

Appila, the 26th May, 1901

First, may God greet you

Dear Bertha and Paul!

I must write you once more because you will want to know what things look like here. Thanks to God we are still well and that is always the best thing. I feel very well and am quite cheerful. Dear mother is fairly well too.

On the other hand, it is as dry here as it could possibly be. But this year that doesn't matter so much, as we still have enough fodder for the stock, and so we can't complain as yet. But things look very sad for the people living further North who didn't have a harvest and have no feed for their stock. So things don't look very good for the North at present, for even if it were to really rain now then it usually turns too cold right away.

Both Friday and yesterday the wind blew mightily from the North but up till now it has not rained yet. Yesterday midday I thought we would get a lot of rain. But usually on the years that we've seen a Comet we have had a dry year. But we hope that won't be the case this year; hopefully we'll get a wet second half-year. If we would get that, then we can still have a middling harvest. For till now little wheat has perished; because it was so dry none of it has come up (germinated) yet.

And I always think that our dear God will have mercy when the need is at its greatest. For He has already helped us more than once when we thought that we could hardly hang on any longer. So longer as I still have fodder for the stock and receive just a little harvest I am still quite satisfied. And even if that does not happen, then we still are not allowed to despair. For that may also have it's good side, even if we don't know it yet. For I always think that need helps us by teaching us to pray. For if we were always to have good harvest we would never find time to think about what it really means to rely on God's blessing for success. But as things are we see that without our dear God we can do nothing. For if He doesn't give us rain and make things thrive then all our work and planning so of no benefit. So we will just carry on patiently in our faith and life, even if at times it seems a long wait until He helps.

Regarding seeding, I have finished except for about 15 acres. I have been waiting for rain to do these, because the ground is very cloddy. But if it still hasn't rained by the end of this week I guess I'll have another go at it. I let my worker go on Thursday because it looked like staying dry. We now have a lad with us who is attending confirmation instruction here. He is a good helper, especially for Mother, because he is very willing. He is one of the Graefes of Black rock, a nephew of the blacksmith Graefe.

Our new church is gradually moving towards completion; last week they put the roof on. No doubt it will still take some time before it will be finished. From our place it does not look half odd at all. And when one is on the spot it doesn't either, except that it is a bit short for its width. It is quite high and can be seen from far and wide.

Dear Bertha, concerning the people of whom you wrote to me that 'since then' they seem to be avoiding you, but that you are not running after them, well, you are doing the right thing. For surely that shows that they are waiting for some thing better and probably for Mr. P..... And if they should get him, then I can't think ill of them for that. Because then she could stay on in the neighbourhood and would not have to work either – something that most people don't like to do! Beside, they would no doubt think he would be better than a ***** farmer.

I hardly think that she already has another prospect, for she said so beseechingly that things could still work out for us if it should be God's will. And distance may also have something to do with it. For since her 'Old Lady' is such that she never wants to venture outside of her circle of friends, it is likely that her parents have not exactly encouraged her to do so.

Well, if it is really not to happen now, then it is also better that it comes naught. Especially if perhaps she should not like it here, for then we could not be happy together. 'Everything has its good side' so maybe this has it too.

Beside, something could still turn up, because 'There isn't just a handful; indeed there's a whole land full.' And if not, then life may still go on; better at any rate than to live unhappily with just any 'She'. At least I am now satisfied; for otherwise I would always have thought: 'If only I had gone to see her ...' But now I am quite 'Happy'.

I had thought right away that she would draw back from you, especially if they are lying in wait for Mr. P..... I am more inclined to believe this than not, for otherwise they might possibly forget it also I do think that she had not expected me to speak so curtly. Well, it will soon become clear whether she will get Mr. P..... or wait for another hopeful prospect. For as far as I can see I'm out of it there; anyway I think so.

As I hear it, there has again been discord at your uncle's and I hear that Carl has left. It is really bad if that's the case.

Please write again soon and what your parents are doing. Hopefully they are quite well again. I was very troubled to hear that your dear father was sick. And if I should go and visit you again and no longer see him there I would be really sorry. I really must close now with lots of greetings to you all.

I remain your R. Becker

English Translation

© Rufus Pech