

Christmas Day 5649

My dear Husband,

I think this is the first time I have had to post a letter to you on Christmas Day. May it come to you with all blessings. Mamma continues about the same. I do not see that she has lost any strength during the week, but her present state is a sad change from a fortnight back when she could read, write, and work as usual. Now she only lies quietly in bed. All that seems to be left of her is her mind, which is quiet and calm and collected. She sends her love to you. We scarcely ever leave her alone, as Dr. Hargnes says it is better to have three one always at hand. She has no suffering, all is quietness and peace, and she is only waiting for her dismissal. I sleep in her room, except one night in the week when Mil. takes my place, and I get a long night in my own room. Mil. is most good and kind. Maria is very thoughtful and helpful. She always brings my breakfast in a morning, and feeds poor mamma.

child I have mine. I should have
thought this loss of physical power was
from paralysis, but Dr. Hauges says is
decidedly it is not. Esther and Legras
thank you very much for the cards.
They are truly faithful girls and I
find them a great comfort. Mamma
and I have given them a deep each
as a Christmas gift. Noel has brought
me a good report from school. The
examiner, a Mr. Carey, from Oxford,
says that in classics he shows great promise.
Conduct is "very good." In writing to
Mr. Douglas with the amendment of the bill
I said how much we feel ourselves in-
debted to him for his kindness, and he
says in his reply - "Noel is a good boy, and
it is a pleasure to teach him." I am sure
it will be a joy to you to hear this. The
examiner said he had no doubt if
he worked steadily, he would get a Marl-
boro's scholarship. I quite share your
doubts as to the advisability of a public
school for him. I would I never let
him take this scholarship as it need
not involve going to the school. The
Newbern College changes nears
near Easter (April 1855) Noel would not

at the earliest, leave Mr. Douglas until
Sept. 1855. As by that time we would decide
whether Newbern College, under its new
directorship, would do for him. I have
a great feeling myself, against sending
him away from home, but he should
be amongst boys older than himself,
as to have to work up to someone
above him. His health keeps good, though
he looks delicate, and he is full of energy
and interest, both in work and play.
I wrote to Aletta the other day, asking
her about schools in Sausanne, and
she objects to Sausanne at all, for it is
so flooded with English, that girls really
do not require that ready use of the French
language which is for some the chief
end of sending them there. She strongly
recommends the lady at Montreux
with whom she staid for six months, with
Filda and Miriel, before going to Sausanne.
But that lady is a Roman Catholic and
I should not care to send girls there unless
I were with them myself, as Aletta was.
I will write to our friend Miss Burdett
who lives at Montreux and ask her about
schools. I am very glad the examination
is over. It was too much for them. I

Whenever the possession of the watch continued
Ilian's thoughts into quite a new channel.
It is quite pretty to see her enjoyment of
her new treasure. I have given Michael
this Christmas her mother's silver
fruit knife, with the initials L. S. W.
on the blade. I gave Ilian, at the same
time, a fruit knife of my own, and had
a little silver ornament for his watch
chain. The children have asked for me
such a lovely tea cloth. It is really quite
artistic. You should see the quantity of
cards and presents they have this Christ-
mas, a book each from Uncle Tom,
one each from Aunt Susan, and
numberless other little things. I hid all
the things in different parts of the
dining room, and nearly an hour
was spent in finding them. It was a
great enjoyment. I do not tell the
children about our anxiety for
Mamma, for it is no use clouding
their lives before the time. Their tea
dinner to her is very beautiful. I
think sometimes the present state may
become chronic. It is a step, and a
deep one, towards the end.

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Aunt Susan has sent me a copy
of "The Light of Asia", that I have read
very much. Her presents to
the children are, Stories from Homer,
Virgil & Lee East, all with Plate-
man's Illustrations. Uncle Jonathan
sent Mabel a book of music, beau-
tifully illustrated, Elian a selection
from the American Runnaways, and
Nool a book of etchings. He has also
sent me a book of boards, and
Morrison, and a small Life of
Nielif, so you see his bookcase is
considerably enriched. His delight
in painting is really wonderful. I
think he is a boy of singularly refined
tastes, and I believe his home life
develops them more than residence
at any school could. His good life.
I must not forget to say the £40. came
safely and was very welcome. Till the
pass I proposed under missing four
months' remittances from April
next. Mamma sends her love to
you. We all admire the card so much.
M. L. sends her love and thanks for her.
Ever your loving Gp.