



4664

Kenilworth  
Massachie.

23-9-03.

My dearest Mama,

I'm so glad you all like the photos so much, baby has grown tremendously even since he was photographed, & is now at the age of thirteen months the same size as two other babies in this house of eighteen & nineteen months! The day before yesterday he walked, or rather ran, all alone for the first time!

I haven't told Ralph yet because I want to surprise him when I go down at the end of the month. 'Papa is quite right in saying that he

looks at life from a very merry  
point of view, he is the merriest  
little fellow, & brain full of fun  
& mischief, he simply delights in  
being naughty. He sits for a long  
time quietly reading to himself some  
times, he holds the book up, with one  
hand, & points to the letters with  
an exceedingly fat little finger  
of the other hand, & generally reads  
aloud, & occasionally goes into  
fits of laughter, as if he had come  
across a huge joke! When  
one takes him out shopping, he  
is terribly embarrassing, because  
he will greet every body he meets  
with "Ta" pitched in a very high  
key, that never fails to attract  
their attention, & holds out his  
hand for them to shake! The

only Hindustani word he knows, at  
least I mean uses, is "da-do", al-  
ways very much in the imperative  
tense! And he only knows very  
few English words, but he under-  
stands every word that is spoken  
to him, & if you tell him not  
to do a thing, he promptly does  
it, & shrieks with joy. A lady  
talking about him the other day  
declared that there must be a  
love charm about him, & I really  
think so too, because he is such  
a universal favourite everywhere  
& none of the other babies get the  
attention that he does. He is getting  
mightfully spoilt in consequence, &  
I have engaged a nurse to come  
& take charge of him in November.  
She is Eurasian, but has been  
tremendously recommended to me  
not only by her late mistress, but  
by all the other ladies staying  
at the Chatterville. She is leaving

her present place because, she says  
Mrs Goodenough interferes, so frightfully  
with her charges, every body says they  
are awful little cry-babies, & if  
they know their Mother is anywhere  
about, they yell, & then she rushes  
into the nursery, & the nurse says she  
feels that she can't trust, & of course  
her control over the children is greatly  
decreased, & she refuses to stop, though  
Mrs Goodenough has offered her Rs 40/-  
to stop on, at present she gets Rs 40/-.

I feel awfully sorry now that I  
didn't bring a nurse out with me,  
she would have required far less  
wages & have been much more  
satisfactory, because baby is sure  
to pick up a horrible accent & we shall  
be able to prevent it. I've had no  
nurse for the six months I've been up  
here, because I've never let him out of  
my sight, & so didn't require one  
but now we are going to Dinapore  
where the Club is nearly 4 miles  
away, I should never dare to go  
to it, or go & see any friends

living in the Conventments or St  
Bankipore, leaving baby in  
charge of an "Ayah"! The  
nurse I'm getting has also been an  
hospital nurse, & so I shall  
always feel quite happy about  
leaving him with her, for any  
length of time. And I hope &  
trust he will lose the accent as  
soon as he goes home, as we in-  
tend sending him home very young.

At first we made up our <sup>mind</sup>  
never to have an Eurasian, but as  
I have tried two so-called English  
nurses, & they both had accents  
being country bred, it doesn't seem  
to make much difference. What  
do you think about it, is the accent  
likely to cling to him through life?  
My young brother, Jack, has

just scraped through with his  
exam., & got two months leave in  
consequence, which he has been spend-  
ing up in Cashmere, at Srinagar  
& thoroughly enjoying himself, & eating  
enormous quantities of apples  
& pears & grapes. He joined a friend  
up there, & they live in a house  
boat, there being no other dry place  
to live in owing to the floods.

I expect to see him in Allahabad  
on his way down to Calcutta.

I'm so glad you are all so well  
in spite of the bad weather, I was  
very interested to hear all about  
the little Emma, & hope she is head-  
ed up again! And I know all about  
La Grande too. Ralph told me  
ages ago. Please give my best  
love to dear Papa, & with much  
to yourself & all the other members  
of the family believe me

Yr. affectionate daughter  
Margaret W. Strachey.