

5657
Lee Hollies Jan. 21st/86.

My dear Husband,

I have your letter this morning with the very beautiful New Year cards. That little picture does remind me of the road down to Brossell, with the low roofed cabbled cottages. The roads on the small card are very pleasant. Mamma sends her love, and thanks you for hers. She has been much better the last day or two, perhaps in consequence of the cold weather. We cannot tell from one day to another what change may take place, but we must just be prepared for anything. I cannot wish now that her life should be prolonged, great as the sorrow will be at the earthly parting comes; but her quiet and comfortable state is a great mercy. Her memory fails very much and the activity of her mind is abated, though it is clear and collected still. I spend nearly all my time in her room now. The children begin school tomorrow. Since I wrote to you, Miss Jeanes has been telling me of two ladies in Paris who live with their mother, the widow of a French general. They have sometimes had English girls staying with them and Miss Jeanes thinks it would be a very suitable place for Fildian. They are gentle people; she would hear good French spoken, and only French

I have asked Miss Pearce to make further enquiries for me through her sister in law, who knows the family well. They are Roman Catholics, but not of the proselyting sort. My idea would be for Filian to go there or to some other suitable French family in May, for five months. He wants no teaching, only conversation. I should offer such remuneration as would insure his being made really comfortable, and he would be home again before you come back, if you do come out the end of this year. If you do not come home this year, and if Mamma should have left us, I have an idea of starting for Darjeeling in October, and bringing Filian with me, for six months. It would be a splendid education for her, and if, as she sometimes says, she should like to devote herself to work in India, she would know better what such work means. For myself, I feel sure that I must, as soon as I can, take long rest and change, if I mean the remainder of my life to be any use either to myself or others. I could not make the voyage alone, neither could I be anywhere alone now, and Filian is very good and dutiful and affectionate. It would not be a trouble to her to care for me when I am not able

to care for myself, and the visit would be a much treat for her. I would meet the expenses out of my own income. Hotel life and going about from place to place is not what I can do with us, but I feel as if it would give me new life to be at Mrs. Lection's, if he would only take me in with anyone else would care for me as I think Filian would. And I should also arrange for her to see something of Bernardes and Agnes. But all this must shape itself by and by. In order to be in readiness for the French arrangement, I have written to Mrs. Joseph saying that the children will give up with Miss Andrewes at the end of the quarter, April 28th. If Miss Andrewes remains with Mrs. Joseph after that, I shall advance with her to carry on Mabel's French and music, if not, I will have a master for her. I do not think it is worth while spending money over Mabel at present. She does not make use of her advantages. Perhaps in the course of a year or two her mind will mature, and then she must have lessons again. Now, they do her no good. I shall superintend her reading and writing at home, which will perhaps be better than lessons. If I come to India with Filian, Mary Catherine will come and stay in the house, so that Mabel and Noel will be well cared for. You will

tell me what you think of all this. When you
know that for now nearly a year and three
quarters, I have not been out of the house
more than four hours at a time and
only four times even so much as that,
and with a constant pressure of anxiety
upon me all the time, you will under-
stand that when I am able to go away
at all, it must be far off, and for long.
It will be pleasant for you seeing old
friends in Allahabad. I can picture to
myself the feeling I should have in
driving through the familiar scenes
again, with no Lady Stuart & Co to
despotize over one's actions. It would be
like a freed slave visiting the place where
he had once dwelt in bondage. Does that
estimable person turn, can she, the
misery which her small soul in-
flicted upon a bigger one? Well, it is
over now. On road of the King, Kober's to
give you the farms, and so I shall like
to see the stables of the owner. But the
owner themselves I must see again
before I die. I hope you will have a good
holiday, and come back strong for the
Calcutta hot weather. You last there,
and then you will be free, if you choose.
The children are all well and happy.
Ever your loving
E. J. P.