

Allenhead. July 28th /77.

My dear Mamma

Here we are at the end of July and still only three short showers of the monsoon which ought to have begun in the middle of June. People are beginning to say now that there will not be any real monsoon this year, and if so it will be trying enough for us, but far worse for the poor natives, as in that case there must be a dreadful famine in the North West next year. Riles of land are lying waiting for the seed, which cannot be put in on account of the drought. Grain, which the natives feed upon chiefly, is now nearly double the price it was. We are now beginning to feel the heat very much. We are paying as we were afraid we should for the unusually cool weather and showers in March. I hope to go to the hills for a month or six weeks in September. John will go up with me for a few days, as he is needing a change very much. I hope he will go away for a little while before then, for I am sure he cannot go on much longer working as he has been doing for the last two months. I am very glad to think that he will not go through next hot weather in this dreadful climate. They say the politics is a very

pleasant place for a gentleman I think if I
come down for eighteen months, it would
be worth while to take a house and furnish
it. I could bring down enough of plate,
clay, linen and decorations, and con-
venience in furniture would make a
little money in a long way. It is so much
pleasanter being in a house of one's own,
I do not suppose for myself and the three
children with a governess (and I must have
someone for them) I could get pleasant
lodgings with attendance linen &c for less
than £2 a week taking them for a year. This
would be £150 for the 18 months. I could
get a nice house for £40 and I think for
£50 more I could put in as much
furniture as would serve us. It would
be very nice to have a regular house of
our own when John comes down for his
6 months furlough. Of course the longer I
staid at home the cheaper it would be for me
to have a house, rather than rooms, but
we must wait for time to settle it all. We
were very sorry to see in the papers the other
day to the effect that all claims upon "the
late Lieut Chambers of the 81st Regt" were
to be made to or paid to, from this I infer
his death, though we have seen no announce-
ment of it, and Mr Pringle knew nothing
when he was here a week ago. He was at
Jullundur too, so it must be the same.

I see in the Homeward mail which Lady
Stuart sends us every week the notice of
Mr Peterson's marriage at Melbourne
on April 17th. I do hope he has found the
right lady, and things will go smoothly, but
I doubt. I had a letter from Mr Peterson
of Bombay the other day, and he says his
wife will come down with me next March.
This is good news for me, for I shall enjoy
so having her for a companion, but I am
afraid ill health is bringing her away
from her husband. I am enclosing a
letter to Trigate and Johnston asking
them if the "Lion" is likely to be making
the return voyage from Bombay when
I want to come down. You will know
their answer when it comes, as I have
asked them to address to you, so you
can open it and let me know the con-
tents. It was a nice little vessel, and
I should think her to make myself
comfortable on board. But I don't
know whether Mrs Peterson would like any
other boats than the P. & O.
I hope Miss Colman will enjoy her visit
It will be rather trying for you to make ar-
rangements for a young lady who has
been accustomed to so much pen-
sion. I have just finished "Mr Smith" it is
a most clever book, without even a
thread of plot in it.

I have entirely given up ^{spending} rising up but
I find that by taking things at a right time
I can get through as much as I did before.
I have the women's sewing class in the
afternoon which is a great relief. For the
last four weeks I have led it by myself,
Lady Stuart not being able to come, and
the two other ladies who sometimes help, being
busy. I must say I enjoy it more in that
way, being able to do just as I like. Two
little black children come, not being old
enough to be left at home, one 2 years old
the other 4. To see their attempts at wrapping
acquaintance yesterday was most comical.
The little boy is the child of a native woman
who has been sent to prison, and one of our
women has taken him. I should think he
was never so cared for in his life before.
He is a dear little fellow, so bright and good.
Out of the 25 women who come to the class
20 contribute to the penny bank. I think
they will be very triumphant when they get
their money at the end of the year, and really
see what is the result of saving regularly.
I know the dirge comes to make flannel
shirts for John. The quantity of flannel things
men do at though here, to be sure. My
hardware is lasting out very well, but not
so well as it would at home. However I love
enough for years and years. John sends his
love to you both, and with mine I am
always your affectionate daughter Eliza