

4592

Ocher Bridge

4<sup>th</sup> May 98

no 14 (or thereabouts)

My dear Pippa,

Oliver arrived here yesterday with a face the colour of mahogany and a nose like a beetroot, and peeling as if he was in the middle of an attack of scarlet fever. This is the result of the first attacks of the tropical sun's perpendicular rays and will gradually tone down to the ordinary Anglo-Indian brown. He

doesn't much fancy the climate of these parts, but seems otherwise to be in good enough trim. He will no doubt send an account of his adventures en route, so I will pass on to the next topic which is Mrs Faulkner and her sister Miss McGinnis though how she spells her hideous name I can't imagine.

These ladies are friends of Palmer's and are here on a visit and are the most deadly depressing females I have ever had the

misfortune to meet. Mrs F. is what you call petite with a very thin waist tight dresses and high shoes, and a neat pair of ankles which are most liberally displayed to the view. She considers herself to be a sweet fairy and walks with an extraordinary jerky rising step which is supposed to indicate a thumping gait I have forgotten what the word is, oh springy. Her mind as you may guess is appropriate to her body, being a complete example of babbling idiocy - She is

Milly Foster multiplied by 10 and then squared.

Miss McQ. is far worse, being of the awful type of female whom one idea in life is to be married, and feels that she is getting on and must effect her purpose before the chance has gone. The result is a fearful combination of posing and fishing which makes the gorge rise. Her intellectuals are somewhat <sup>slightly</sup> beyond ~~was~~ advanced, <sup>beyond</sup> ~~than~~ the protoplasmic condition of her sister's and might be

described as Merionian -  
a mixture of Water and  
snake. The two sisters  
hate each other like poi-  
son - Lily makes nasty  
remarks about Rosie's  
temper, and Rosie retali-  
ates by giving away the  
secret of Lily's complexion.

Every evening after bad-  
minton which is hailed  
by Rose as an excuse to the  
me to show the frills of her  
petticoat, and an oppor-  
tunity for the other to  
make advances towards the  
object of her ambition, we

have to sit down and  
listen to the droning rot  
that issues from their lips  
in a never ending stream -  
of Calcutta Society and  
Sunka balls, of that hor  
A, and dear Lady B,  
and of what they think (?)  
about the plague, the heat,  
their ayahs, the rupee, &c  
&c ad infinitesimilimum;  
showing in every word they  
utter their folly, their  
ignorance, and their sordid  
carelessness for anything  
that is not petty, mean,

and contemptible. Away  
with them! but before  
leaving the directing room  
I must tell you that a  
further investigation of  
Birdie's character has re-  
vealed a large quantity  
of excellent qualities.  
Though wicked in the ex-  
treme she isn't half bad  
and in fact quite decent.

Having now relieved  
myself of the shocking  
bad temper in which I  
began this letter and  
having reduced myself  
to a condition of pleased

complacency, I will lay  
down the knife and  
say farewell -

Yr. loving brother

Ralph

P.S. Reports of some bridge  
by next mail.

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27 Wilfred Street  
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