

KONNAROCK MEDICAL CENTER

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BOARD OF AMERICAN MISSIONS
OF THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AMERICA

HEINZ C. MEYER, M. D.

KONNAROCK, VIRGINIA

August 7, 1951

Liebes Kind,

I was very good today, I think. Just now I did the dishes for mother, who has been very tired, and late this afternoon I went to Green Cove with father, who was depressed and had some visits to pay. Also this afternoon we had a very sick child who suffered from a series of epileptiform convulsions for almost two hours. Mother was afraid the child would die, and I had to go over to Green Cove to get father who had been conducting a clinic there. So you see, I have been busy doing very unimportant things, but I try to be patient, and wait, and hope that the time will soon come when I can do what I would most like to do.

I have been thinking about you a great deal. If only you were happier, when we are together. As things are now, I am not very happy, but at least I manage to lead a calm, semi-dignified, and somewhat meaningful existence. This quietness is something, which I need very much. My stomach has been better, and does not bother me so much any more as it did. I liked your comment about the meeting, because I think you must have felt a little bit the way that I ~~felt~~ would have felt, and thinking on that fact made me a little bit less lonely. I myself did not go to church, but Margrit tells me that the sermon was quite bad.

Tonight I played violin again, the first time after a long interval. It sounded surprisingly good, and to me, as always, comforting. I spent most of my time on the aria: Zerfliesse mein Herz in Fluthen der Zahren... Erzähle der Welt und dem Himmel die Noth: Dein Jesus ist tot. The more I think about Christian theology, the less meaning it seems to have to me. I hope you are not hurt by my putting it in this way. But the less I care about such abstractions as sin and faith, repentance and salvation, or the everlasting life, the happier I become in the childlike love and sorrow for him and his suffering. Often I feel as if he were a friend who had gone away from me but yesterday and who was known only to me and ^{as} if the sole purpose of my life were: Erzähle der Welt und dem Himmel die Noth: Dein Jesus ist tot. And all the ill and dying people remind me only of that one thing.

While I was washing the dishes tonight I had to think of your and your parents criticism of me, that I expected only you and not myself to change. This is very difficult for me to understand, since I, for my part could think of nothing more frightful than not being allowed to change. Denn mein Leben ist so schwach, dass ich täglich mich erneuern muss, um überhaupt zu existieren. Darum heisst es, Mache Dich mein Herze rein.... Das ist die Hygiene der Seele....

I still think very often about the "dead end" and the incompatibility. I hope that you do too. I believe that it exists and is very real, but I also know that my love for you will be able to stand great pain. And I am not afraid., and I often tell myself, that no matter how discontented you will be with me, I will never be discontented with you. I only wish that I could make you happy, but I know that nothing I can do or be suffices. ... Just now Mutz was barking; he seems to think that some intruder is about. He has been very good and gentle to me these past few days. As soon as I talk to him, he is happy and wags his tail. When I was small, I would think that there was much virtue in unhappiness. Perhaps there is, more than in silliness or self-deceit. But there must be more virtue in overcoming unhappiness, because we cannot be unhappy when we love either God or man or ourselves ... or even Mutz, - and as the great salesman put it: the greatest of these is charity.

In Gedanken nehme ich Dich ganz fest in den Arm, und ich bete für Dich, dass Du gestärkt sein mögest ... I fear, though, that it will take an air-mail, special delivery prayer to do any good; the ordinary kind seems to remain unanswered. Gute Nacht, schlaf gut.

Dein

John