

New Years Day 1896

My dear Pippa

Things have come to such a pass that it is now pretty certain that nothing will be done in constructing the Hooghly Serai Gya line before next cold weather. Gov. ernment have at present only sanctioned Rs 15,000 for a survey of part of it on which Palmer is going this week. This being so a brilliant idea has come into my head viz: - I have now been ^{more than} 6 years in the Co's service and

under the new leave rules, which
are already settled and ^{I think} agreed
to by Sec. of State I am entitled
to a years furlough. The only
bar is that the rules are not
yet published but are lying in
a drawer of the Chairman's desk
awaiting a $2\frac{1}{2}$ stamp. If he
could be prevailed upon to send
them out now instead of waiting
for ~~the~~ until the rules for natives
are ready, I could get 9 months
from March to November and
come back in time for the real

start of work. I have broached
the subject to Robertson and he
agrees.

I went for Christmas to
Assam to the Highets who H.
being now District Engineer
there. We had a very merry
time and I took some highly
successful photos which I
have been spending the whole
day in printing. The conse-
quence is I have got no time
left to write more. I will send

you a batch of photos next week
I have sent the bearskin to some
critters in Edinburgh and have
told them to send it to you and
if you like it when you see it
you may have it. (Vulgar comic
song in great vogue here.)

An urgent reply is requested
to the part of this letter written
at Papa -

yr. loving brother

Ralph