



Bitten bread
To pain your head.

Delhi Bridge
Bengal
10th Jan^r /99

4608a

My dear Pippa

These puzzle pages
are getting too much - It has
taken me two hours to devise this
one and the result is hardly
worth the effort. Yours are
exquisite especially no 46 the
young lady looking at a ship
through a telescope - The last
received is no 48 - a horrid sum to
make you glum - which is neat
but too lazy.

I have been in bed for the

18
last week with a disease
of the tummy and have
been starving on milk and
barleywater - Dysentery
was at first feared but it
has passed off and all is
well - I got up today and
for dinner tonight am to be
promoted to chicken which
is a joyful thought - The
great disadvantage of living
with a doctor is that you
have no chance to devour
beefsteaks when starving as
he sits at the door and

hounds off all smugglers - Stone
came through on Sunday and
was affable as usual - I tried
to draw him on the subject of
the new Agent but without success.
The report is that it is to be Col.
Hanbury White R.R. who is now con-
sulting engineer - in fact this was
announced in the Pioneer and is
probably correct -

The town is at present filled
with two fearful bores whom I
have barely fled from leaving
the unfortunate hidwell to enter-
tain - One is Cooper contractors
agent a complete dullard and

the other who is far the worst
is called Larminie - He is an
old loafer who lives in the lake
bungalow, was once in the police
but was I believe chucked out
and now knows about doing
nothing and living no one knows
how - He spins long yarns
of the days of his youth which
are generally scandalous tales
of the goings on of Messrs
A. B. C. D. . . . X. Y. Z with Mesdames
Z. Y. X. . . . C. B. A. full names
and addresses being given in
all cases - He is now telling
hitchhail how Macnamara of the
I. M. S. got into trouble over
some Mr Hawksbee of Assam -

It appears that Mac is
Nicholl's dearest friend and
lived with him for 4 years.
Nicholl says the story is
false in every particular -
However Larnie is ^{assured} convinced
of the truth of it and relates
some convincing details - Nicholl
regrets that he still holds the
same opinion & changes the
subject to rhino shooting. He
is now trying to hold him
down by telling some of his
best sporting lies; but he won't
succeed for long -

A new engineer has come
here for the girder erecting, by
name Liddell - He has come

from Madras last and talks
fondly of that benighted spot.
He strums on the piano and
also composes Lord Henry's
set songs with words complete.
Here is a specimen -

Rose a Ring

I hold a red red rose here in my hand
The counterpart of one you gave to me
The day we were betrothed, the day my heart
Went out to yours in happy ecstasy
A petal here for every vow you breathed
A petal here for every month gone past
And what remains of love that was
That fickle love of yours that did not last
Ah red red rose of petals all bereft
My heart is torn like you what hope is left.

I hold a little ring here in my hand
The tender ring of love you once gave me
I treasured it for you & wound my heart
It ~~turned~~ turned itself in silent constancy
A golden thread for every vow you breathed
A jewelled stone for every kiss bestowed
And what remains of all that was
Caught but an empty ring, loves past and gone
The little ring once dear so dear to me
My heart is sad with bitter memory.

Enough said - He is rather deaf
and unfortunately has hooked
himself on to eat with us - I
am afraid he will be a little
wearisome -

Have you seen Palmer's beauti-
ful panoramic view of the bridge
which he sent to the Chairman?

I have also taken some rather
good photographs lately which
will be sent as soon as copies

have been made - Particularly
an exquisite portraiture of
my Huddleston - Did I tell
you of my extravagance in
buying a lens the best manu-
facture of Zeiss? Not quite
so wild as Oliver's piano but
pretty good - it cost £12/.

I have also written to the
Times who have started a depot
in Calcutta for the Sneye. Britt
and am going to get one on
the instalment plan - You
pay Rs 20/- and get the whole
E. B. with a beautiful revolving
bookcase thrown in - You
then go on paying Rs 20/a
month for 10 years or so when

you become complete possessor
of the knowledge of the world
neatly bound in $\frac{1}{2}$ morocco -
What do you think of the
enterprise?

I have been reading Esmond
which I find a most delight-
ful work particularly the
Sham Spectator letter to
Beatrice - This makes me
want to read the real Specta-
tor - Are there any decent
editions to be got fairly
cheap I mean reprints?
If so you may tell Brumpus
to send - many thanks to
Dorothy for the Jacobs book
which is most amusing. Also

many ditto to you for
2nd thoughts of an idle fellow.
I cant say I think they
are the best. Did you
ever see such ludicrous igno-
rance as is displayed in one
of the most high flown passages
on love when he talks of
one flower mingling its
pollen with the pollen of
another flower? !:ji

We have been having the
most atrocious weather here
for the last weeks bitterly
cold, rain, & a piercing
wind so I really think that

I have done rather well in
being in bed.

The following amusing telegram
was received yesterday from
Garland engineer at Karmnasa
to Palmer. "2500 ladies and
10,800 small ladies arrived. I
will take my requirements and
send remainder to you" !!

The joke is that Garland is
the most respectable old man
with a large wife and family.
In case the Chairman should
be so scandalized as to tele-
graph to the Agent to hastily
dismiss the poor old thing I

had better tell you that
he is talking about states,
which are called by these
ward names.

I think I will now stop -

You see what beautiful
letters I can write when
my time is not filled up
in writing progress reports
and signing bills!

Yr loving brother

Ralph H. Wiley

P.S. What about H.R. X his
W.B. ? I suppose it has
fizzled out -

Fawcett Library
27 Wilfred Street
London S.W.1.

Love to Marjorie 810(a)