

Allahabad Decr 5th / 76.

5527

My dear Nannamma

I am again taking time by the forelock, for never before were my days such a whirl. From eight in the morning until I go to bed at night I seem to have had half an hour of real quiet. In consequence of everyone being busy getting ready for Christmas or going to Delhi, I cannot get a dirge and so I have had to make the new druggets myself which have been put down in the study and dining room. I was very anxious to get them done before Mr and Mrs Mathur come to dine tomorrow. Then Mr Robbards also has just left the station, sent us yesterday a very nice handsome looking "almirah" or cupboard which is put up in the dining room and I have had all my stores, glass china &c arranged in it, so that now I can give out things with very little trouble. The study looks quite cozy now, a pretty rug and brown carpet over the matting, red chairs, red curtains over the glass doors, and a good fire all day. I always spend my evening here with John, that is when he has an evening at home, which is seldom enough. He does enjoy these fires. They give such an English feeling to the house. I still decline going out to dinner, and find it a great relief to get a little quiet time to myself. I was inspecting the bills when I wrote to you. We got dinner ready for them at ½ past 9 and sent the carriage to the station, 3 miles away; waited till 10, when the women came

back and said they had not arrived. no
word from them until yesterday, when there
came a telegram to say they would come to
night. However I shall not make any more
preparations for them. The parties keep going
on, and now there are invitations for tiffin
as all the evenings get filled up. I am
sure all the people who like to live in public
ought to be stationed at Allahabad. And
then whether or not you accept invitations, you
must make the calls afterwards. On Monday
I had to go out in the middle of the day - that
being the only time allowed now - and make
seven. It is such a relief to have got the
men out of the house. I never had my pa-
tience so tried before. One has to be constantly
looking after them, or they do things in such
a slipshod manner. I believe if a picture
was left on the walls, they would whiterash
all round it, rather than take the trouble of
moving it. Telling is no use. You must
actually take a chair and sit down and in-
sist on seeing the thing done, or it never
will be done. Our two regular Sunday
evening guests have both left the station
now. Mr Hobbs and Dr Spry. We shall
miss them very much, for we felt so com-
pletely at home with each other. Dr Spry
sent me this morning his canary, a bonnie
little thing in a most dainty cage. I hope
it will prove a more interesting pet than any
of the parrots. Mr Harrison comes in as
usual most afternoons, and has a cigar
and a cup of tea. If ever we are stuck fast

about anything, so say "ask Mr Harrison"
He is a mine of experience and good will.
I had tiffin yesterday with our next door
neighbour Mrs Waterfield, with whom we are
to dine on Christmas day. She very kindly
asked me to go and spend my morning
there whilst the house was upset, but I found
I must stay at home, or the muddle would
never be ended. John has been so busy lately,
everything seems to come at once now, exam-
inations of schools, confirmations, classes, and
I don't know what, and then Sunday is no
rest. But indeed we are not worse off in that
respect than other people. Several of the
civilians here are obliged to do a great deal of
their writing on Sunday, or they could never
keep their work under.
The moths have got into my muff, and I am
afraid it will never be wearable again. How
it must have been doing service for me now
nearly fifteen years, and is it does not owe
me anything. But I shall keep it for old ac-
quaintance sake. They have not meddled with
the seal skin jacket. I always wear that now, after
four o'clock. It is really cold in the evening.
I had (Saturday) got as far as here, when
I was interrupted by the arrival of our
guests, who are - the lady at least - very funny
people. If she had "taken the rooms" for a
week, I could understand her going on,
but to invite herself as our guest, being
a perfect stranger, and to make such a
inconvenience of us, is a new experience
to me. She is a wonderful contrast
to the gentle breeding of most of the
women here. Mrs Know says she thinks

she is not in her right mind. They will only
stay until Monday. Fawcett Library
27 Wilfred Street
London S.W.1 8049
Now curiously one knows up against old
times here. I think I told you that some
time ago I went to see Mrs Saunders, who
began at once to talk to me about "Ephantine"
the her step mother, who seems to have been a
very unkind one, was a Miss Baker, of York.
another Miss Baker married Tritle, the artist
and another that doctor in Nickelegate, whose
name I forget. I went to lunch with Mrs
Saunders yesterday. She told me that old Mrs
Price of Clementhorpe was her grandfather
and Captain Price, whose name I remember
very well, her father. She is an impulsive little
woman, open hearted and genuine. She
pulled out an old tin box of letters, and
dived into a queer leather case, from which
she produced a yellow scrap of newspaper,
the York Herald, containing about a quarter
of a column about the death of old Mrs
Price. It was dated 1856. I think I re-
member about Captain Price being
rather a wild young man, and Mrs Sau-
nders does not hesitate to say that to was so.
I am doing my dissipations now in the
form of luncheons. There is then no
trouble of dressing, and I get back in
two hours. Yesterday, with the exception
of the little time I spent with Mrs Saunders,
the day was a continued rush, from
getting up, to going to bed at eight. Miss
calls come, and then one has to be
always answering notes, for newspapers
can never be sent through notices.