

Thursday St Anne's
Maritzburg
Dec:10th /96

My dear Mater,

Fancy! Next Thursday we shall be on board
according to all we can hear.

The "Kausler" is expected in Durban on the 12th, &
should leave again on the 16th. Friday.

I tried to write yesterday, because in the afternoon I
was sent to my room to lie down & do nothing, the
rehearsal of the night before gave me a stiff shoulder

& neck & I was useless; every few minutes somebody

rubbed me with Elliman but it only gave way when
Mrs Bennie ironed me through brown paper.

I suppose it is rheumatism, now I know what you have I do indeed sympathise with you .

Part of the afternoon I could not move myself& I had to get somebody to do my hair for me & help me to dress.

I thought I should not be able to appear, however, it yielded to the ironing & I was able to take my place behind the scenes as usual.

Every body said it was a great success & they all seemed to enjoy themselves, so I hope it was. Fortunately, it rained, so some people could not

come in, which was lucky for the rooms were

crowded.

Grace, Alec, Tom, Jack & Harry all came from Cramond, Grace Trotter the Shaws (Wattie Alfred Joe & Campbell) Mr Burdon, Caroline Shaw, Miss Norton Sheila Fannin Mr Hansky, Mr & Mrs Warren.

People come in from all parts.

We felt it was rather like Fiddling over Rome while burning for it feels as if we were on the brink of some kind of outbreak.

Two of our Dutch girls were sent for & went last night old Mrs van Wyk said there was going to be war & she wished to have them at home

immediately, they were to wait for nothing but to go at once.

One of them was in the play but we had to take her out, they left last night & were not even to delay a

few hours until the play was over.

Another has been sent for today.

From Dundee & Newcastle there has been a general exodus to Maritzburg & Durban of Dutch families who say the natives are going to rise on them - but in the Transvaal & in the Free State it is supposed to be the Dutch against the English.

They have even timed the rising of the natives on the 16th December, of the Dutch on Xmas Eve.

Mr Geo Mackenzie was in on Wednesday, to fetch Shortie

& he told us of an Australian he had just met who was most indignant.

He was in Johannesburg, & having a pistol he had obtained a license for it - when a few days later he was arrested & fined for having it in his possession

they had just passed another law to forbid anyone

to possess arms unless he would take an oath not to use them against the Dutch. He was fined & his pistol taken from him because he refused to take the oath. He had come down to Maritzburg for he said he would not stay in such a country under such terms.

The Governor & all in authority say "Pooh! Old Women"

but no matter what they think they have to say such

things to calm people & prevent a panic.

Many old colonists say things look very black & threatening but hope it will come to nothing.

y. I do not like to leave when they are in such a state of uncertainty Perhaps, we may not leave on the 16th as advertised because trouble has already begun at Delagoa & the "Kausler" has to call there before it comes into Durban -Then when we leave it is the first place we call at. In this morning's paper was a telegram to say the Dutch consul had been insulted, the German consul attacked & the

English flag torn down & split into ribbons at
Lourenzo Marques which is the Portuguese port on
Delagoa Bay.

This will be my last letter from Natal if all goes well
& I may write & leave one to be posted as we
expect to go to Durban on Tuesday - only I have all

my packing to do & very little time. I will post as
often as I can up the coast.

Mrs Sutton sent me a bottle for the voyage, the
other _ _ _ _ & Miss Fannin told me to' day she had
ordered one to be sent up to me. Elsie Pascoe has
given me a bottle of Lavender Water, & Grace & Mrs
Warren gave me an enormous bottle of Eau de
Cologne.

Are they not good?

Last night people were invited for 8 as usual, but of course came at 7.30 p.m. The play began at a quarter to 9 - the room was filled, some men were standing on forms & chairs outside to look in the windows -

I cannot tell you what people said to me afterwards, or you will think I have no feeling of modesty left,

but many of them were highly complimentary. Miss Stoward was most amusing of course she taught all the singing & taught it very well, exceedingly well, but she would conduct. She sat in a corner of the audience where none of the girls could see her but the audience could, near the orchestra but at the back of it so that

through everywhere & showed all the weak spots & was driven right across our verandas - then hail which thundered on the roof & smashed the tiles & sent the mortar flying. I put a bath on the veranda in one place where there was a leak & thought I should have soft water for my tub this morning, but it contains large lumps of plaster & brick as well as water. The grape vine which looked lovely under the wealth of green grapes yesterday, I hear are nearly demolished. The apricots were saved for

we had them for dinner yesterday, stewed.

When the violence of the storm had passed & we could again hear ourselves shout, we could not before in the roar of the storm & the pelting of hail

on the iron part of the roof (it is iron my end,

tilled lower where the old part of the College is) there was a dull roar to be heard like the murmur of wave upon a rocky beach - it was the hail-storm somewhere else. We fear there may be great damage though less than usual because this year there is hardly anything to spoil. Next week I must tell you about Miss Lawrence's shipwreck a lovely adventure!