

Allahabad. March 19<sup>th</sup>/17.

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My dear Mamma

I begin my letter again  
in good time, as I have the prospect of a  
busy week. Major and Mrs Keates come to us  
this evening, leaving probably on Thursday  
night & Friday morning, and on Friday Mrs  
Nichell comes by herself, for a week, after that  
Mr Nichell is to come, and I don't know  
how long the two will stay. After that Dr Caldwell  
the new missionary bishop is coming to Allah-  
bad and we shall probably have his chaplain  
Mr Strahan with us. After that I think the  
hot weather will prevent us from receiving any  
more guests, for which I shall not be un-  
grateful. We really need a little rest and  
quiet now, things seem to have kept  
pressing upon us so lately. I wrote to that  
Mr Jay a week ago, saying we should be  
glad to see him any time when he was in  
our neighbourhood, but I have not heard  
from him yet. The weather still continues  
tolerably cool, so that we do not need fire-  
stoves, and I am employing the coolies in  
all sorts of cleaning operations. There has  
been such an unusual quantity of rain  
this year, which is far less than the  
heat. In a general way, after the Christmas  
rain which last for two or three days, there  
is no more until the mid-noon in  
July; yet now within the last week we  
have had two nights of heavy rain. The  
country looks beautiful in consequence  
but I am afraid it will be very tedious

for the crops. Indeed people said if the rains had lasted a day or two longer, there would have been a famine in the North West. As it is, the price of grain will rise very much and there will be distress amongst the poor natives. John has gone to inspect this morning, to take his fortnightly service for the European prisoners there. There is one man in jail for a month, quite a gentleman. He is a veterinary surgeon here, and was formerly in the army, but had to leave on account of his drinking habits. He has been gradually going down the hill since, and a week or two ago a bailiff who was put in possession of the house, and the result is that he is sent to prison. His wife is the daughter of a major and has brothers officers in the army. I went to see her yesterday, nearly everything in the house has been sold for drink, until she and her five children have scarcely anything to put on. She has a sister in Germany in one of the Orphans institutions who would take the three elder children if money and clothes could be raised for sending them to her, and I am going to see Lady Stuart, to find if anything could be done in the way of a public subscription. The children might be saved if they could be got away from the father, but I am afraid he will go to the bad soon. The wife is quite a lady like woman, painfully out of keeping with her equalled surroundings.

Mrs Robinson leaves on Friday, we shall miss her very much. I hope she will come over and see you and tell you all about our going on. Major Keates I believe has a place quite near Melbourn. Give my love and congratulations to Mrs Dinsdon. She will be quite proud of her new dignity. But I think it was too bad to make Miss Dinsdon do so much in preparing for the little stranger. If these three poor children get off to Germany, there will be plenty of work in preparing an outfit for them. I must say the ladies here are very kind in helping whenever there is anything to do. My poor old ayah was very ill yesterday, and has scarcely been able to do anything since. I fancy it must have been a sort of sun stroke. Her absence only shows me what an unnecessary luxury she is, for I do not seem to miss her at all, yet it would be contrary to all Indian etiquette if I did not visit her. After she has made my room tidy in the morning, she goes and sits in the verandah all day, meditating, I suppose, for she never does anything. Poor old body. I believe she is as honest as the day. I never miss a thing. This little verandah, yours which you see in the picture with the three arched (it is not the one where the ayah sits) really looks very pretty now. We have it nicely matted and pots of flowers all round, and the doors are kept closed all day, so that it is quite private. We have bamboo chairs and a table in it, and use it as a sitting room. It is very nice for putting

men to turn into it of an evening when  
they want to smoke. He had punch at  
dinner last night, for the first time, not  
so much for the heat as to keep away the  
mosquitoes, which are very troublesome  
now. He had Dr Hall of Mysore, and Mr  
Etty, the new carriage chaplain, to dinner.  
I believe they will both be regular guests  
on Sunday. Dr Hall I like very much. Mr  
Etty is gentlemanly, but narrow.  
Here I stopped to go and see how the men were  
getting on with the cleaning of John's dressing  
room. You would stand aghast at the way  
cleaning is carried out here. no soap and  
water used, for fear of white ants. The floors  
are swept, the doors and woodwork rubbed  
with oil and that is all, and you have to  
keep looking and looking, or everything  
would be slurred over in the most expeditious  
manner possible. This our houses must  
be filthy, judging from the manner in which  
they attempt to keep ours clean. The longer  
I am here, the more I find to look after and  
attend to. Last year at this time, I had hours  
and hours to myself. now there scarcely ever  
seems to be any undisturbed leisure for me  
except on Sundays. However in the hot  
weather it cannot be so. It is a great relief  
now to know that in the house everything is  
right and straight. Polly looks beautiful now.  
She is washed every morning. Every one admires  
her bright effusive little face. She quite  
thinks it her duty to go about with me all day.  
I should miss her very much. There is every  
thing as usual here. I have no messages from him this time  
with love to you and kids, I am clear your affectionate daughter  
8.060

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