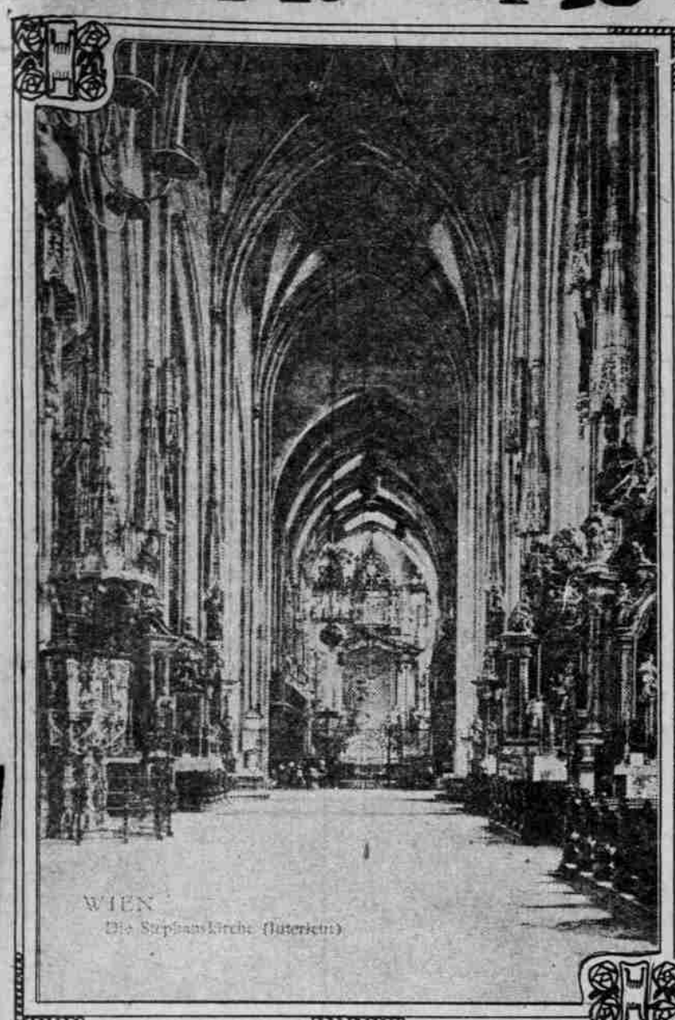
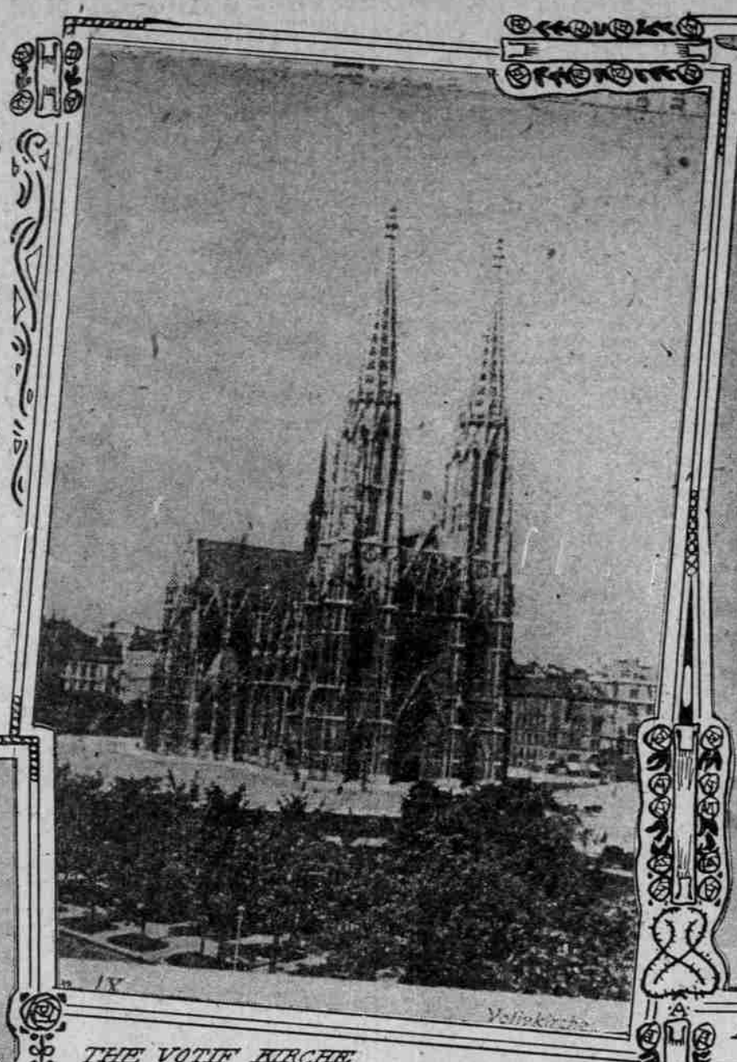
GREAT EASTER FESTIVAL IN VIENNA

Mrs. Alma A. Rogers Tells of Joyous Gatherings Unknown on American Soil

Praise for Francis Richter From a Former Companion of the Great Liszt



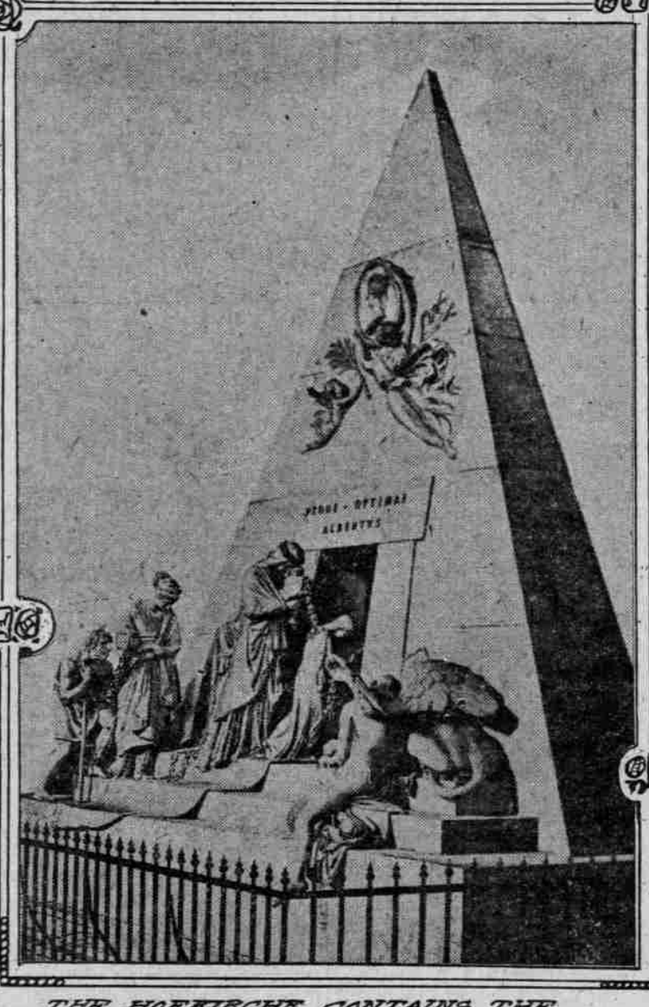
AN INTERIOR VIEW OF ST. STEPHAN'S. IT IS CROWDED WITH IMAGES AND ALTARS



THE VOTIF KIRCHE

PROFESSOR FERDINAND DOMEIER, WHO SAYS FRANCIS RICHTER PLAYS LIKE LISZT.

THE MOST HISTORIC BUILDING IN WIEN IS THE STEPHAN'S KIRCHE, DATING BACK TO THE 12th CENTURY



THE HOFKIRCHE CONTAINS THE SPLENDID MARBLE SCULPTURE BY CANOVA

KARL'S KIRCHE, ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING OF VIENNESE CHURCHES

BY ALMA A. ROGERS.

EASTER in Vienna is celebrated with all the pomp and circumstance that mark a religious festival in this most Catholic country. For a week or more previous to Easter Sunday there are various holy days, and on Saturday the religious service in the churches climaxes with a procession of gorgeously arrayed priests carrying the many silken banners of their respective institutions.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon of this day I stood in the courtyard of the Hof Capella, waiting with another American woman for our chance of admission into the royal chapel. We had been permitted by the Imperial Life Guards—these magnificent beings six feet tall with the high helmets crowned with horse hair crests—to pass from the great outer court, where Maria Theresa's apartments front, into the smaller court.

Here we found several hundred people waiting, who like ourselves had been separated from the great crowd outside and allowed to pass the barrier. Just what principle of elimination the officials followed we could not make out, for there were all kinds and conditions of women and men in the waiting company. Once when they pushed too far forward a much begilt officer rushed in and told us we must keep back out of sight, for he could not let the mob in! Perhaps we all looked harmless and non-anarchistic. I am sure the old peasant woman devoutly telling the beads next me did.

Shortly after this order another officer came forward and permitted the company to pass two by two up the steps and into the vestibule of the Chapel, where was a line of officers. Here another halt was made, perhaps to stop a growing tendency to rush. One woman who tried it got a severe reprimand from the head officer, though he did not send her back to the rear of the line where she started. We observed the same woman later still pushing into the front ranks with a wild look in her eye as if she would not lose the view even of one priestly shaven crown, though being a Viennese, she had doubtless witnessed the ceremony many times.

At last we were allowed to make a slow and dignified entrance beyond the portals, and were fortunate enough to get seats next the aisle. The royal chapel is very small, with seating capacity for certainly not over two hundred, though many more than this number were allowed to enter and stand. The walls are hung in scarlet silk tapestries, decorated with gold. The altar is quite simple in flowers and candles. In fact there is much less in this chapel of the tawdry effect which the excessive gilding and many images, of ten times positively grotesque, in the other churches, create on a mind not accustomed to Catholic forms.

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Promptly at 4 o'clock the music began, the pipe organ being supplemented by an orchestra and boy choir. It was of the nature of a mass, with responses by the priests, and much incense, the sun showering find gold over all through the purple stained windows. The procession was the chief feature of the service, and the Cardinal the chief feature of the procession. He was preceded by a body of priests, those invested in gorgeous robes and each with a shaven crown, while the neophytes were black gowns and were without the mark.

The Cardinal walked last under a glittering canopy supported at the four corners by priests. His robe was so resplendent in gold embroideries that he seemed literally clothed in gold, and in his hand he bore the golden host. He was a very old man with snow white hair and a face like fine parchment. In addition to being a cardinal he came as the papal nuncio, the special representative of the Pope. For the Emperor Franz Joseph is not only Imperator Austriae, but apostolic emperor as well, and his realm is recognized as the chief stronghold of the Catholic faith next to Rome. When the priests were expelled from France they came in great numbers here. One of the odd sights at first was the spectacle of barefooted friars on the street, some wearing the brown robe of the Franciscans which recalled memories of the good St. Francis of Assisi and the long fight he had with the Pope for the privilege of assuming the vow of poverty.

When we left the royal chapel we passed through some more courts and came out by the Hof Kirche, which is a very large church, though not especially beautiful, except by the sculpture of Canova. Here a great concourse was assembled, going through the same ceremonies. Across the platz we entered another church, only to meet a similar crush, with thousands assembling in the street for a view of the procession. We waited with the crowd and found it was quite the same as that we had seen at the royal chapel, except not on so gorgeous a scale, and with a priest under the canopy instead of the papal nuncio.

With difficulty, for the streets were so packed as to be almost impassable, we made our way to St. Stephan's in the heart of the city. This is the church of all churches most dear to the heart of the Viennese. Its tower is a landmark, and the building is historic, dating back to the 12th century. When the Turks made the second siege against Vienna in the 18th century some of their cannonballs lodged in the steeple. I have seen them, after a tortuous climb up the dark, worn, stone stairways that lead to the top of the tower.

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There is a story that when Vienna fell into the hands of Napoleon he rode his warhorse up St. Stephan's tower. To find out the truth of this all you need do is to climb the stairs yourself. I think nine people out of ten would then be ready to declare it a myth. But if he really did get up his horse must have had wings like the archangles, and come down in a parachute. Or maybe Napoleon uttered the magic word and he became a small gray mouse. In the course of two or three hundred years it won't matter which of these versions is preferred.

Before St. Stephan's another procession was getting ready, with purple and gold banners, but the throng was so great that either access to the church or a view of the procession was impossible, and we were so tired that we hailed the first omnibus homeward. When we got in sight of the Votif Kirche, loveliest to me of all the churches of Wien because of its perfect gothic lines, behold another concourse, a veritable multitude, and the streaming silken banners of another procession. By this time it was 6 o'clock, and we concluded that the hours of service must have been set later in each church to make a continuous festival.

The Votif Kirche is quite simple inside, which is a relief, and the color scheme is modern and tasteful. It owes its erection to a very interesting incident. Shortly after the present Emperor ascended the throne an attempt to assassinate him was made on this spot. The dagger of the assassin was warded off by a butcher. In commemoration of his preservation the Emperor erected the Votif Kirche.

On Sunday we went to the Karl's Kirche to hear a Beethoven mass. Everything we had heard heretofore was either from Haydn or Mozart, and their works are so much alike that I for one can rarely tell them apart. But when the first big, solemn chorus of Beethoven rolled out the veriest neophyte would have known it was something different. The books say that Haydn and Beethoven differed in theory. Evidently! The more one hears of Beethoven the bigger he gets and the more the others dwarf by comparison. One clever young person of my acquaintance, whose wit not infrequently supplies items for these letters, declares that Mozart and Haydn are hooch and Beethoven, only, the real coffee. Hooch, it must be explained, is the name of a breakfast beverage composed of three-fourths hot water with a spoonful of milk and enough coffee to color.

The only interesting thing about the Karl's Kirche is its two sculptured towers, which date back to the medieval period, and have carved upon them in winding lines wars and kingly processions and what not. Inside it is very commonplace, with imitation marble pillars. It seems to be the favorite haunt of beggars. I have spoken before of the old woman with the great nose who always sat here during the Winter. She was not there on Easter Sunday—let us hope she has been translated—but no less than four others, men among them, were hanging around the steps and doorways.

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It would seem as if all Vienna had been taking part in the Easter Fest, but there was still one more holy day, the Monday after Easter Sunday. Next day people got into working clothes again and there will be nothing particular to deflect the wheels of industry until the Corpus Domini Festival in June. One spectacular feature of the Easter was lacking this year. It has been the custom of the Emperor to take part in the ceremonies in the Hof by washing the feet of the 12 oldest men in the city.

The festival which commemorates the resurrection of Christ reminds me by violent antithesis of the means used at one period of the world's history to make converts to his doctrines, or what what were pronounced by the church to be such. In a basement down in the Kohlmarkt, which is in the heart of Vienna, can be seen the various instruments of torture employed under the Inquisition to accomplish the work of grace in the salvation of sinners—a sinner being one who tried ever so little to think for himself. I saw these gruesome things more than two weeks ago and have not been able to get the taste out of my mouth.

For they are not models, remember, but the real machines, cumbrous and rusty and blood-stained, on which agonized human beings shrieked for mercy from their pitiless murderers. Figures representing persons in the tortures are placed in most of the machines. On the rack, that demoniac invention for stretching the sinews and joints asunder, one of these figures lies palpitating in apparently the last agony, while a cowled priest bends over him with book and pencil to catch the last faint words of the recantation. It is horribly realistic. A woman who wears a metal crown that is slowly crushing the skull is likewise a hideous and true representative of the age when Satan was let loose upon the earth. It is almost enough to make one believe a real devil, with horns and claws, to see such things. It causes a blush of shame to be forced to remember that we belong to the same humanity.

Well! Let us be thankful that's God's self-appointed representatives no longer convert by fire and rack, no longer force the feet of tender womanhood upon iron spikes or thrust the cruel knives of the virgin into the quivering flesh. This last device is one of the most hideous, consisting of a machine in the form of a woman lined with long knives and with a door which opens to admit the victim.

There are many other tortures, all of which brought back to mind with painful vividness the price that has been paid for liberty of conscience since the world began. And the whole thing is just because somebody had a different idea of God from that held by somebody else. Nor has the age of religious intolerance by any means passed from the world, though its expression is modified to consort with a higher civilization. Scratch the skin even in the freedom of my own blessed land and you'll find it, in less drastic form, but still recognizable as a sprout from the old root. So long as there exist people who believe that they hold all the truth in the compass of their own beliefs, so long will religious intolerance disfigure human life.

Let me hasten to a more pleasant topic—Francis Richter's last recitation, for instance. There were about 35 guests present in orr rooms, some of them distinguished and all musical. The programme consisted of these num-

Moonlight Sonata ..... Beethoven
"At the Brook" ..... Theodore Lakh
"Music Box" ..... Liadoff
Polonaise in A-flat ..... Chopin
Improvisation in the hymn "America," ..... Francis Richter, by request
Concero in E-flat ..... Liszt

In addition to Mr. Richter's playing, which was masterly, and which perhaps more than any other occasion showed the great advance he has made in the past year, were two songs by his friend Marcel de Bouzon: The Wanderer, Schubert; and Asra, Rubinstein.

M. de Bouzon is a pupil of Frau Giampietro, working for grand opera. He has a big baratone voice of fine quality and a remarkably vivid and dramatic temperament that will go far in itself toward success on the stage. When he began his study with Frau Giampietro his voice was overstrained from much singing by a bad method, but in the space of a few months she restored the throat muscles and brought out most beautiful low and middle tones with a constant gain in the high ones.

One of the distinguished guests at Francis Richter's recitals is Herr Professer Ferdinand Domeier, who not only knew Liszt in his youth, but says Mr. Richter plays like him. This is certainly high praise, coming from a source so competent as Professor Domeier, who is himself both a pianist and composer and has been decorated by several of the crowned heads of Europe. But what is of more consequence, in my opinion, is that he also played for Liszt and seems to bear about him some of the traditions of that master.

Professor Domeier is a German by birth, from Hanover, and has traveled extensively in the Orient, where he was entertained in the houses of the pashas and played before the Sultan. He also played before the King of Servia and the courts of Luxembourg and Hohenzollern. His decorations may be seen in the photograph.

Though his hair is now white, he still plays and composes. At the recent Easter fest his Andante Religioso, a very beautiful composition, was rendered by violoncello and organ in one of the churches here. Among his numerous works, most of which are published in Leipsic and Budapest, are Konigfest Polonaise for grand orchestra and two and four-handed piano; "Die Swestern," a composition representing Germany and Austria, for men's voices and the piano; "Wiegenlied," for violoncello and piano; also the Mondnacht, a romance for the same.

The waltz, "An Evening on the Bosporus," is one of a number of waltz compositions, all of which are marked by exceptionally spirited rhythm. Professor Domlerer's courtly bearing fessor Domeier's courtly bearing gives him an air of distinction in any company.

Asia and the Golden Rule.

Ex-Secretary of State Richard Olney.

The Western powers have insisted on equality for all missionaries and others who may go to China. Yet they claim the right to bar all Orientals at pleasure. This attitude prevails everywhere. It is illogical, unfair and opposed to international law and comity. It is up to the Western nations to follow the Golden Rule in their treatment of and attitude toward Orientals. If they persist, nothing but brute force can make their position respected or respectable. And if persisted in the inevitable war will come. The theory of an interminable conflict between the West and the East savors of pessimism and the doctrinaire. The inevitable increase in intercourse between the nations will cause them to be more tolerant and they will grow to realize that there is room enough in the world for everybody, and that war produces ills infinitely greater than those designated to be cured.

Blue Laws at Concord, N. H.

New York Sun.

The women of Concord, N. H., are struggling to have the word "male" omitted from the new city charter that Mayor Charles R. Corning has recently appointed a committee to draft. It is asserted that the present charter of Concord is one of the most antiquated in America. It is a copy of Boston's original charter and among its provisions are minute directions to the chief of police assigning him all sorts of puritanical duties. Witches are warned to refrain from their sinful practices and tradesmen against selling rum to Indians. The women now say that to prohibit them from voting at this advanced state of the world is just as antiquated and as irrational as the provisions relating to witches.

H. G. Wells, the English litterateur, in his youth often wrote 8000 words a day, while Conan Doyle, it is said, once wrote a story of 12,000 words at a sitting.