

Jan. 16th / 81. 5586

My dear Husband,

Wool is writing you a long and circumstantial account of the children's out yesterday. It was a fine time for them. I got up Eastern dresses for the three sisters, so that all were in harmony. Wool makes a splendid little page with his velvet-trimmed tunic faced with broad white lace and sleeves red rosettes on his shoes, and his jaunty Indian topie. Mahel was very pretty as Beauty. I made her a white muslin shuddah with a little scarlet cap and tassel, after the eastern fashion, and she had a white calico tunic with broad scarlet band round the bottom, and her bare arms covered with bangles. The six of them made really a very pretty picture, and for a banquet I had all the Benares brass things arranged in three tiers, so as to display themselves to advantage. These were concealed behind the curtain until at the proper time the page drew it back. The Beast was so very tickled that he barked at him barking violently, and would not be satisfied until he had smelt him all over. Whilst I think of it, will you, when you have opportunity, get one or two nice soapstone plates, of good pattern, as specimens of the manufacture.

Esther had an accident with our nicest
one here and though I have mended it
carefully, still it is only a makeshift. We
are having bitterly cold weather here now.
Noel sleeps with me in my little room,
and both Mamma and I keep our cas-
sides burning all night. We are none of
us any worse for the cold indeed the chil-
dren seem to enjoy it. But I am glad it
was not so sharp when Mamma was poorly.
I shall be anxious to hear what sort of a
Christmas you had at Lady Compton. The
children are going to a little party at
Mrs Taylor's on Tuesday, and on Wednes-
day they begin school again. After that I
shall set to work at my story and hope to
finish it by the end of March. The money
that I get for it, and my half yearly dividend,
can be invested together, so it will be a
nice little sum. Clarence Smith is looking
for a profitable investment of the money
which the Bant's shares have sold for. It is
a great relief to me that we are rid of those
shares. One never knows what may happen
in these days of mad speculation, and
those twenty shares would have ruined us
as much as if we had had five hundred.
A letter is selling less too. The children

are reading peculiar History with me in
the evening, now. They seem quite to enjoy
it. Do you get any good books out of the club
now. You will find your own companions
and that of good books, as valuable as most
other, and I am sure you will never want
a few good friends in Allahabad. I had
far rather hear of your being as alone, with
close friends and noble thoughts, than
raving about with "society" from one
dinner and dance to another. I believe
God has a good work for you to do in England
W., and he is preparing you for it by this com-
parative loneliness, in which you have
time and room to grow. When you write to
Mr Nichol, remember me to him, and
say I shall quite love to see him when
he comes home. Is it to be this year. If I
have time, I will enclose a note for Mr
Eggar Hill, which please post to him.
I am sorry to hear of Lady Stuart's accident.
I hope she will soon be able to get out again.
Her prophetic speeches at the prize giving
are very good, though I dare say the parents
would think him rather sharp. Now it
brought back the old Allahabad life, to be
reading the Pioneer again. I seemed to
be in that bedroom opening into the
verandah, and looking every part the

garden to the church. Should I ever see it
again, I wonder.

Thursday. Just received your letter, with
Mr. Oddy's, to show please give my very
kind remembrances. By this time your
Christmas and New Year's bustle is over
and you can take a little rest. I do hope
Mr. Knox will come back to Ollahabad
and that I shall see him whilst he is here.
I do not think it would do at all to
bring the children out to a hill station.
It would do their health no good, and
would entirely break up their education,
which for now would be seriously im-
portant. I would not break up the
home here at all. I could come out
to you for a year, or less or more, ac-
cording to circumstances, and leave
the children here with Mamma and
their lessons would go on with Miss
White as usual. They have had so many
changes already in their little lives
that it would be very unadvisable
to make more. They are doing as well
as in every way, as could be wished.
But we must let ourselves be guided
by circumstances, when the time for
action comes. We are leaving a

turn of bitterly cold weather ⁸⁵⁸⁶ now, the
ground is thickly covered with snow,
and the frost is sharp. The children
should have begun school yesterday,
but I did not like to send them out
we finished our precious History last
night, and are now beginning Roman.
They seem quite interested in it. This
morning, as they cannot go to school
again on account of the snow, I have
set them all to write a little account
of their own lives. Lillian takes the part
of Barnes, Mabel the account of their
second Nottingham life, and Noel
tells what has happened since they
came to Malvern. They are all as
quiet as mice about it.

If this home had to be broken up, of
course it would be the most natural
thing for the children to go to Letitia,
but it must not be broken up. We
can give children no better memory
than that of happy years in our home,
and that they are loving now. Besides,
Letitia's own health is not equal to the
charge of three children and I trust no
one else to whom I could trust them.
They send you much love. I did send
you very much last night. It seemed
too hard to be without you. Ever yours
E. J. [unclear]