

See Hollis 5659

Feb 5th 185.

My dear Husband,

Your letter with its post-script written after you had heard of Hannah's illness, went to my heart and did it good. Thank you for your loving and comfortable words. I have an anxious enough time now, and am likely to leave, but my health keeps up better than I could have expected and the children are so good and dutiful, and help me in every possible way. Lillian becomes a very lovable character. I am rather glad in one way, that she is breaking off work in April, for I do think Miss Andress works her too hard. It seems to be always lessons. I believe the going to France and having a regular change of work, will be a good thing for her. If she goes in May, she would return in October, and be settled at home when you come. If you do not return then, and my dear Mother is not with us, then Lillian and I will make our voyage together, for I look to that as the only means of building up a store of health again. I am today fifty years of age. Thank goodness I have not taken to spectacles

it, and don't mean to, either. I told
the children they were not to make
me any present today, but they might
write to me instead, so this morning I
have a pretty letter from Lillian, and
a piece of poetry from Mabel, also a
picture from Noel. I have been
writing each of them a letter full of good
advice and all the rest of it. We have
all written to Letitia for her birthday to-
morrow. I suppose she will soon now be
thinking of coming home. Noel asks
what has become of that piece of coral
which you brought from Louathine.
Can you pack it amongst the books.
We shall welcome those books, as a sort
of advance guard of yourself. We were
very much interested in the account
of your travels amongst that simple
minded people. I will send to the
Office for the report of '83. I shall also order
that magazine from Nichols. Lillian
might do far more than study medicine
and go out to practice it amongst the
native women. But the thing is to
give her every possible educational
advantage now, and let her tastes

develop themselves leisurely. I should
much like to send her to fiction or
Nuremberg, if possible. She will make
good use of a good education. If Mabel
had perseverance, she might do some-
thing in composition, and when she gives
up lessons in April, she must do some
steady writing at home. She has also a
fine voice. But the indifference!
Mamma continues about the same.
Her strength decays gradually, but very
gradually. She has good nights, and that is
a comfort. I really sleep better now, in her
room, than I have done for a long time
past, though I have to get up in the middle
of the night always to prepare something
for her.

As for the dismal prospect which you have
before you, of not being able to lie in bed as
long as you like when you come home. I
don't think you need fear, so long as you
do not wish the whole family breakfast
to wait for you. Against that I would cer-
tainly rebel, both on account of Noel's
school, and my own health, but you can
have your own breakfast whenever you
like, as becomes the master of the house,
and the prayers must come in *strenuously*

they can be put. We do not have them in a
morning robe, as ever since Mamma
has been so much worse, I have had
breakfast in bed. I could not get up at
all unless I had that put at the beginning
of the day. The servants are so good and
conscientious that all goes on well in
my absence. Esther is invaluable. She
is so steady. She is going to take the cook's
place when Mrs. Leighton is married in May,
and I shall take a young girl to train
under ^{her} as housemaid. We have to do as
well as we can now. I save my strength
as much as possible, for if I did break
down, it would be impossible for me to get
away. However all goes well at present.
I shall like to hear about your visit to
Allahabad. And shall you see the Khosras
at Agra. I should like to take Julian there.
I wonder when Mr. Leighton will be married.
I should think if he gave him something
of real silver, say a little jug, or half a
dozen tea spoons. I am doing a piece of
work for him on my own account, a
border for a small table. Remember
me to him when you write. Mamma
sends her love to you. She often says she
wishes the end would come, for she fears
being a burden. Still he she will never
be better. You love me & Yr