

St Anne's
Maritzburg
Dec: 4th/96

My dear Mater,

December nowll have begun to strip my room & have put away my little ornaments & begun to pack my books. I wish you & the dear Chick a Happy Xmas & New Year. Please give my love to Bingo & his wife & say I am sorry I have not time to write my good wishes to them, but I will say them later.

The poor little baby at Buccleuch is dead. It was very sad altogether. On Monday I heard from Miss

Short that it was worse again - on Saturday it was considered better & Mrs Mackenzie returned home,

on Sunday it had

a relapse & on Monday died, almost directly after

Shortie had written to me

On Wednesday we were astonished to see Miss Short - she suddenly appeared spent the day shopping, the night here, & then went up country to bid farewell & pack some things up there.

She was looking very thin & wretched - she says it had been a dreadful time at Buccleuch. For a fortnight the little creature's life seemed to hang on a thread. It remained motionless, they dared not touch it except to put little drops into its mouth It never thrived - was always sick - then had

convulsions & died of

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"meningitis" or something like it - but for the fortnight nearly every hour was expected to be its last & yet it lingered on.

Of course it has upset poor Mrs George - & as for Mr George Shortie says he looks 10 yrs older. Quite grey, face white & lined - poor man.

I saw Tom for a minute on Wednesday, he drove Shortie up to St Anne's & sat outside in the carriage for a brief moment, I jumped up & sat with him to talk. He looks very thin & has sciatica so badly that even when driving in he had to get out & walk part of the

way, he could not bear to sit still.

Miss Short will be down again on Monday or Tuesday.

I was much astonished the other day when my girls gave me a silver napkin-ring a very nice one indeed, you will see it for I shall bring it home with me & the photograph too that you may see them Was it not good of them it was instead of framing

the photograph, I believe because they thought a

frame would be a nuisance on the voyage.

I have taken down nearly all the things in my room & packed them, & nearly all my books are packed I sent 2 boxes up into the loft this afternoon of things, for L. Warden said she would prefer me to

put away my things - & I did too -

for I do not know who is to have my room net term.

I told you about Concha did I not? Well it seems that

he has gone home to his kraal now & he said it was "dakha" or Indian hemp which he smokes until it makes him ill. Dr Allen says its effects are most injurious, some smoke it till they lose all nerve power others become imbecile & nearly every ktnr in the asylum has been sent there through it. Concha confessed when Dr Allen accused him, he could hardly walk, he reeled & staggered & this not like intoxicants soon after drinking but it is the effect of smoking more than a week ago.

Dakha is Indian hemp, it grows here, & you can be nned if you grow it & if you smoke it.

A number of people have come down here from Dundee & Newcastle because there is a scare of a Kthir rising - it is wonderful the rumours that there are - some think the Dutch are going to make war they are certainly making preparations - others that it is to be a native rising - certainly the natives

are in some places very discontented just now. All

this is really due to Jameson's raid, & yet you deify

the man & want to marry him to a Countess.

L.Warden is getting very nervous. We see by the paper that more troops are coming out here - not

that they are much use when they come.

I saw Mrs Sutton the other day, she & Bettie & 2
Misses Richies arrived last Saturday. She looks
very well, so does Bettie. The Misses Ritchie are
going to live at Fair Fell & Gerty has gone up to
settle them. They had on board, going home, the
Reform people they sailed out of harbour a
Capetown by day, in the dead of night the vessel
stopped everybody alarmed, because the
telegram of the Drummond had just been
received, rushed up on deck nobody knew what
was the matter, then in the dark a boat came
alongside & 4 or 3 men & one valet came on
board. Mr Lionel Philips was the owner of the
valet & he had told him to bring the least amount
of luggage possible - only a hand-bag - so the
master had only

that but his gentlemen brought all his luggage &
his deck chair.

The captain to the end maintained that he had not
known what was going to be done when he left
Capetown, but stopped because of signals of
distress.

Good-bye dear Mater & Chick both of you a
Happy Xmas & New Year.

The time is short now

With much love

Mary Moore

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