheer—be always my true and only treasure, my all, as I am thine, all else must be left to the gods, what must be and will be our lot.—

thy faithful

LUDWIG."

The letter was too late for the post; it was

returned to Beethoven, and he therefore continued on the same sheet:

"Monday evening, 6th July.

"Thou art troubled—my dearest one—I only now notice that letters must be posted early. Mondays—Thursdays—the only days on which the post leaves for K.—thou art troubled—oh, wherever I am, thou art with me, for us both I shall so arrange things that I shall be able to live with thee, what a life that will be!!!! there!!!! without thee—persecuted now and again by the kindness of people, which I mean—as little to try to deserve as I do deserve it—Man's humility towards man—it is painful to me — and when I look upon myself in relation to the universe, what am I and what is he—who is called the greatest—and yet—in this again lies what is divine in man—I could weep when I think that probably the earliest day on which thou wilt hear from me will be Saturday—however much thou lovest

me—I love thee still more—yet do not hide thyself from me—good-night—as one taking the baths for his health I must go to bed. O God—so near! so far! is not our love truly of Heaven's building—and as sure too, as the firmament of heaven.—"

"Good morning! July 7—
even before rising my thoughts throng to thee my Immortal Beloved, now with joy, now with sorrow, waiting to see if Fate will give ear to us—I can only live entirely with thee or not at all, yes I have determined so long to wander in loneliness, until I can fly to thine arms, and can deem myself quite at home with thee, can send my soul uplifted by thee into the region of spirits—yes alas it must be—thou wilt be resolute and calm, the more so that thou knowest my faith to thee never can another possess my heart, never—never—O God, why be compelled to separate oneself, from one so deeply

loved, and yet my life in V. as things now are is a wretched life—Thy love has made me at once the happiest and unhappiest of men—in these years I should need a monotonous evenness of life—can this be under our circumstances?—Angel, I have just found, that the post goes out every day—and I must therefore stop that thou mayest get the letter directly—be tranquil only through quiet contemplation of our existence can we attain our object of living together—be tranquil—love me—to-day—yesterday—what tearful longing for thee—thee—thee—my life—my all—farewell—o cease not to love me—never misunderstand the most true heart

of thy lover

L.

"ever thine
"ever mine
"ever ours."

To whom was this letter of the 6th of July,

which was returned to Beethoven, addressed? And when was it returned to him?—These questions have often been started; till to-day, however, they have not been definitely answered. The name of the "Immortal Beloved" has not hitherto been indicated with certainty. On the one hand, this proves how strictly the secret was kept on both sides in its time (even until quite lately the members of the Brunswick family were unwilling to acknowledge the fact of the engagement). On the other hand, it is probable that not much value was attached to inquiries on the subject, and the circumstances in Vienna threw a veil over it from the beginning.

Prince Nickerl (Nicholas) Esterhazy gave utterance to a sentiment at that time widely entertained in the gay capital, and which may have had reference to Beethoven:—"The musicians and comedians rival us in the hearts of the ladies, so that even we courtiers and officers of the Hungarian Guards become en-

vious. The musicians and comedians!—The names of the beauties upon whom the eyes of the great master gazed with delight are carefully set down in Beethoven's biographies. He was a passionate being, whose sensations surged up and down like storms at sea. And the admiration of this king in the realm of music was flattering to the vanity of some women. Probably many, like the charming Guilietta Guicciardi, did not fail to encourage it. But one thing is certain: he loved—with that love which transforms earth to heaven, in which not only the eyes delight, but in which spirit joys in spirit, with that love through which the recognition of the highest nobility of soul creates a feeling akin to adoration—in this way he loved only—*her* to whom this letter is addressed, whom he glorified personally in one of his greatest works ("Fidelio"), and who was his inspiration in many others.

After the secret engagement Beethoven saw the Countess less frequently, especially in order

to keep the secret the better. Countess Theresa, in fact, feared the impression which a too early discovery would certainly make upon her mother, who was a very proud woman possessed by the idea of the high rank of the Brunswick family. Also after the breaking off of the engagement the secret was carefully kept, and those concerned in it, even Count Franz, destroyed all letters which referred to it. This is the reason why even the most careful searcher, such as Alex. W. Thayer, has only been able to discover so few traces of it. The return of the letters between them took place in the year 1810, when, after four years' duration, the engagement abruptly came to an end.

Beethoven exerted himself without success to obtain a post in Vienna which would be permanent and worthy of his merit. Count Franz Brunswick pointed out to him the necessity of obtaining such a post, without which a marriage with his sister, who had no large fortune, was impossible. Beethoven there-

fore also turned his thoughts towards Prussia and England. The allusions in the last part of the letter of the 6th and 7th of July, 1806, to the separation from the beloved one, and the miserable life in Vienna, refer to these circumstances. And 1810 brought no change in them when the breach occurred. Beethoven seems to have been so bowed down by it that his creative power forsook him. His genius, in fact, reposed in 1810.

What was it which gave to the Countess Theresa so mighty an influence over Beethoven's soul? . . . Undoubtedly in beauty and mind she was far beyond other women. She could shine in society—which she did not care for—but out of it, also, hers was a most distinguished presence, a noble, thoughtful nature, deeply earnest, like her beauty. Her whole being enchanted Beethoven's soul, and enchained it for ever.

We cannot describe her more truly than by recording the impression which she made on

another great artist, who even in old age spoke of her with enthusiasm. They are his words which we give below.

Peter von Cornelius was standing at his easel working at one of his cartoons for the Campo Santo in Berlin. It was a year before his death. He already lived in such retirement from the world that he would often work for days absorbed in thought and speaking to nobody. We hit upon one such day, when my friends, old acquaintances of the master, introduced me to him. He greeted us with a hardly perceptible nod, taking no further notice even of me the stranger.

Against my wish—for I had immediately withdrawn timidly, and stood apart before another cartoon—they said to him: "Our friend knows Countess Theresa Brunswick."

The name had an electrifying effect on the old man. With the alacrity of youth he laid down his pencil and hastened towards me.

"Theresa Brunswick!" he repeated, with a

tone in which fervour and reverence mingled. Then he gave me his arm, and invited my friends to follow him into the sitting-room.

We found his wife and his brother-in-law there. He named me with reference to the Countess, but beyond that would scarcely allow the ordinary interchange of greetings.

"Honoured friends!" he cried, "Countess Theresa Brunswick is the most remarkable woman I have ever known. Let us now talk of her. Listen to me, for—I tell you—though I have known many celebrated women, admired by all the world, praised in all the newspapers, *not one* of them could I compare with this Countess Theresa Brunswick, who has remained almost unknown, even in her own country.—She is, to my mind, the type of *noble womanhood*. . . . Her family also was extremely remarkable! Yes—I believe—that such a woman could only spring from a family governed by the highest aspirations. Martonvásár, the ancestral castle of the Brunswicks, in Hungary,

has been transformed into a temple of the muses by Count Franz, the brother of Countess Theresa. He lived there with his family as his father had, only for the arts and sciences, and in these he taught his children to find their highest enjoyment. Countess Theresa had studied the ancient languages with him, which did not, however, hinder her from knowing the modern ones.

"In music Mozart and Beethoven had been her teachers. I cannot describe to you how this pupil of the greatest masters played the piano. . . . That it was not granted me to meet her in her youth, although I early visited the family home, I have often regretted extremely. I had made acquaintance with her brother during my first Italian journey, and soon after availed myself of his invitation to Martonvásár.

"That was truly an enchanted castle! It lay surrounded by a lovely park, different portions of which were named after some of the countries of Europe. Count Franz, the inheritor, had

acquired many costly works of art in Italy, and had decorated the rooms of the paternal mansion with them. I found many things among them which fascinated me for a long time. Unfortunately, though, I did not meet his favourite sister, Countess Theresa, there. I was only to become personally acquainted with her many years later. After her father's death she had gone with her mother to Ofen, and lived there with her in the family home of the Brunswicks. An important episode in her life was already over at that time. . . .

"It is long, long ago that I saw her for the first time. I was still in the best years of my life, an artist, and ideal women inspired me.—Countess Theresa accompanied her niece, who wished to study painting with me, to Munich. This niece was the same Countess Blanka Teleki who became well known later—during the revolutions of 1848-49; she was one of those stern beauties who affect us like an insoluble riddle. I immediately discovered the

likeness between the two. Countess Theresa must have been like her in her youth. There were the same noble lines of the classical oval, and the forehead, little touched by age, bore the same high dignity. But only a perfectly pure spirit could give the gentle look in her large dark eyes. When she smiled—which was seldom — a heavenly radiance lit up every feature. Such a face never really becomes old. After conversation with her one felt oneself raised and made better without the least intention on her part. She spoke with inimitable beauty and clearness, because she was inwardly so transparent and beautiful, almost like a beatified spirit."

Cornelius was silent; his wife whispered to me: "For weeks I have not heard him say so much at a time. I hope it will not hurt him." Without giving much heed to these remarks, for my thoughts were completely engrossed with the subject which was so dear and familiar to me, I said to the noble-minded man:

"How pleased she will be when I write and tell her what memories you have of her!"

"Yes—yes—tell her that," he replied, giving a fugitive glance upwards. "When did you last see her?"

"In May, 1857, she came to Vienna and spent a day with us—a day never to be forgotten by me. My mother was still living. The conversation which I had with Countess Theresa is graven in my memory. In the evening two quite young girls came to see us. I feared that after the deep and earnest talk we had been having together they would be burdensome to her, and I said so. 'Children are never a burden to me,' she answered. And how the grand woman found the way to draw out these shy creatures and lead them to unreserved conversation! How beautifully, how inimitably she recited, without once hesitating, the 'Abt von St. Gallen,' which she had learnt by heart in her childhood!"

"In her childhood—" repeated Cornelius, half aloud.

I was under the impression that he was tired and exhausted, and was going to stop, but he prevented this, and raising his sunken head again, asked me with re-awakened animation:

"Then do you also know stories of her *childhood?*"

"Oh, many! I have them partly from herself, and partly from her sister, Countess Emmerich Teleki, Blanka's mother."

"Do you know the story about Beethoven and the music-lesson?" asked Cornelius, quickly.

"Oh, how should I not know *that* one!"

"Well, then tell it! One so likes to hear stories of childhood, and this one was—so I believe—the prelude to a life's drama."

I assented to the master's wish, and told the story. "Countess Theresa had passed her fifteenth year. She sat at the piano. The door of the little room in which her mother was stood ajar. It was a bitterly cold winter's day in the year 1794. Vienna was embedded

in snow, which still fell in large flakes on the shovellers, who could not quite clear it away. Horses and carts seemed fixed to the spot, and pedestrians waded along with great difficulty. Now, the teacher whom Countess Theresa expected was probably accustomed to brave any weather. That which came from the skies hardly played any part with him, but it was far otherwise with that which raged within him, and which would not be quieted until he had fettered it in music. *That* was the storm to be dreaded — dreaded by himself and by his friends, whom in those moods he not seldom treated as enemies.

"Theresa Brunswick, still almost a child in years but wonderfully earnest and advanced in art and knowledge, looked up to her teacher Beethoven with a mixture of fear and veneration. With *veneration* because, in spite of her youth, she recognised the genius which no other on this earth approached. (Mozart was dead.) With *fear*, because she found it so difficult to

reconcile herself to the often more than *harsh rudeness* of his nature.

"The greatest refinement in habit and bearing governed the Brunswick family. Kindness and courtesy, extending to every servant, were the natural elements in their home life. No discord was permitted to disturb the harmony. Countess Theresa's mother was a proud aristocrat who knew how to command obedience with unapproachable dignity. But neither her children —nor even her servants—had *ever* heard a word of scolding from her. Neither from her, nor from the exceedingly kind and learned father.

"And Beethoven? . . . As a boy he might have counted the days in the year on which he had heard a kindly word from his—*surly* father!— In what an atmosphere he was brought up! How often, when the torment in the young heart was too great, did he—destined to immortality —long for death; for before life had given to the artist the overflowing cup of joy, the man

had already tasted the bitter draught of daily misery! . . . We know that in moments when the common needs of existence overwhelmed his genius the great master gave way to the wildest, most fearful outbursts of violence. Passion dwelt in the depths of his soul. If it is impossible to imagine his creations without it, he certainly was not sufficiently its master in life, and his faulty education was only too apparent in these outbursts.

"On the day on which Theresa Brunswick expected her master a storm was brooding deep in Beethoven's mind. She noticed this at once as he entered, barely greeting her with a nod. She also felt that it would be hard to please him.

"'Practised the sonata?' he asked, without looking at her. His hair was more tossed and dishevelled than usual, the eyes—the splendid eyes—were not fully open, and the mouth wore an angry expression. Oh, so angry!

"With hesitating voice she answered, 'Indeed I have practised—but——'

"'We'll see!'

"She sat down at the piano; he stood behind her. She thought, 'If only I could give him the pleasure of playing really well!' But—God knows how it happened—the notes swam before her eyes, and her hands trembled. She began too fast—several times he said 'Tempo!' It was in vain. She noticed that he was becoming more and more impatient, and she was becoming more and more confused. And now, alas!—even a wrong note! To her own sensitive ear it was so painful that she could have cried aloud. But then the master himself played a false note, which hurt her outwardly and inwardly. . . . For he struck, not the keys, but her hand very hard and angrily, rushed to the drawing-room door, and, like a madman, in another moment out at the front door, which he slammed behind him.

"'Without cloak! without hat! good heavens!' she cried aloud unguardedly in her excitement, and hurried after him, while her

mother came out of her little room into the drawing-room to see what was the cause of the noise. The drawing-room was empty, the door stood open, the door into the vestibule also stood ajar; and the servant—where was he? The Countess was terrified, but her terror gave place to a very different feeling when her daughter appeared before her and told her what she had done, where she had been. *Her* daughter, *Countess* Theresa Brunswick—had run after the musician—into the street—with his cloak, hat, and stick! To be sure she had hardly gone ten paces from the front door before the frightened servant caught her up. And not far from her stood Beethoven, irresolute as to what he should do in order to get back the things he had left behind. He received them from the servant, while his pupil, unnoticed by him, slipped back into the house.

"The mother sent her to her room with the strict injunction for the rest of the day to think over her unseemly behaviour. But no matter

how much Theresa thought over it, she always came to the same conclusion : 'He might catch cold and die!' The kind father put the blame on the servant who had gone away from the entrance. He quieted his wife by telling her that Theresa was still a child, and had acted as a child. 'After ourselves and her brothers and sisters, her teachers have the first place in her grateful heart, and this excuses her precipitation.'

"It certainly was not exactly as the old Count imagined. In Theresa's diary, written in French at that time (1794), there was on almost every page something about 'mon maître,' 'mon maître cheri ;' and this *never meant another than Beethoven.*"

This was told me by her sister, Countess Emmerich Teleki.

My account of this incident of her childhood had become rather lengthy. I saw that it was high time to end the visit to Peter Cornelius. He made no objection, but made us promise to

come again very soon. Turning to me, he added, impressively :

"But then *you* must tell me everything that you know about Theresa Brunswick, especially all about her relations with Beethoven, and whether it is as clear to you as it is—to me."

The last words were spoken at the hall-door with special emphasis, and I nodded assentingly.

What I had to tell the master is contained in the following recollections.

I was a child when I was brought to the Countess Theresa through a relation, who was a college friend of her brother, and therefore her friend also. To her question, "Why I looked at her with such large eyes so wonderingly ?" I could answer nothing. I could not tell her that she seemed to me like a good fairy out of my story-books, or like a saintly woman out of the sacred stories which had been told us in the boarding-school of the Ursulines. I was now to

be brought up in a girls' school. Until Countess Theresa found a suitable one I was to stay with her. Pages might be filled with that glorious month of May which I spent with her. How beneficent was the look of her beautiful earnest eyes, the sound of her soft voice! how full of instruction all that she said!

She was at this time occupied in establishing an infants' school in the Rennweg, one of the suburbs of Vienna. It was the first, not only there, but in the whole kingdom. The interest of the Court was gained through the Empress Caroline, who had an open heart and clear understanding for everything relating to the public welfare. The offering made by the noble founder, although it was beyond her means—for she lived on a very moderate income—was not large enough. Even the contributions of a few friends, who stood by her in word and deed—as, for instance, the astronomer Littrow, in Vienna—were hardly sufficient to give the undertaking a good start. In spite of this her

efforts were crowned with success. At present there are institutions in all parts of Austria like the one founded by the Countess Theresa Brunswick; and a few years ago her bust was placed in the National Museum at Pesth, in recognition of her remarkable activity on behalf of the rearing of children, and works of humanity in general.

During the consultations about the Infants' School I usually sat at her feet; although the subject was often beyond my understanding, I was always fascinated by the *way* in which she spoke.

Once I had placed my stool too near her. "You are on my gown, child," she said, with a kind smile. I moved off too hastily; and, on finding that I had torn the dress, I burst into tears. She took my head between her motherly hands, and kissing me on the forehead, said, "My dear child, a torn gown is not worth tears; kind Schmidtbauer (this was her maid) will mend it if you ask her very nicely; keep your

tears for the rents in your life; Heaven will hardly let you escape them."

We made excursions to the Kahlenberg, to the Brühl, to the Helenenthal, and other places in the neighbourhood of Vienna. It was Countess Theresa who awoke in us the love of Nature, and also an interest in historical reminiscences. She could tell us so much about trees and flowers, about castles and monasteries, that the time seemed to me to pass more quickly when we were alone with her, than when relations were with us.

I had found a playmate with the Countess. A poor orphaned child had been brought to her some years before in heartrending circumstances. Having just returned home from a long journey, and tired of travelling, her life was somewhat lonely in Pesth. The aristocratic society there was quite as pleasure-seeking as society in Vienna, and was avoided by her. He who seeks solitude is soon left lonely. One of her sisters was married in Transylvania and one in

Russia. Her deeply-loved brother was away. The thought, then, of bringing up a poor orphan to give joy to herself and to others might well seem to bring a beautiful prospect before her. Louise D. became her adopted child. In that May month which remains in undimmed beauty before me, Louise was about fourteen years old. She remained for long in my mind as a shadow in those gloriously bright days, the shadow also to her benefactress until she married.

A clever Frenchman, speaking of education, said: "Ah si,—l'éducation est une bonne chose et peut beaucoup, mais rien—absolument rien contre le naturel.—'Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop!'"

This saying, alas! was verified by the fruitless endeavours of the noble Countess to raise her adopted daughter to her own high level. At last she tried a boarding-school. The one which she chose was the best in Vienna; the principal of this school was well known to the Countess, a distinguished woman in every way, whose

ideal was very high. I also was sent to this school, and later became enthusiastically attached to Frau von Draeger. But at the moment of parting with Countess Theresa, I clung to her hands, crying passionately, and would not leave her.

"Child! child! Do you really love me so very much?" she asked, in her beautiful mild voice.

"Oh, so much—so much that I could die for you!"

I merely mention this childish outburst, because Countess Theresa's answer, which I fully understood only many years later, may help to solve the riddle of her life and Beethoven's.

She stooped towards me and said slowly and impressively, "My child! when you are many years older and more sensible, then only will you understand what I mean when I say that, to *live* for those one loves, is by far the greatest love, for that often needs far, far more courage."

Then she stroked my head lovingly with both

hands, saying in that motherly tone which won her the hearts of all children—

"But on the 27th of March every year, while you are here at school, you can do me a little service, which in my heart I shall count a great one."

When for the first time on the appointed day, I went, accompanied by the lady principal, to the little Währinger churchyard to lay a wreath of everlastings on Beethoven's grave, a middle-aged gentleman was standing there who also had just brought flowers. The schoolmistress who knew him whispered to him, "The child does it at the desire of Countess Theresa Brunswick."

"I could have guessed that!" he answered. "*Everlastings are fit only for her.*"

Baron Spaun was an old man when I met him again in 1859 in Traunkirchen, on the Traunsee, where he lived with his family in his own villa. He kept himself apart from the society of the summer visitors to the charming

little place, and was considered a very strange old fellow. But his name had remained in my memory, and I made use of the occasion to remind him of the little girl with the wreath of everlastings at Beethoven's grave.

"I've never forgotten it!" said he, very eagerly. "It seemed to me so touching—like everything connected with that glorious man."

From that conversation, interrupted alas! too soon by strangers, I saw that Baron Spaun knew more about Beethoven than many of those who are mentioned in his biographies. As a young man he had mixed with all those artists who had formed a group round the master.

"Did you know his most distinguished pupil, Countess Theresa Brunswick?" I asked.

"His pupil..." repeated the old man, meditatively, and continued after a few moments: "I once went to see Beethoven at an unusual hour. He could not hear me, nor could he see me this time, for he was seated with his back turned towards me. The light from the window fell

on the picture which he held in his hands and was kissing tearfully. He was talking to himself, as he often did when he was alone. I did not wish to be an unbidden listener, and drew back at the words: 'Thou wast too great—too like an angel.' When after a time I returned, I found him at the piano extemporising gloriously. 'There is none of the demon in *your* face to-day, old fellow!' said I; to which he answered, 'My good angel has appeared to me!'"

"That picture with a dedication from Countess Theresa was found in a press with the letter to the Immortal Beloved among Beethoven's belongings. I recognised it at once, and after all I have heard about the Countess I have not the smallest doubt that only she could have been the 'Immortal' Beloved." So said Baron Spaun.

In the year 1860, at Gmunden, on the Traunsee, I met an elderly lady, Frau Hebenstreit, who, on account of her masterly piano playing, was invited to the houses of the most

distinguished residents there. Schuppanzigh had been her teacher; at his house she had often met Beethoven, and had even played to him once. One evening at a large party, after Frau Hebenstreit had played the overture in "Fidelio" (Leonora), she said in her Austrian dialect, "See here, ladies and gentlemen, just as one sits to a painter for one's portrait, so the Countess Theresa Brunswick sat to Beethoven for his Leonora. The whole world ought to be grateful to her for it. But—Beethoven wasn't fit to marry,—and especially not a countess without money,—and so refined and so delicate one might have blown her away! And he—good heavens!—an angel and *a devil*—all in one! It would have been the ruin of them both—and of his genius too!"

It is probable that some others besides Baron Spaun, Frau Hebenstreit, and Peter von Cornelius had an insight into the intimate relations between Beethoven and Countess Theresa. But the naïve utterances of Frau

Hebenstreit had a deeper meaning. They proved that a correct judgment had been formed as to the true relations between them, and on the fatal contradictions presented by Beethoven's passionate nature.

Those simple words hit the true cause of the breaking off of the engagement. Beethoven himself was fully aware of the kind of temper he had, and after much conflict arrived at the conviction that the fear of bringing misery into the life of those whom he loved and revered beyond all was only too well founded. Delicate hints which Countess Theresa gave me personally leave no doubt about this. I shall return to it later. Many others agreed with her in these views.

During my school-life I often saw Countess Theresa. Once in the year 1837 she asked me to spend a day with her in Vienna. A glorious day! We drove into the country to the Littrows. But the happy hours there passed all too quickly! When the maid fetched the

carriage to take me back to school Countess Theresa asked: "Do you still love me so much, then?"

"Oh! very, very much! But, Mother Theresa, our schoolmistress also very much! and my three friends—and my teachers—"

"And the whole world!" she broke in, smiling, "you happy child!"

I used to write to her every year on St. Theresa's day, and on New Year's day, and to treasure up her answers as something precious. When my mother fetched me from school in the year 1838, Countess Theresa had again gone on a long journey. I did not see her for many, many years, and our regular correspondence came to an end. Nevertheless our relations remained unchanged, for in Transylvania I held active intercourse with the family of her sister, Countess Emmerich Teleki, where news was frequently interchanged. With the Telekis as with the Brunswicks, art and science were the chief interests. Blanka Teleki, the eldest

daughter, pupil of Peter von Cornelius, belonged altogether to this atmosphere. It was a strange family, and its destinies, in which Blanka was to play a prominent part, were both strange and tragic. Her likeness to her aunt, Countess Theresa, attracted me strongly. Her mind, her artistic talents, her literary knowledge filled me with admiration. Numerous paintings which were her work adorned the castle. She devoted her time to art and study. She did not go into society, and avoided fashion and finery, just as, in her youth, Countess Theresa had done. Yet every one turned to look at her as she passed through the streets. Her glossy black hair was twisted into a Grecian knot, her large dark eyes, shaded by long lashes, had a calm, almost a cold look; one felt inclined to say to the mouth: "Do smile, but—not scornfully!" Then came the noble bearing of her figure, which, though not tall, was beautifully proportioned. So uncommon a woman necessarily struck people and attracted them, while

awakening curiosity; the more so as she seldom emerged from her retirement. In the midst of the exciting social movements of the Magyar nobility in Klausenburg, the house of the Telekis remained a quiet one. The invalid mother seldom saw any visitors. One day, when by chance I was alone with her—Blanka had just left us — I involuntarily made the remark, "Blanka is so like her aunt that I keep thinking I see Countess Theresa before me in youthful form!" — "So like," answered the Countess, "that I once really took her for my sister when she bent over me on my sick bed;" . . . and after a moment's thought she added, "So like, and yet so *essentially* different!"

The quiet house soon became quieter still. The parents died. The younger daughter had married and gone to France, the son had a home of his own on one of the family estates, and Blanka had gone to Pesth to establish a school for the daughters of the Magyar nobility. After years of silence she had sent me an account of her

plan, asking whether I would take part in her patriotic endeavours.

In the spring of 1848 I saw her again in Pesth. I went to see her before going to her aunt because Countess Theresa had appointed a day for me by letter on which she was to give herself up to me entirely. Blanka might have been about forty; she was still beautiful and most attactive. And what could have taken from this face the nobility which had been impressed upon it by nature? But—the noble earnestness, the dignity and grandeur were no longer there: an excess of amiable politeness had come instead. She who now stood before me in a light morning dress, the neat little cap tied with a sky-blue ribbon—this was not the proud Blanka of former days. It seemed as if a second, another youth had come over her. Her speech was louder and more animated; she even joked. She made me follow her into the schoolrooms; she introduced me to her pupils and the teachers, and when I was going

she said with animation : "The main work we devote to Patriotism ! Our first thought on waking, our last on going to rest, is — the Fatherland ! Is it not, children ? Is it not, gentlemen ? Before all else we are Hungarians !"

What a transformation had been wrought here by time and circumstances ! On the following day I made my way, not without fear, to Countess Theresa. Hesitatingly I entered her study, which the maid had quickly opened for me. The first thing I noticed was a Nürnberger desk, on which the light fell from a double window adorned with flowers. Two portraits—Mozart and Beethoven—in carved oak frames hung on the wall above it. A bookcase with splendid editions of classical works, a table covered with portfolios and pocket-books, and a few chairs—all was simple and unobtrusive which filled the little room. She whose entrance I was expecting was already there. Countess Theresa, who was now seventy years old, was reclining on a sofa. When, to my

surprise, I caught sight of her, I asked myself in the first moment whether there would be any feeling of estrangement between us;—but in another minute I felt her motherly look, I understood the beckoning gesture of her hand, which was made to bless, and I longed to be a child again that I might sit at her feet as in times gone by.

Reading in my face what I could not express in words, she looked at me long with an expression which warmed my heart, and smiled. I kissed her hand and asked whether she still loved me a little.

She answered, "There is nothing left for me to do but to love all men a little, and my friends very much."

"Dearest lady, it is more than ten years since I have seen you!"

"We will say—ten years have passed since you placed the last wreath of everlastings on my—dearest one's grave."

I looked at her in wonder, for I did not

understand her at once. For the moment I only thought of the grave of her parents and of her dearly loved brother, and I repeated, "Your *dearest* one's grave?"

"The grave of the man whom I loved more and quite in a different way from any of my relations. . . . Since that day when—almost a child—I rushed after him in the snowstorm with his hat and cloak, I felt as though I belonged to him. And as I grew up this feeling grew with me, increasing in intensity, but always mingled with the unutterable pain of jealousy. . . . When society was amusing itself over the conquests of the 'great musician,' every nerve of my being quivered.—Two daughters of the Brunswick family shone in the great world; the third played the piano, painted, read, and—dreamed. My mother said, 'My Resi seems made for a *Stiftsdame*,'[1]—and marked me out for

[1] *Stiftsdame*—a lady usually of noble family residing in an endowed institution formerly conventual, in which her parents have the right of placing one of their daughters.

it. What was going on in my passionate young heart, what I suffered, none guessed!—not even my beloved brother, my true comrade and Beethoven's friend. . . . And I was often very, very sorely tried.—One day my cousin, the charming Guilietta Guicciardi, dashes into my room and throws herself theatrically at my feet, exclaiming in a choking voice: 'Do advise me, you cold philosopher! I do so long to throw over my Gallenberg, and to marry that beautiful, horrible Beethoven, . . . if—if only it were not—such a come down!'"

Countess Theresa paused.

"A come down?" I said, indignantly. "Dearest lady, . . . what did you say to that?"

"What did I say to Guilietta?—Nothing. I was silent. For what I should have had to tell her about her vain, conceited love and about that great man, to whom she did not wish to 'come down,'—she would not have understood. So I quietly offered her a glass of water. . . . God saved Beethoven from

Guilietta. She became Countess Gallenberg, and disappeared from the stage of his great life."

Countess Theresa was silent for a while. Her thoughts were so completely lost in times long past that she seemed unconscious of my presence. I did not dare to disturb her. At last she took up the thread of her conversation again.

"I knew well what courage he needed to overcome the poverty which threatened to stem the flight of his genius. Therefore I also wanted to be courageous, wanted to keep pace with him mentally.—The whole of Europe at that time was shaken, and Austria trembled at the name of Napoleon Buonaparte. Beethoven was full of enthusiasm for him, and looked upon him as Germany's God-sent liberator from the rotten remains of the middle ages. His glorious 'Eroica,' partly composed at Martonvásár, was the expression of this feeling. How proud I was of it, and of its deeply-loved creator! Then came the year 1804. My brother brought us

the first news from Vienna of Napoleon's approaching imperial coronation. 'What said Beethoven to this?' I asked."

"Lichnowsky confided to me that he tore his music," said Franz—"threw it on the floor and stamped upon it, with the exclamation, 'So he, too, is an ambitious self-seeker and nothing more!'—My brother had not been present during this outburst of violence, but others said it was terrible!"

At these words Countess Theresa looked silently up at the picture of the beloved man, folding her hands in her lap as though asking his forgiveness. Later I heard her only too often reproach herself for not having been able to overcome the fear of his passionateness, and for having been in constant dread of an outbreak of his angry violence.

Then came a pause which seemed endless; when the door bell was rung.

"Don't be afraid! I told you this was to be your day. No visitors will be admitted."

"But if it should be Blanka?"

"Blanka knows that to-day even she will not be admitted. You have been to see her. What impression did she make upon you?"

"As though another soul had entered into her."

"Her transformation would be a good one, if she were not—so sad!"

"So sad?"

"She has devoted herself with splendid zeal to patriotic work, but she is in love with a young fellow who is quite unworthy of her—merely because of his fine appearance. She falsely attributes to him the noblest patriotism and all possible fine qualities, and would like to make him a patriot-hero of the revolution. How I wish that she were still possessed by the pride of former days! It would have saved her from this mistake. The revolution is already in train; fearful things will come to pass,—but this man will disappear in the sombre crowd of those who have joined merely in thoughtlessness, while my Blanka—my highly gifted, but deeply

erring Blanka—God only knows what she will undertake and—live through! . . . But, my child, we must go for our drive now, and we shall return to the subject in the evening. While I am dressing you can look through the albums and—take a peep into this drawer, in which you will find—the *jewels* of the Countess Theresa Brunswick."

She opened a small drawer, one of many, in the writing-table, and then followed the maid who stood waiting by the door which led to her bedroom. I lifted some tissue-paper in the drawer and came upon a small sheet of paper turned yellow with age, on which was fastened, with a faded pink thread, a little bunch of everlastings. The paper bore these words:

" L'Immortelle à son Immortelle

LUIGI."

(" The Everlasting to his Immortal One,

LUDWIG.")

In the drawer was a great collection of everlastings, some loose and some in bunches, such as Beethoven was wont to put in his letters. I dared not touch them, and was still standing buried in thought when the maid brought me my hat and cloak and called me off for the drive. The driver greeted her with particular respect and helped to wrap her feet in a rug.

The streets were full of commotion. Our talk, which had to be in French because of the driver, immediately turned upon the topic of the day, with which all minds were occupied. Kossuth, the Magyarised Sclav, already played the chief part in it. His watchword was, "The liberation of Hungary from the black and yellow Austrian tyranny." I understood very little about these things, but in Siebenbürgen I had so often been a witness of misdeeds partly ludicrous, partly terrible, perpetrated by the heroes of freedom, that, in spite of my Hungarian blood, I was only too much inclined to

turn away from it all. Neither were Countess Theresa's sympathies on that side. In after years I often had occasion to remember her conversation during this drive to the little wood near Pesth.

We met very few people, as it was not the fashionable hour for going out, and we could thoroughly enjoy the fresh green of the country in undisturbed quiet and intimate converse. But one rider came into the road as we were driving through the principal avenue in the park. I merely mention him because he was Count Ludwig Batthyanyi. A few days before Kossuth had made his inflammatory speech against the sending of troops to Italy—"Hungary must not send even *one* man to aid in suppressing the freedom of Italy!"—this was the closing sentence. The speech was stuck up at every street corner, and even on the trees of the public park.

"Do you agree with it, dear Count?" asked Countess Theresa.

"*Cum grano salis*, most gracious lady!" answered the gallant officer, who still had the distinguished bearing of his profession. "Kossuth's ready tongue is of great use to us at this moment. He understands the 'Asiaten'"—(by this term the Hungarian aristocracy at that time designated the gentry) "just as Esikos knows how to keep wild horses together. Let the nigger once have done his duty,—and we shall send him about his business." He greeted and went off at a trot. Countess Theresa gazed after him sorrowfully.

"You—him?" she said to herself. "So they have always been, and so they will remain, governed by the self-conceited notion that *they*—the magnates—constitute Hungary. This time the dawn will be fearful. Kossuth will compel *them* to go with him, and those who do not—will be sent about their business by *him*, to their own peril. . . . Oh, we shall live to see fearful things—horrible things—and my poor Blanka!—Driver! go home!—I'm shivering!"

Although Countess Theresa's sad foreboding really referred to her most dear niece Blanka, I could not help thinking of those words, "I'm shivering," when Count Batthyanyi was condemned to the gallows and the sentence was afterwards mitigated to powder and shot.

Her forebodings, alas! were only too well fulfilled! Blanka Teleki was deeply involved in the conspiracies of 1848 and 1849. She was in correspondence with Mazzini. She aided the revolution by forming a company of Honveds,[1] and made other great sacrifices. She was taken prisoner and tried; they would have been glad to show her all possible indulgence, but her behaviour defeated their intentions. Means of escape were afforded her at the trial. She refused them, and with unbending pride declared to the judges that 'she would act in the same way again on a similar occasion,' thereby rendering any mitigation of her

[1] Honveds was a term used by Kossuth at the time, signifying Fatherland defenders.

sentence impossible. She was condemned to death, but the Emperor commuted her sentence to lifelong imprisonment. After having spent nine years in the Kuffstein prison, she was released in 1858, and went to Pesth in the strictest disguise to see her Aunt Theresa once more. Thenceforward she lived in Dresden until her death in 1860. . . .

On our return from the drive the Countess was silent and buried in thought, and I feared very much that she would not return to the story of her great love and of her great sorrow.

But, when she had rested, we went to sit again in that cosy room which held her precious relics.

She understood my life, and knew of my painful experiences, and in unveiling to me the innermost shrine of her heart, it was her kind intention to give me comfort and strength. And it did her good to speak to one who was young—of her own young days.

"What a pity that you are not musical! that you cannot quite understand how it was

that Beethoven could put nothing into music which had not touched his inmost soul! Pain amounting to desperation, the sense of happiness even to ecstasy, a bold, proud spirit that would take heaven itself by storm, and with this the greatest humility, devout enthusiasm, and the profoundest adoration, the whole of his many-sided being was fully and truly expressed in his works, and made itself felt in his marvellous playing."

Oh, how I understood him! how I felt with him, how I followed the flight of his thoughts!

But it was long, only too long before Vienna, that most musical town, recognised and admired him even as the greatest pianist. The publishers gave miserable prices for his immortal compositions.—Nor was there any prospect in view of bettering his unhappy position, which weighed upon him most heavily, for he had a vivid consciousness of his high calling, and was imbued with a sense of his own worth. The aristocracy of Austria was at that

time perhaps the most musical in the world; and Lichnowsky, Rasoumowsky, my brother, and others were on terms of the most intimate friendship with Beethoven. But to procure for him what he needed was not in their power. The war, too, had reduced people's incomes; and a large part of the art-loving nobility and society in general still devoted themselves, as did the Imperial Court, to Italian music. Beethoven had as yet composed neither opera nor mass. I urged my brother to stir him up to it. Franz did so. Altogether he took pains to give Beethoven that inner support which he so much needed; for his unhappy circumstances were embittering his mind and saddening his spirit. One day he found him in one of those passionate moods which, alas! were only too frequent with him. He called the world a swamp of lies, and all men hypocrites. . . .

Franz tried to appease him: "My poor friend, would that you could always have some one

near you who would bring calmness to your spirit, and who would try to reconcile you with mankind when you are raging against them! Such a sister as God has given me, the embodiment of truth and faithfulness, and of unselfish love. In such a being one possesses an inexhaustible spring of faith and trust, and one learns to love and respect others, for one certainly has not the right to assume that she is the only one of her kind."

You will understand my brother's enthusiasm, for he idolised me. In letting himself run on thoughtlessly in this manner, Franz had naturally no idea of the effect his words had upon Beethoven, who was immediately all attention. He was henceforth always wanting to hear more about me, for hitherto during his visits at Martonvásár he had hardly observed me. Franz had to tell him a number of stories about our childhood. Two of these made a particular impression upon him.

One of them has been perpetuated by my

father, who painted a little picture for the family. The adventure was more tragic than cheerful, and happened on the large pond which we called the "Mediterranean Sea," in our park, the different parts of which were named according to the European countries on the borders of that sea. I was then only eleven years old, and, being very much afraid of water, declined to go for a row with Franz, who therefore embarked alone with my sister Caroline. I sat with my governess in a summer-house overlooking the pond. Suddenly she gave a cry, and rushed towards the gardener's lodge, which was close by, calling loudly for help. I looked up, and saw that the boat was capsized, and that my brother was clinging to it with one hand, while with the other he held Caroline, who was under water, by the frock. . . . What passed through my mind at that moment I don't know, but in an instant I flew down the hill and into the pond. . . .

As it turned out there was no worse result than a fright to us all, and in my own case a slight fever. To my father's question whether I was not afraid of the water, I am said to have answered: "Oh no! my protecting angel went with me!"

The other story is the one about the music lesson, when Beethoven rushed away in passionate wrath, and I flew after him with his hat and cloak which he had left behind. The servant fortunately caught me up at the front door—but you know the story! Beethoven had heard nothing of it till then. My brother was the first to commit this indiscretion, and probably many others; in fact he never knew when to stop when he talked of his sister Resi. From other people, too, Beethoven heard much about me. He who inquires learns. The country folk were fond of me; I was able to give more time to them than my sisters could, for they were carried along by the social stream. I did a little doctoring in Martonvásár, and also

busied myself with the children. Enough—when Beethoven came to us again he looked at me with very different eyes. And while formerly with his thoughts devoted to music he would choose the most lonely paths, this time he so contrived that he met me.

One evening we sat in the drawing-room. Beethoven at the piano. There were no guests except the clergyman, who dined and spent the evenings with us every Sunday. The moonlight shone into the room ; that was as it should be, for him. Franz, who had seated himself next to me, whispered, "Listen, he's going to extemporise!"

Did I not listen! His gloomy face cleared up; . . . he passed his hands just once over the whole key-board. . . . We knew what that meant. At least Franz and I knew that such discords with him usually led up to the most beautiful harmonies. Now followed some touches in the depths of the instrument, and now,—slow, mysterious, solemn, the following song:—

"Oh, wilt thou give thine heart,
Then let the token be,
That none shall bear a part
In thoughts I share with thee.

Let love that makes us blest
Reign deep in soul and will,
Let greatest joys and best
Be ever calm and still."

My mother and the clergyman had fallen asleep: my brother looked straight before him with a serious expression. Struck by the song and by his look, I was awakened to fullest life. . . . The next morning we met in the park.

"I am writing an opera!" said he. "I have the chief figure in my mind and before my eyes wherever I go. Never till now have I been on such heights! All is light!—All is pure and clear!—Till now I have been like the foolish boy in the story, who gathered stones and did not observe the lovely flower growing by the way."

* * * *

So we found each other. But he had to go away immediately. For many months it was only through his letters to my brother Franz that I learned anything about him and his life; that the opera was making progress, then that it was finished, and finally—oh, irony of fate, untold torment for Beethoven's great soul—that in the late autumn of 1805 it was performed in Vienna before an audience of French officers who represented chiefly cultured France. —The applause was moderate, the success, even among friends and connoisseurs(!), was but small. Beethoven was advised to cut out, to abbreviate. But he would listen to nothing of the sort, and wrote in despair to my brother: "I shall become a street-singer, a harper, an organ-grinder!"

But he soon recovered himself. His genius inspired him with the first mass. The "Missa Solemnis," which later became known as the masterpiece of his life, had been ordered by Prince Nicholas Esterhazy, who was a great admirer of Italian music, and who played the part of

a cold and superior patron towards Beethoven. He had the mass performed at his palace at Eisenstadt in 1807, and behaved in a very formal manner on the occasion, even addressing Beethoven with the words, "What have you been about?" Beethoven was so much hurt by this reception of his work that he wanted to refuse the price offered for it, and as a consequence he would have nothing more to do with the Prince.

All Beethoven's most intimate friends, and among them even his friends and patrons of princely rank, such as Lichnowsky, Kinsky, and Lobkowitz, from whom for years he derived a certain income, had occasionally to submit to having the door shut in their faces. They hardly could discover whether it was the queer old fellow's temper which made him play hide-and-seek with them, or whether he really was storming about in woods and fields. As a matter of fact often he would be sitting in his room with the door locked, "not caring a fig

for all their talk," as he would afterwards confess to them. More often, though, he had really stormed out into the open air. To be alone with Nature, to have her only for friend and confidant—this was what he wanted when his hot head was filled with desperate thoughts. Nature was at all times his consoler. Sometimes, when his friends sought him out where he had taken a summer lodging, he would again make off. So he often came to his intimate friend, Franz Brunswick, at Martonvásár.

And this happened in the spring of 1806. After the over-exertion and excitement of the year 1805—the "Fidelio" year—he wanted a few weeks' quiet at our house. *Then it was*, in May, 1806, that I became engaged to him with the knowledge and consent of my dear and only brother Franz.

The first condition was, the closest secrecy; the second, laid down by Franz, that the marriage should not take place until he had

secured a suitable and permanent appointment. Not till then was my invalid mother to be asked to give her permission. I hardly dared think of this step, for her deeply rooted aristocratic pride was the most susceptible part of her character, and the whole of society, which at that time meant only the high nobility, would have sided with her. But for the consideration which I had for my mother, I should have followed my beloved into any condition of life. For at first it was I who was impatient and restless. Beethoven, on the contrary, agreed to every arrangement and stipulation, and while striving indefatigably for a permanent position in life, he tried to fill me with calmness and hope. What these long delays meant to Beethoven's passionate soul became later on only too apparent! At first the thought that I was his bride, that I had never loved another, transported him to the seventh heaven. So he protested and assured me. He *hoped* and *worked* for us both, he was full of strength and courage, though his deafness was

increasing, and he was frequently obliged to take the baths to strengthen his over-excited nerves. I also felt the joy and blessing of his love. But the secret weighed on my mind like a sin against my mother, and like a derogation of my beloved one. I should have liked to say to every one: "And if I were obliged to go begging with him I should still be proud to be his wife!" . . . Later Beethoven's mood changed. It is not in a man's nature to wait. How would he, with his disposition, have been able to bear the delay patiently for any length of time? But soon, when I grew accustomed to it, and complained no more, trying in my turn to quiet him, he felt hurt and injured. . . . Storm and sunshine alternated in his letters, and in our hours of intercourse. Terrified by his passionateness, stirred in the depths of my heart by his love, I earnestly entreated that God would send me counsel and help. That his genius produced the most glorious works during the four years of our engagement, and that they were all

secretly dedicated to me, was a comfort to me only many, many years later. In the most terrible days of my life—the endlessly long and desolate days,—which followed the hour,—in which we parted for ever,—I was inconsolable.

As to the intimate circumstances and the actual cause of the catastrophe Countess Theresa kept unbroken silence. But it is only too probable that it was brought about by Beethoven's sudden and vehement demand that the long engagement should come to a close. With this aim in view he had quietly arranged (1810) for the transmission of all the necessary papers from Bonn.

From what the Countess told me I inferred that for some time after the breaking off of the engagement her brother kept himself out of Beethoven's way, owing, apparently, to some personal offence. At last, however, a complete reconciliation took place between them, which may have been partly brought about by the winning influence which Beethoven's character

and musical power exerted over all his friends. It was this influence which so frequently brought Prince Lichnowsky back to him in spite of his having been so often offended.

It was Countess Theresa's earnest wish that a reconciliation between Beethoven and her brother should take place, and that their friendship should continue on the former intimate terms; she could now once more get accurate information about all Beethoven's doings, and remain in unbroken intellectual contact with him.

In the conversation which I record here these circumstances were not touched upon.

"How strange it is," said Countess Theresa wearily, after a long pause, "that it fatigues me so much to *talk* of that which is constantly in my thoughts! I suppose it is that I am so unaccustomed to clothe those thoughts in words. You know that since the death of my brother that part of my life has lain in the quiet grave of my heart; . . . of this old heart, which *for its sake* has kept an eternal youth!"

She was silent now for some time; then, holding out her hands to me, she said—

"Dear child,—at my age one's physical nature is a tyrannical master. I shall have to give way to it presently and get a little sleep. . . . This one thing, however, I must tell you in conclusion—the word that parted us was not spoken by me, but—by him! . . . I was terribly frightened, became deadly pale, and trembled all over. . . ."

The last words were scarcely intelligible—Countess Theresa became suddenly unconscious, and sank back upon the cushions of the sofa in a deep sleep. Much alarmed, I crept out of the room to call the maid.

"Her ladyship must have been talking too much. To-morrow she shall stay quietly in bed, and then she will be well again."

When on the following day I went to inquire how she was I met the doctor, whom I knew very well.

"The old heart trouble will keep reminding

us of its presence. I must order absolute rest. The Countess belongs to my most obedient patients, and you, I know, will not disobey my orders."

This lasted a week. Every day I inquired after her. But my time in Pesth was over. The state of affairs, too, was becoming more and more threatening. I was obliged to return to Vienna without seeing the Countess again. But the kind doctor himself brought me a sealed note from her. "My dear child," she wrote, "you of course understand that you are to keep to yourself what you have seen and heard. A shrug of the shoulders and a pitying smile is all that society gives to such things. If God allows me to live a few years longer more light will come to me. I know already that the chief blame is mine. The *true heroic courage* which overcomes all was wanting in me. Leonora puts me to shame!—*Destroy all Blanka's letters*;[1] *also mine*, if you possess any, and *this*

[1] A precautionary measure of which the necessity very soon appeared.

one—immediately. The evil days are drawing near. You can always have news of me from my niece M.[1] in Vienna. May God be with you and protect you, my dear child!"

Yes, the evil days were drawing near. For the purpose of our story we need hardly allude to them. In the year 1851, when the disturbance in Hungary was quite over, I visited some relations and a friend in Pesth. Placards were still up at all the chief places giving the names of those condemned to death. At the first glance I saw the names "Andrassy, Batthyanyi, Teleki." I did not meet Countess Theresa in Pesth. *She was staying at the same health resort where Beethoven had gone to strengthen his nerves in the year* 1806, *shortly after his engagement with her.* Füred, on the Plattensee. It was from there that the letter of the 6th of July, which was found among his possessions, was written

[1] The orphan daughter of Countess Theresa's sister, who had married in Russia. This niece now lived in Vienna with a friend.

to her. I wrote to her there. Her answer, which was very short, contained these words: "I have seen the room in which *he* stayed at that time—you know whom I mean! When I go to Vienna I will tell you about it."

But a long time passed before I saw her again. She did not come to Vienna till May, 1857. Again she gave me a whole day, and for two hours I was able to talk with her alone.

First she spoke of the revolution, to which she was decidedly opposed, then of her poor Blanka, whose pardon she still hoped for. At last she came to her favourite topic—music. She spoke of cultivated and uncultivated, musical and unmusical, voices; and of how a pleasant voice wins the heart. It was on this occasion that I told her the story of a young musical prodigy, which Countess Bánffy Dénes had told her friends. She had taken the son of a Saxon clergyman, C. Filtsch, of Siebenburgen, in order to have him educated by Franz Liszt

in Paris. One day a dog barked during the music lesson. "In what key is the dog barking, Karl?" asked Liszt. And the boy, stopping his ears, answered, "G major, but out of tune!" People had doubted the story,—and thought it curious. I did not know what to make of it. Countess Theresa then made further observations on the qualities of voices. She spoke long and beautifully about the sounds throughout nature. . . . A great musical talent she held to be the highest gift of God, which only a few chosen ones, who heard these sounds everywhere and constantly, possessed. "The great musician," she said, "knows these sounds by heart, just as one of you knows a poem. How else would it have been possible for Beethoven, when he was become quite deaf, to present with such marvellous fidelity the whispering of leaves, the murmuring of the wind, the sweetest songs of birds, and finally the rushing of the storm in water and in air?"

So Countess Theresa came back again to the

beloved master. I started when she began to talk about him. She noticed it and smiled.

"Don't be afraid! It will not hurt me now. In these last years I have had to sympathise with so many others in their sorrows, and to feel so deeply for my country, which has brought such sorrow upon itself that I have not had time to dwell overmuch on my own life, and I have become more tranquil about it. . . . My jewels—you know the everlastings from *him*, which I did not return with his letters—I have sewn into a little white silk cushion. The little cushion will be placed under my head when they lay me in my coffin. What is in it no one will guess. . . . I look upon it as a wise dispensation of God in Beethoven's life that we parted from one another. For what would have become of his genius—and what of my love, if I had had cause to—fear him? As it is, we remained the highest for each other—each dwelling in the heart of the other—for ever. We did not meet again, but my brother saw

him just before his death, which he seemed to anticipate.

"'Will you—take your sister a kind greeting for me?' he asked, and then added, pressing his friend's hands and with tears in his eyes, 'she was too good for me!' . . .

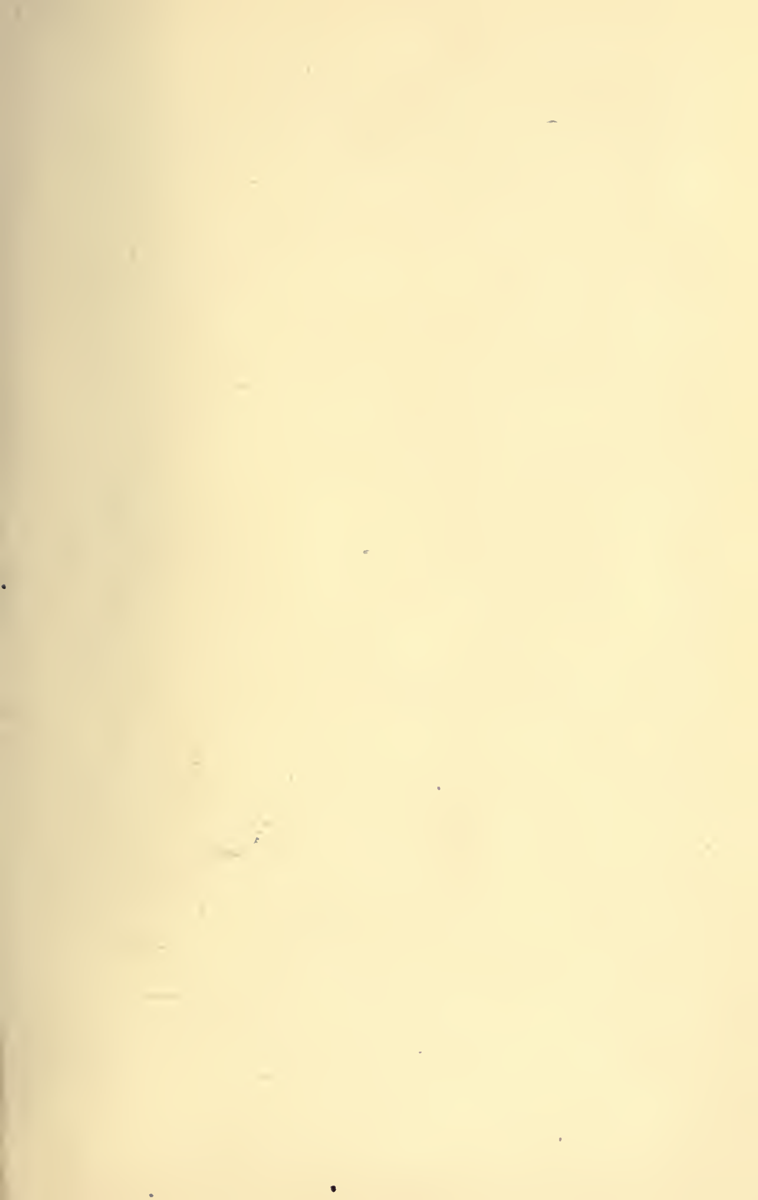
"A picture was found among his belongings —no one knows that it is of me—and that *first* letter, which he wrote to me in July, 1806, after our engagement. So he had saved *that one.* And I—had copied it before returning it to him with all the other letters. I have read it so often that I know it by heart,—like a poem—and was it not a beautiful poem? . . . Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven are like Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, benefactors of mankind. Whoever hears Beethoven's Mass in D. (Solemnis) unconsciously folds his hands and feels himself uplifted to the sublimest heights. I can only humbly say to myself—*that* man loved thee! And thank God for it. . . . Amen, child! we will not speak of it any more. I am nearly

eighty; those I loved most have gone home before me. Daily I count the treasures which await me there."

. . . . . .

Countess Theresa died in the year 1861. In the place where she loved most to live, and where she had been most deeply beloved, there, in a cool vault, she was buried.

Upon her coffin has not an invisible hand laid a wreath of everlastings?



BUST OF COUNTESS THERESA BRUNSWICK IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AT BUDA-PESTH, EXECUTED A FEW YEARS BEFORE HER DEATH, BY ARADI.

THE PICTURE OF COUNTESS THERESA.

(A SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTER.)

If I remember rightly it was at my last meeting with Countess Theresa in Vienna, in 1857, that I entreated her to give me her portrait. Of course I was modest enough only to mean a photograph. Her answer was gentle, but quite decided. "No more portraits of me!" Thereupon I was silent. But when we resumed the conversation, the subject of the picture taken of her in her youth, which with her own hands she had dedicated and given to Beethoven after her engagement to him, naturally came to the fore.

Countess Theresa well knew that this picture had been found among the scanty relics of the great master; but what had since become of it she did not know. I myself have only lately been able to get fuller information about it. A propitious fate had ruled over it. It came into the possession of a family in which musical talent was hereditary and the worship of Beethoven traditional. And how this came about is noteworthy, so that I shall return to it presently.

Beethoven kept the picture of his betrothed, which remained to him after the return of the letters, carefully hidden. As even after the breaking off of the engagement those concerned in it observed the strictest silence regarding it, they succeeded in keeping the secret. And this explains how it was that the picture was found in Beethoven's room after his death, together with that first letter of the 6th of July, 1806, to his betrothed, the "Immortal Beloved." Baron Spaun told me of this; he had once surprised

Beethoven with the picture in his hand, talking to himself, and had discreetly withdrawn without having been noticed. Later he recognised the picture among Beethoven's possessions.

Until the year 1864 the picture was kept by the widow of Beethoven's nephew, and hung on the wall among the few other pictures which had belonged to the great composer. It raised no special interest, as it was not known whom it represented; but Alexander W. Thayer, Beethoven's biographer, who saw it there repeatedly, found in it a corroboration of his conjectures.

Shortly after the first appearance of this little book, "Beethoven's Unsterbiche Geliebte," in which it was shown decisively that this picture was the portrait of the Countess Theresa Brunswick, more was made known regarding it. For there appeared in the newspapers an announcement by Joseph Hellmesberger, sen., musical conductor at the imperial court in Vienna, saying that *he* was in possession of the picture,

and that he intended to have it photographed, in order to make it accessible to Beethoven's admirers.

A few weeks after this I was able, at his house, to see the picture of my motherly friend, and he very kindly gave me all the information he could about it, and also about his relations to the Beethoven family.

Hellmesberger's father was a distinguished musician and a contemporary of Beethoven, and reverence for the great master descended from him to son and grandson. Joseph Hellmesberger, jun., the grandson, is now conductor of the Imperial Opera. The son, as a boy of fourteen, was an excellent violinist. One day Mayseder, who was at that time one of the most celebrated musicians in Vienna, came to his father and said: "Do lend me your little Joseph. There's a Count Brunswick with his sister Theresa here, who are very musical, and they want to play Beethoven trios." Mayseder's request was granted, and in this way Joseph

Hellmesberger, sen., learnt to know the brother and sister, who had come for a short time to Vienna and were staying in the Himmelpfortgasse. The boy was very much praised for his playing, and had occasion to admire the fine piano-playing of Countess Theresa, to whom he looked up with great reverence as being a pupil of Beethoven. It was the B major trio in which the young musician took part, Count Franz Brunswick playing the 'cello, on which he was a distinguished performer.

Joseph Hellmesberger, sen., did not meet Countess Theresa Brunswick again. He devoted himself specially to the study of Beethoven, and he was the first, when only seventeen years old, to bring before the Viennese public the later string quartettes and quintettes, which till then had been neglected as too obscure. Later, Joseph Hellmesberger made the acquaintance of Beethoven's relatives, and became intimate with Louis van Beethoven, a son of his nephew Carl. A daughter of this nephew showed a special gift

for music, and Hellmesberger therefore brought her to the Conservatorium, and took charge of her musical education generally. His expectations, however, have not been fulfilled.

About the year 1863 the fear arose in the musical circles of Vienna lest Beethoven's remains might meet with the same fate as Mozart's. For they had been, like the remains of Franz Schubert, for more than thirty years in plain wooden coffins in the little Währinger churchyard. Hellmesberger therefore started the idea that they should be re-interred in metal coffins. And the idea was taken up. But the project seemed likely to be defeated by the expense, which would have exceeded 2,000 gulden. Hellmesberger, however, did not let the matter rest, and at last, through two concerts of Beethoven's and Schubert's compositions, he collected the considerable sum that was needed. The re-interment of the two great masters was solemnly celebrated in Vienna at the public cemetery in 1863; and

the Beethoven family, out of gratitude, presented Hellmesberger with the picture, which they had inherited from Ludwig van Beethoven, and to which the illustrious master had manifestly attached great value.

Since the painting of this picture of Countess Theresa Brunswick—which I now saw before me in its old faded gilt wooden frame—more than eighty years have passed. At the back of the frame one can still distinctly make out the words: "*To the rare genius, to the great artist, to the good man, from T. B.*" The picture was painted by Lampi, who, with Heinrich Ehrlick (Henri), was one of the most prominent and favourite portrait painters in Vienna at the beginning of the century. It is a portrait of the head and shoulders only. A yellowish scarf is wound round the light-brown wavy hair; a reddish drapery covers the neck and shoulders. Her noble features are highly spiritual, the dark eyes have a gentle, earnest look. The eyes alone recalled to my mind

the face of my motherly friend, for I had only learnt to know her when she was nearly fifty. When she was painted, Countess Theresa was about twenty-eight years old. She looks younger in the picture, but it is probably true to life, for, like her niece, Blanka Teleki, even in later years, she looked remarkably young.

The picture, which is now in the Beethoven House at Bonn, is interesting as a memorial of one of the most deeply-stirring events in the great master's life—perhaps of that which had the greatest influence on his genius.

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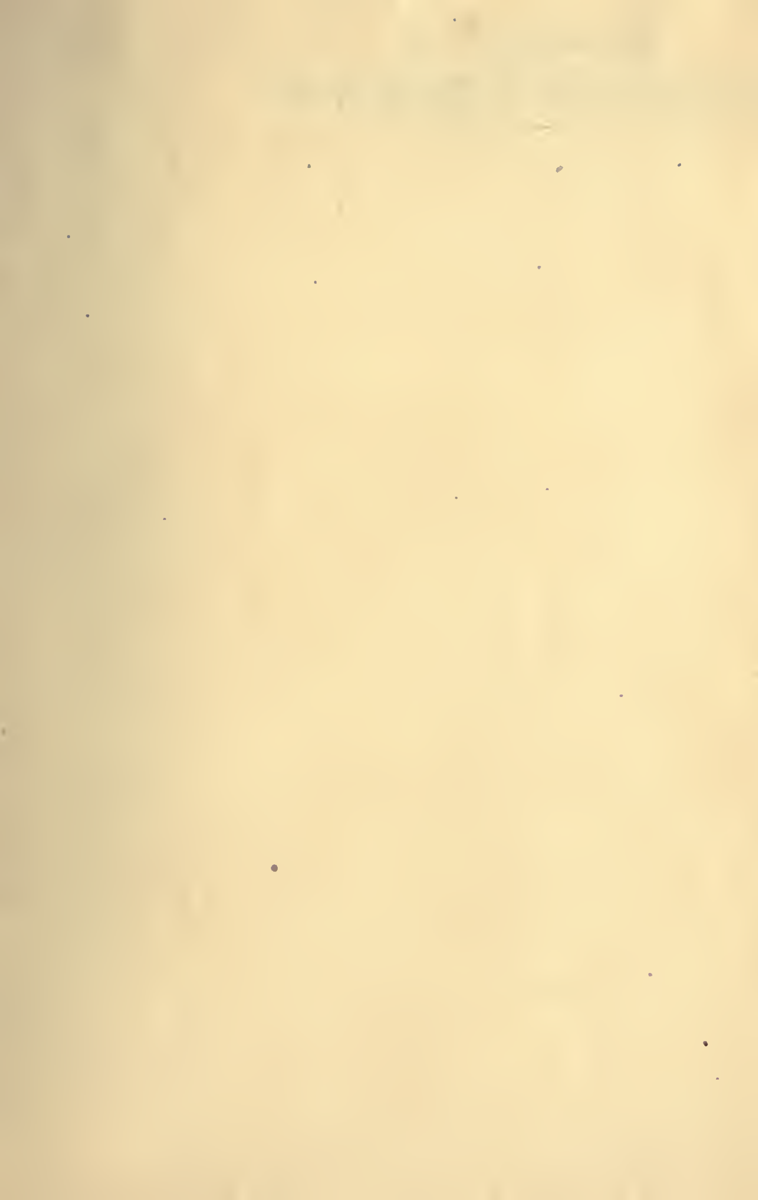

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