

Berlin. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> 97

My dear Kelly

A2/3791

I have received your parcel  
as well as both your letters and have read  
your official account to me, which I think  
very good and quite to the purpose. Altogether  
you seem to have collected all the material  
that is at all interesting and conducive  
to a general insight into the school, such  
as is likely to ~~gain~~<sup>win</sup> the favour of Her  
Majesty. So far all is right and good,  
but still I have my scruples with regard  
to applying to H. M. at present, on account  
of the very distant sum which you have  
fixed for the furniture. I gather from your  
first letter that it would hardly be con-

venient - if indeed possible - to visit  
the property before June 1899, and if  
that is the case, I will ~~hardly~~ <sup>likely</sup> do so  
claim her attention and good will  
a year and a half before the thing can  
be thought of. Of course I might lay  
the <sup>matter</sup> ~~thing~~ before her and try to interest  
her in the whole concern, but there is  
the danger of her forgetting about it  
in the intervening year, so that I should  
have to do it over again in December  
1898, the usual time of her visit to  
Berlin. She has not yet come here

until now, but I expect she will arrive  
one of these days, and then of course  
I might ask for a private reception  
and claim her good will in a preliminary  
way. However I feel doubtful whether  
it would be wise to do so. You know,  
the chances are that she would propose  
next summer as a time likely to suit  
her, so that I should be in the uncon-  
fortable position of having to decline  
and put off the very thing I am to ask  
as a favour. And probably she would  
say: why ask me at all, if it is too  
early to come to a decision about it.  
I lay all this before you, so that you

may decide what I am to do. I am quite  
ready to bring in the suit and would not  
hesitate for a moment, if I could at the  
same time ask M. M. to fix the hour of  
her visit <sup>within</sup> in the ensuing year, but as she  
is in the habit of going over to England in  
the Spring, and as next Spring would not  
suit you at all, there is a slight awkward  
ness about the matter. On the other hand  
it is just possible, though rather unlikely  
that I should not have a chance of asking  
her next year; she might be prevented  
from paying her annual visit to Berlin  
by some unimaginable cause, or I might  
be dead by that time, or absent for some  
other unaccountable reason — in that

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it may be considered safer in a way  
to pass no time about the matter and  
propose it as soon as I have a chance.

Only I want you to decide, and please  
do so shortly, for she may be here  
one of these days and her visit may  
be cut short, as it has been several  
times before.

I suppose you are in a hurry at the  
close of the term, and so am I, parti-  
cularly because there will be 3 days  
of examination next week. As soon  
as I am more at leisure I will go into  
your school more deliberately and in  
detail, so as to feel brimful about  
it in the encounter with Her Majesty.

I have hardly any family news to give you. My mother's state of health is not quite as satisfactory as it was in the summer, for she has had a rupture, which obliges her to wear a bandage and to be rather careful in her movements. But her general health has continued good so far and she can take walks even at Berlin. She was much benefited by her stay at the sea-side. She came home in November only with rosy cheeks and good spirits, quite ready to go to work for the "Weihnachts-Preise der Künstlerinnen". She did some

pretty tables and a very fine screen, but I am sorry to say it has not been sold until now. My sister Götz will not come to spend Xmas with us this year — a great pity! But she wants to keep Xmas at Bismarck for Wronitz and Luchsi, who will both be away probably another year. Luchsi has after all got the gifts. Stella she applied for in the summer and shall have to reside there in future, while everybody expects Wronitz to marry in the course of the year. However we do expect Ellen after Xmas for about 6 weeks; she may possibly go to Munich for

some months, certainly not to Paris.  
Goodbye for the present, dear Nelly  
I shall wait for the <sup>arrival of the</sup> charming Xmas  
gift you announce to me in the  
shape of Miss Clough's life, before  
I write to thank you. In the mean  
time I wish you a very merry Xmas  
and a happy New Year. I wonder  
where and how you will spend both.  
My mother and Elsie send their love  
and good wishes likewise, and I  
remain always

Yours affably  
Miss von Colbe