

Allahabad July 18<sup>th</sup> / 76.

5508

My dear Madame

Your letter with the extracts from Lord Macaulay's life, was very interesting. I had seen two reviews of it in the Times, but the only extracts from the Indian part were political. They must have come out in style to exceed 1200 over it. I am very glad Miss Peaves and Miss Lamont have been, I hope too that Mrs. Elzite may be avowed an opposition to you as you hoped for at first. John had a letter from his sister by this vessel, but there was not much news of the children. Frank does not appear to be in at all good health. We have now got our rains and everything is looking wonderfully green and beautiful. I had a very interesting drive on Friday, through a forest almost exclusively occupied by the Brahmins, to the river farges, the first time I had seen it. It is a splendid river about half a mile broad now, but it will soon be much wider, when the rains have been going on for awhile. This Brahmin settlement upon the banks seems nearly all temples. In some of them the "poosali" or worship was going on. It consisted as far as I could see of the people sitting silently round the jars of fruit and vegetables which they had placed before the image of the god. In a large portion



of plantains, palms and bamboos  
stands a very fine temple dedicated to  
Shiva, the great god, and near it is a  
long row of little chambers like shrines,  
each archway being most beautifully  
sculptured. This is what they call the  
Hall of Religion, there is generally one near  
every great temple for the accommodation  
of the pilgrims who come from all  
parts to worship. They can take their  
beds and cooking vessels there and stay  
as long as they please free of cost. The drive  
back at sunset was most lovely, I never  
saw anything like the tint in the sky,  
deep intense blue, seen through masses  
of grey rain cloud, and a rainbow over  
it all. Next day Mrs Bolton, wife of a  
doctor here came to take me for a drive  
and we went the same way again only  
going down quite close to the river this  
time. There are numbers of little ways  
with steps from which the people wade  
to bathe and one of these numbers  
were collected, looking out what I thought  
was a man swimming across the river.  
However it disappeared & and I was  
coming up again, and the natives told  
us it was an alligator. I suppose to be  
killed by one, whilst bathing in the sacred  
river would be an enviable death for  
a Hindoo. We came home by a splendid  
avenue along the banks of the Jumna.  
The trees meet overhead just like those

in the Blittlesee lane. The foliage here  
is very beautiful now, superior I think  
to any in England. I did not think so  
when first I came, for everything looked  
so parched then. There is nothing in England  
so fine as the tamarind and currip trees.  
One of the temples, I saw yesterday, is built  
round a peepul tree the sacred tree of the  
Hindoo, and the curious quarled trunk  
had grown itself in amongst the pillars.  
Nearly all the temples are built to Shiva  
the Destroyer. Brahma the Great Creator,  
and Vishnu the Preserver, are supposed  
to be kind enough, and to want no pro-  
pitiation, as they sit comparatively few  
temples. Shiva's images are coloured  
red. Sometimes they are only a piece of  
wood or stone set up under a tree. I saw  
a red stone under a tree in nearly every  
little village that we passed as we came  
up here from Poona.

John is feeling this hot damp weather  
very trying. I think it is worse for him  
than the rains, though I like it better for  
myself. When we sit with open doors, the  
flies are a great plague. They are both  
idle and impudent and greatly object  
to moving when they have settled upon you.  
At nightfall the frogs begin to croak.  
You have no idea of the din they keep  
up. It is like the shaking of parched peas  
in a tin. I could never have guessed  
what it was, if I had not been told.



One young man we know here has just got  
his wife out from England. He is not  
only twenty one and runs away from  
school to be married at 17, to a lady  
some years older. She has been living  
with his friends in England until  
now, when as he has got an appointment he  
is able to leave her with him. I am afraid  
they will be rather a meddling young couple.  
He told me himself that he was married  
at 17. Mr Harrison is settled in his quarters  
most do, and we find it very pleasant  
to have him so near. He is a pleasant  
man and full of character.

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27 Wilfred Street  
London S.W.1.

8.030  
Yesterday Mr Spence sent me a quantity  
of numbers of Punch. That a ridiculous  
story there is in this year's numbers  
a parody on Miss Broughton's style.  
"Red as a Rose" is the story imitated, and  
most cleverly it is done, with apologetic  
notes by the editor now and then, then a  
rather highly coloured bit appears. It  
is in the style of Bret Hart's Lancelotti  
novels. I am reading "The Innocents  
abroad". The description of the voyage  
very vividly recalls our own experiences.  
The plots are a complete pest whilst  
I write. It reveals a man staid with  
a great fear to keep them away.

John sends his love to you and Mary  
Catherine, and with mine I am  
always your affectionate daughter Eliza