

Pension Marcelli. 5746
Via della Arce 71. Roma
Italia. Dec. 21st 1880

My dear Eliza,

I had your letter this morning with Mrs Speer's. I have written to her to say I can do nothing here, but will when I am back in Malvern next month. I have an appointment this afternoon with the Secretary for the Prevention of Cruelty Society here. He can only speak Italian, so that I have had to wait till I can take an interpreter with me - for though I have Italian enough now to go about with, I cannot converse. I never saw any where such treatment of animals as here in Rome - not from cruelty, but from pure ignorance & thoughtlessness. I feel sure something could be done. At any rate I mean to try.

I hope the quiet living, "where the real home-life may begin again for good, is not very far ahead; for I am afraid the Liverpool one will be very wearing to you. However I am glad there are some nice people turning up. After all, there will be a great deal of fresh air to breathe in socially, even if there is not much to root into in other ways, and if Mr Stephenson must have work, it is better having it in Liverpool, where you can all be together, than in India, where you would be apart. But I would not use up your strength in such hard work as

nailing down carpets. There is enough
that others cannot do for you, but
the rough work might fairly now be
paid into other hands. I am glad
Mr Cropper is so near. He is one of the
most sterling men I have ever come
across, and their home must be a de-
lightful centre, I should think, of what
is best in Liverpool - unless Mrs Crop-
pers ill health just now shuts them
up - Mr Stephenson will be having
a busy time with Advent and Christ-
mas services on hand. I hope it is not
a Daily Service Church. There are two ladies
at this house who are ruining their
health by their morning-religion; going
out to church before breakfast, when
they need food first thing. We have had it
much warmer the last few days, more like
Roman winter weather. We scarcely seem
to need fire at all, unless it be in the
evening to look at. There is an open stove
in the Salon, and a wood fire is lighted
at dusk. On the whole things are very
comfortable, and there are two or three
really nice people. with others who are
rather the reverse. The last comes among
the number. Irish, and a perfect peg-

Low Church - studied for the Irish Church, and
very sanctimonious in manner, but it is
disgusting to see his anxiety to get the best
and biggest of everything at table for him-
self. I like Rome, as a place to stay at, better
than Florence - If it were not for the treat-
ment of the animals I could stay on
indefinitely with comparative content; and
so far I have been much better in health
than in Florence, where I never felt really
well. Perhaps it was the sudden change from
the mountain air to that of a city in the
plains - By the bye - I do not think Rome
would be a very safe place to bring girls
to, for here you see the fascinating side
of the Roman Church. The services here
are in some churches very lovely. I go
every Sunday to the Trinita di Monti, where
the music is - always to the same quiet
corner, and though it is true that artisti-
cally speaking the music is far from per-
fect, yet there is something about it
which seems to bring everything and
everyone into harmony with what is good.
Yesterday I spent going over the ruins
of the Forum, but I will write about
them to Moll, whose letter must serve
for Mabel and Lillian as well, for
my envelope will not hold a

note for my wife. I wish I could
have seen him yesterday coming
Home. I expect the house will feel
more home-like now that he has arrived
to see and admire the finished arrange-
ments. I hope you will have a
Happy Christmas Day, though it will
be broken into a good deal by the neces-
sary Services at the Church, which
will hardly allow the "Master of the House"
sufficient time to do his duty properly
by the Christmas Dinner. I should be
very glad myself to go to sleep on Friday
night and wake up on Sunday morning.
However as I have to spend Christmas
Day in Rome I shall do as Rome does
and make the most of it. The ceremoni-
al in the Churches is magnificent, though
less so at St. Pauls than when the Pope
used to officiate in person. I think I shall
go there in the morning, and to the Trinita in
the afternoon at 4 o'clock. When you write
again will you send me a cheque for £2.?
There is no hurry, so do not send on purpose.
Will you speak to Sarah about coming to the
Hollies? It would be about the third week in
January. Perhaps she would stay with you till
then if she came, and her wages for the two months
would be the same as with you. My love to all,
and a Happy Christmas. Your aff^{te} M^{rs} Catherine Taber.

Exeter Library
27 Wilfred Street
London S.W.4

8268