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Aransel  
(ported on) 30<sup>th</sup> Sept /91

My dear Pippa

After the band we drove home and dressed and then drove back to Bathie's where the following large & crowd assembled. Mr & Mrs Devon, Mr & Mrs Jennings (not Jennings), Miss Mitchell, Mylne, Barker, F. Wright, Arbuthnot, Drysdale & me. Miss Mitchell is the lady who presented us with water lily buttonholes for the Racecourse races. Barker is the youth who lost his wool at Baraker, 9 for.

get it & told you about this be-  
fore but in case I didn't I will  
now proceed to relate it. When  
H. Wright, Reddie & I were at Baraker  
we went out one Sunday with  
White to shoot ducks. We had to  
drive about 8 miles to get to the  
place and Barker who was stopping  
at Baraker arranged to ride out  
and meet us there. However, he  
didn't turn up but came to dinner  
afterwards and told us he had  
ridden out there and seen us in  
the distance, but not having found  
anyone to hold his horse, he 'lost  
his wool' and rode back; thus in-  
geniously missing breakfast and  
tiffin. The real reason was he is

abnormally shy and couldn't  
urge up courage to go up to us.  
He is an assistant engineer on the  
Bengal Nagpur Railway.

As we were sitting around talking  
before dinner, suddenly a wild  
hoorooch was heard outside; we  
all rushed out, and there were  
my tumtum and pony lying in a  
mangled heap on the ground. The  
villainous eye, instead of taking  
the pony out of the trap had left  
it by itself and gone off to talk  
to the other eyes with the natural  
result stated above. They were  
disentangled with some difficulty  
when it was found that not so  
much damage had been done as

might have been expected - the pony got off with a slight scrape on her knee, and although the trap was a good deal bashed up, the wheels and shafts weren't damaged, so I contented myself by merely dismissing the syce instead of hanging him first and then dismissing him as I at first intended.

This little contretemps slightly damp- ed my spirits but I was cheered up by a very good dinner with lots of champagne. (Baths in ancient days always used to give champagne dinners but now only on grand occasions)

We missed most of the concert but were in time to hear Band- master Brown sing 'The Kerry Dance'.

"Oh to think of it, oh to dream of it,  
Fills my heart with tears!"

The next thing was a comic song,  
and when a most extravagantly dressed  
nigger appeared all prepared to enjoy  
the regular 'They're all very fine and  
large' kind of entertainment. He  
began by a long prologue in which  
he said he would now sing (by  
special request) his famous song, which  
had been written for Sims Reeves  
who had found it beyond his powers  
&c, &c, and then proceeded to sing  
'My Pretty Jane' in the most exquis-  
ite style, breaking off in the middle  
of a difficult *solfeggio* and ending  
up with a step dance. I don't

think I've laughed so much since  
I heard Conroy Grain sing "Ich  
corten tooandheim." Perhaps it was  
the champagne. After the concert  
followed the usual dance - three  
waltzes and the rest Quadrilles, Dece  
Aulberts (D'Alberts) and The Cal-  
donians.

Tuesday. Mrs. Devon got hold of  
me and said she hoped I  
hadn't given up going to church  
since I had left home and I  
was very glad to be able to tell  
her with truth that I had not.  
I hope she won't make enquiries  
because I might find it rather

difficult to explain this little quip.  
A circular came from the Agent to  
say that the board had written to  
say that they would like to see every  
one volunteers but of course no com-  
pulsion was to be used &c. It then  
goes on to remark that the Agent  
quite agrees, and thinks that any  
one who isn't fit to be a volunteer  
isn't fit to do the railway work. He  
therefore requests all who are not  
volunteers to explain their reasons  
and he will determine if they are  
sufficient ones! Isn't this sweet?  
It is ~~then~~ considered by some to  
be rather "gubberdusty". Drysdale is  
in anguish because he was a capo-  
tain and resigned last year, and

will now have to rejoin as a private.  
Ita!ha! Some rather funny reasons  
have been sent in; one man said  
that he used to be a volunteer  
but had retired, but he was quite  
ready to defend his Queen and  
Country as could be ~~seen~~ <sup>proved</sup> by  
looking up the records where his  
name would be seen as having taken  
part in the Santara War! This  
was a rising of Southals at the last  
census; the volunteers were called out,  
but when they got to Santara the  
insurgents had fled. Another man  
said he was not a volunteer but  
was quite ready to defend himself,  
not mentioning his Queen & Country.

The best yet received is from a man who says that he is very timid of firearms and has had a nervousness of his whole body from the beginning!

We had a dinner party here in the evening without champagne. Nothing happened till Saturday when the Consulting Engineer came to test the Singharron bridge. It went off all right and the bridge was declared open, and I was just jumping off a little low wall to bid the C. E. adieu when I slipped on a brick, tumbled down, and sprained my ankle. Warnt it vile? Just as I am going to Darjeeling? I have been seated on a sofa

ever since in hopes of curing it quickly. I shall be able to go all right only there won't be much walking about KC for me. The bitterest pang is that there are all sorts of festivities coming off and I shan't be able to dance. Boo-hoo-boo-hoo.

If you turn back to last year you will see exactly the same thing happened before I went to Huron.

One advantage however is that it has been the cause of this magnificent letter so for this and all his other mercies Amen.

In my hours of idleness I have turned to poetry and have evolved the following touching poem:-

I love you not as knights loved maid  
In good King Arthur's days,  
When other knights and dragons grim  
He slew to gain her praise;  
As Galahad loved Guinevere,  
Blame Sir Lancelot,  
As lady fair by gallant knight  
Was loved, I love you not.

I love you not as men love girls  
In these more sober times,  
When slaying knights and chaperones  
As thought the worst of crimes  
I love you not as ~~some~~ men have loved  
In history or in Scott,  
In fiction, fact, or fairytale -  
I. Simply. love you not.

Good, isn't it? Please observe



the parallel drawn between dragons  
and chaperones. I'm not quite  
sure about Galahad and Guinevere  
but let that pass, also let me  
pass, this letter is what you  
might call unconscionable (?) I've  
thought so long about that aw-  
ful word that I haven't the least  
idea how it is spelt or pronounced.

Goodbye

Yr loving brother

Raylestrudley

next letter from Deringing

(D.V.)

Fawcett Library  
27 Wilfred Street  
London S.W.3.

P.S. 23 on Monday - moral reflections  
and aspirations smother evening. 725(d)