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Allerwood

Wimbledon Park

S. W.

December 13<sup>th</sup>  
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My dearest Pippa,

I hope this letter will reach you before you start for Italy. I am sure you will enjoy yourself awfully; especially if you go to Florence. This afternoon I went to the Halscys. They live in a flat in Cromwell Road. While I was there, rather an unpleasant thing occurred. A visitor was there called General Saxes; a sort

of Indian officer, I think. Mr.  
& Mrs. Halsey & General Sines sat  
in one group, talking, and Silge  
& I sat in another. Suddenly  
in a lull in our conversation  
I heard the word "Strachey"  
said in a very furious voice.  
I turned round to hear what  
was going on and I heard  
that they were talking about  
Papa. Gen. Sines remarked:  
"Strachey never did anything  
for the directors; "Richard  
Strachey, I mean." Whereupon  
Mr. Halsey said: "yes, one day  
I met Strachey at Salisbury;

and the man positively  
saved at me; so at last  
I got up to go away whereupon  
he said 'Oh don't go' and at  
last I got him to listen to  
what I said." Mr. Halsey was  
perfectly purple with agi-  
tation by this time & was  
simply ~~thumping~~ <sup>thumping</sup> Mr. H.'s knee;  
she then hurriedly changed  
the subject. You can imagine  
my feelings. Wasn't it  
spendish? I'd like to know  
what they know about Papa!  
Sighs! I can't bear Mr. Halsey

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M<sup>rs</sup> Halsey didn't say anything afterwards when Gen<sup>d</sup>. had gone otherwise it was very nice though it's ~~not~~ very encouraging to have one's father talked of like that. M. Perrotet is here to dinner; he was also here to lunch. He is very nice indeed but it is very odd hearing

M<sup>lle</sup> Louvestic called Marie by anyone but Mamma. She "the unresponsive she" is not all well she is always so tired & also coughs continually, Ah! I feel in a cage how beastly your not being here for the holidays - for me; (not for you) PEN.