

Mary Temple Tweedy to Henry James, 7, 10 October 1873, from Vienna

ALS Houghton, bMS Am 1094 (467)

1 Vienna Oct. 7th 1873

2

3 Dear Harry

4 We arrived here on Saturday night (the 4th) by steamer down the Danube from
5 Linz—

6 I was hungering for news, not having had a line from anybody for a month, but we could
7 not get our letters until Monday morning, when your's, with a budget of 12 more was
8 brought me. You can imagine how I enjoyed them, & passed the whole morning over
9 them, instead of going out to see the wonders of Vienna.—We took a hasty survey of a
10 small portion of this wonderful Exposition on Sunday afternoon—& again yesterday—
11 but we have not begun to see it yet.—It far exceeds my expectations, in every way—&
12 though we must go through much fatigue, to see it all even superficially—it is so
13 interesting that one returns to it day after day, with renewed pleasure—

14 You will wonder what we have been doing these three weeks past so I will begin at the
15 beginning—

16 The fifth day we reached Nürnberg just as the Prussian Crown Prince was leaving, & had
17 the benefit of the illumination for him, & the bad odour which remained after his
18 departure—of Bengal lights—We remained two days—warm & fine weather—Thence to
19 Munich—the prosaic, & uninteresting—for two days more. From there to Innsbruck—
20 where we passed two days—which were cold & showery—Since then we have had but
21 one rainy day.—We went over the Brenner to Botzen, & passed two days, there & at

22 Meran—where we found warm weather, & a little taste of Italy—The grapes & figs were
23 in perfection, & it being the height of the grape “cure” season, we found crowds of
24 people walking about the promenade with baskets on their arms containing grapes, which
25 they munched as they took their exercise. I was told that they begin with one pound
26 daily, & go up to six or eight. It is a charmingly picturesque place, & would suit you at
27 this season—it is so warm & bright. We retraced our steps to Innsbruck, & went thence
28 to Salzburg—

29 I longed to leave the railroad & go to Cortina, to see the “Dolomites” nearer, but Edmund
30 thought it too late in the season.—We had a fine view from one window at the Botzen of
31 the “Rosengarten” & “Schlein”, & they are certainly grand, & at sunset a lovely rose
32 color—I found Miss Edward’s book very interesting, & it gave me a great desire to go
33 over the ground that she describes—But Salzburg & the scenery there & in that region
34 delighted me more than any thing I have seen—The weather was perfect like our finest
35 October weather—We went to the KönigSee, & the salt mines at Berctesgaden—the
36 drive there [^]was[_^] through the most beautiful vallies—the grass & foliage still as green
37 as in June. I should like to pass a summer in exploring that region.—

38 Berctesgaden is the most beautiful village I ever saw—You may remember that in the
39 novel of “The Initials”—the hero goes there with A. Z. for chamois hunting.—The
40 authoress (by the way) has a chateau near Salzburg, the guide book tells us. Our visit to
41 the salt mine, was chiefly remarkable for the costume in which I was dressed for the
42 purpose—& the way of coming out of the mine. I was shown into a room, where an
43 attendant removed my skirts, & put on a pair of white cotton drawers, extremely short,
44 fastened round the waist—& a short black jacket also fastened round the waist. A man’s
45 cloth cap completed the costume—& we were both furnished with lanterns, & preceded

46 by a guide. We walked into an arched door, & followed a well paved narrow passage on,
47 & on, sometimes going up & down steps—until we came to a steep inclined place, where
48 I was placed astride a wooden slide, with the guide in front of me, & we shot down
49 rapidly a short descent—Edmund going first.—At last we came to the Salt Lake a row of
50 lamps around it, making “darkness visible”—& were rowed across it in a boat—After
51 another short walk we looked down upon a “lower deep”, & saw lamps glimmering at the
52 bottom, & could see indistinctly figures, like gnomes, working below—getting out the
53 salt from the earth. From there to the “Cabinet,” a sort of grotto made of fine specimens
54 of the salt, lighted up by lamps.—Then we retraced our steps, & at last were placed
55 astride of a chair on wheels, & running on a railway, & rushing with frightful rapidity
56 down the steep descent, we made our exit where we entered—a crowd of men standing
57 there to witness.—They did not seem at all astonished or amused, for it is no unusual
58 sight to them—but I felt rather foolish, at being shown in such an undignified attitude &
59 costume,—as you may imagine. The whole thing took about three quarters of an hour.—
60 We remained at Salzburg three days, (never to be forgotten) & then leaving the railroad
61 route drove over mountains & vallies, past pretty lakes to Ischl—a day’s journey—where
62 we stopped two days—a pretty valley, but too closely shut in by mountains.—It is (as
63 you know probably) the resort of the Viennese—but the season was nearly over,—though
64 the band still played daily on the promenade. From Ischl we drove to the Traunsee which
65 we crossed in a steamer, & stopped for a day at Gmunden—also a fashionable, resort—&
66 the ~~abodes~~ [^]villas[^] of numerous royal personages, are scattered along the banks—The
67 Duke de Chambord, the kings of Hanover & of Wurtemberg, the Princess Elizabeth & the
68 Grand Duchess of Tuscany &c—It is a beautiful lake resembling those of Italy, & the
69 most charming spot I have seen since Como.—From there we came by rail to Linz & so

70 down the Danube by steamer a voyage of ten hours.—There are some fine points on the
71 river, but long stretches of tame scenery, between. We have had fine weather all the time
72 & still have it & Edmund has enjoyed it immensely—He even enjoys Vienna ^& the
73 Exposition[^] though not so much as the Tyrol—Oct 10th We are working hard at sight-
74 seeing & will probably stay here another week—We spend most of the days, however at
75 the Exposition, which grows, the more we see it in interest.—I was glad to hear that Will
76 James is coming out—& also that Annie Crawford's engagement is announced—We hear
77 from Mr John Field that he is coming out—with his wife, & Ham. Wild & going up the
78 Nile.—They are probably in London now.

79 He does not ask us to join them, or I think we should be tempted to do so.—We have met
80 no one that we know since we left Homburg except M^{rs} Sands & family at Munich, &
81 hardly an American—or an Englishman.—The weather is warm thermometer going over
82 70° every day—We have passed one evening at the Volksgarten—where three bands
83 discoursed most delicious music—one after another, leaving no interval,—among them
84 the famous Strauss band, He is the most remarkable conductor I ever saw—in constant
85 motion, like a galvanized cricket, turning round upon his heels first to the band & then to
86 the audience, & now & then seizing his violin, & drawing such pathetic tones from it!—It
87 is amusing to watch him—He seems the especial favorite of the Viennese—We have
88 been to-day to Schönbrun, which is in the French style of the last century, & not
89 particularly interesting—Edmund does not hear that the financial crisis affects him
90 particularly—though it may, somewhat, indirectly.—The Temples were in Paris at last
91 accounts—I had a letter from your Aunt K—from Kittery Point, which she was enjoying
92 in solitude. I had a letter from Henrietta Temple from California—telling me that Elly,
93 has—another daughter.—Kitty Emmet writes from the Long Island seashore, where she

94 was enjoying the cool breezes.—I hope I shall see Will, when he is on the side—I wish
95 you would write, soon, & address me at Dresden.
96 Hoping to hear good accounts from you. With love from Edmund I am yr's affec^{ly}, Mary
97 Tweedy. Our address is H. W. Bassenge & Cie. Dresden. Vienna is a fine town, & our
98 impressions of it most agreeable.

Notes

16 Nürnberg • Nürnberg or Nuremberg

16 the Prussian Crown Prince • the future Frederick III (1831-1888)

21-22 Botzen [...] Meran • Bolzano and Merano, then both under Austrian dominion

35 Berctesgaden • Berchtesgaden

- 39 “The Initials” • *The Initials: A Story of Modern Life* (London: Bentley, 185), by Jemima Montgomery, Baroness Tautphoeus (1807-1893); her husband was Chamberlain to the King of Bavaria
- 67 Duke de Chambord • Henri de Bourbon, duc de Bordeaux and comte de Chambord (1820-1883), Legitimist pretender and last Bourbon dynasty heir to the French throne
- 76 Annie Crawford's engagement • Annie Crawford, daughter of Louisa Ward and Thomas Crawford and stepdaughter of artist Luther Terry, had become engaged to Baron von Rabe, a Prussian military officer, and was to marry him in January (see Henry James to Mary Walsh James, 22 September [1873])
- 88 Schönbrunn • Schönbrunn Palace, the Hapsburgs' summer residence
- 90 The Temples • Captain (later Admiral) and Mrs. William Grenville Temple; Captain Temple was Mary Temple Tweedy's half brother
- 91 Aunt K • Aunt Kate, Catharine Walsh
- 92-93 Elly, has—another daughter • Christopher Temple Emmet and Elly Temple Emmet's second daughter, Rosina Hubley Emmet, was born 29 August 1873
- 97 H. W. Bassenge & Cie. • H. W. Bassenge and Company, Neumarkt, 6

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