

4639

DEHRI BRIDGE,
SHAHABAD DISTRICT,
BENGAL.

65

3rd Jan. 4 1900

My dear Pippa

A shameful state
of things - If this is really
No 65 I havent written to
you for a month - I meant
to write last week but put
it off as usual to the last
moment and then forgot all
about it - however I hope
you got news of me from
my private secretary whom I
instructed to write to you from
Allahabad. Thank goodness

Christmas is over and it is no longer necessary to go around with hearty smiles expressive of the good will which you don't feel to all men. I don't think I could brook another Dehu Xmas party. But I had better pick up threads and will go back to the 20th Decr when I went off to Allahabad for the purpose of viewing May Huddleston acting in "His Excellency the Governor" but unfortunately somebody died

and the theatricals didn't come off. On the 21st Winnie invited her friends to a fancy dress afternoon party which was a grand success. All the kiddies of Allahabad turned up and looked very pretty in their gay costumes. Mr Bcyts D.E. with whom the Huds an living has got a lovely garden with a big lawn on which were erected a huge tent for tea, a 'High Flier' swing and a 'Cherry Go Round'. Bcyts had in-

vented a most ingenious
contrivance for tilting at
the ring - a post fixed up
close to the merry go round
with a sort of penny in the
slot jim which perpetually
held out another ring as
soon as one was tilted off.
Everyone was given a spear
and there ~~was~~ prizes for
the best tilters - Everybody
was the best tilter and
the kids were simply fas-
cinated by the game and
could hardly tear themselves
away even for tea - They
were very nice children - I
fell in love especially with

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a little pink girl who said 'Give I a spruce too' meaning spear - she had a most Indian little face and it was a sight to watch her every time she came round to the post. Winnie was rather angelic as the maid was in the garden hanging out the clothes and acted the part of hostess with great gravity. After tea there was a magic lantern show followed by fireworks and the entertainment wound up with Shapdragon & H.B. as old Father Christmas with a

beautiful tow beard which
of course caught fire in
the snapdragon amid
wars of laughter. Every-
thing went off beautifully
and it was agreed by all
to be the party of the
season.

I went to lunch next
day with Arthur & Kelly
who were as kind as usual
Kelly had been ill but
said she was all right again.
They were expecting Charlie
Grant who was vaguely

supposed to be coming and
all trains were being met
for him, but he didn't turn
up while I was there - This
reminds me - What about Pat?
I heard that Mamma tele-
graphed for him to be re-
turned the moment he set
foot in India - Has he got
a commission or what?

We (the Huddlestons & I)
returned to Delhi on the
evening of the 23rd and arrived
next morning - The party
collected were the Asletts, Scarss
Soutter's deBevoise and Dutton

all 2.12. The Geakes w^o
w^o & Miss (Collector), Ross
(joint) & Murray (policeman) -
On Xmas day we had the
usual cricket match and
tiffin to which all with
1 drop of white blood in their
veins were asked - The cricket
match was Dehu v. Hilllanders
the latter being easily defeated.
I missed two easy catches
and made 21 not out!

We all dined at Palmers
and had games & sing song
afterwards for description
of which please see letter
of this time last year -

On the 26th there was a

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lawn tennis tournament, prize
a gold bangle won by Mrs
Sears and on the 27th all
departed except the Geakes
who stayed till the 2nd

Altogether it was rather
a dreary party and was
chiefly spoilt by Olivers
not being able to get leave.

Did I tell you that the
Blyttis came here for two
days on a visit to me
I dont know if you remem-
ber who they are - I met
them first at Darjeeling
years ago and went to stay

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with them at Wuzjufferpore.
He is now Opium Agent
at Bankipore. They are
both v nice & I have
put Oliver on to their
track.

Your last letter contained
the joyful news that the
Board had sanctioned my
leave. The extra 6 months
stipulation doesn't matter
much as it will bring
the time for starting my
next leave to March which
will be quite convenient.

The only likely hitch now
is the Govt of India who
may possibly talk about
dangerous precedents.

Palmer is sending home
diagrams of the Sone Bridge
by this mail. The piers
are all practically finished
and only 28 spans of gir-
ders left to be hoisted
most of which have been
rivetted up on the ground.

The Viceroy says he is sorry
he can't come to open the
bridge which is a sad
blow & I don't know if

by post as soon as I have summoned up enough courage
to thank you to Dorothy for her 2 books and to send
one unknown for Learies - Will Pennel still be in Paris
at the beginning of April? If so I might stop there a day

or two en route to see if she is
picking up the true accent.
Yr loving brother
Ralph

we shall have any Tamasha
now or not. The Lieutenant
Gov. of Bengal is coming
here on the 11th Feb. Per-
haps he will do it. Palmer
wants to call it the Strachey
Bridge & wants to know if
this would also be a red
rag. If it must have a
name it would be far
better than calling it after
old George who has had
nothing whatever to do with
it.

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If you see Fanny please
tell her from me that she
is an angel and that I
will send further details