

Cape Town, 1 Octob. 1863

My dear Loui,

This morning brought no Overland Mail Letters, which will, therefore, probably arrive on Monday next. We should all so have liked to have heard by this time, how you are, - trusting so much that you have again recovered from your last attack of weakness. From the enclosures that you sent per last Mail, we almost conclude that you wrote to Dr. Mann regarding your health, and we should be very glad to hear that you had consulted some medical man, in whom you may have so much confidence, as I believe you have in his skill. It may indeed be that you would not soon be able to see him; - but I trust, I need not say, that this may indeed not be the case; Please, dear Loui, may I ask you, in case ever that I should be mistaken, and you had written to him, for some other reason than that of your health, - that whoever of the two (either Dr. Mann or Dr. Callaway) will be first personally accessible to you (and I should think one of them would likely soon to be coming to D'Urban on a visit) you will not hesitate to consult him with regard to your health, and really do whatever you possibly can do for its restoration, - at least as far as human aid goes. - Regarding ourselves, - the chief event is that on Tuesday last the nurse left us not being able on account of private reasons of her own (mostly I think arising out of the care of a daughter just grown up) to be longer absent from home. So one week earlier the charge of baby has entirely fallen to Jemmie, - except that Mrs. Mason comes every morning to wash and dress baby. This is indeed some comfort and a great help at present to Jemmie. Jemmie did not wish to engage a new nurse now, - as she thought it would rather add to the discomfort and anxiety to have a strange woman for a short time in the house. Happily baby is doing excellently, - its existence still mostly consists in sleeping, drinking, a little crying. and sometimes delicious intervals of quiet thoughtful wakedness. Both mother and child want very much going out again; - since Saturday last none of them, nor even Bella (who still retains a few remains of her cold, though much better) have been out of doors. The weather has been very unfavourable. Yesterday we had hail (though not very large stones, more sleet). - Besides baby, there is of course no news of importance from here. Jemmie is pretty well, - only rather nervous by the unavoidable staying in doors. Today we had better weather, but it was too cold. Tomorrow, I trust it will be sufficiently warm to allow her to go out. - Baby has grown so much, is at least twice as heavy as three weeks ago; very expressive face, rosy [?] full cheeks, receding doublechin, - mouth more like her mother's than me. Nose more like mine. Eyes not like mine. The Dr. has not been in the house for a long time. Nellie's Astronomy Classes will not begin again before the 10th, if she attends them again, which we should like her to do, and offered her. The Maclears will not again be there. They find the weekly march in & out of town (assisted either by Omnibus or Rail[?]) too great a tax for their strength. - Though we are looking out for a house, yet we think it very doubtful, whether we shall find a more suitable one. - Living out in the country is at least for the next six months out of the question, for it is not likely that the Wynberg Railway will be finished before that time; and we find it impossible in any other way to manage it, - nor are we sure that we shall be able to manage it in this way. Jemmie is now almost the whole day down stairs. The breakfasts, indeed up stairs in bed, then dresses, - has her portwine and bread, and comes down with baby, who sleeps the greater part of the day in a corner in the drawing room, between the chimney and the bookshelves, on a temporary bed made on the top of a box. She dines mostly now with us in the dining room, has her afternoon cocoa about four o'clock in the Drawing room, and then about sunset goes upstairs, has her tea, undresses baby with Nellie's help, puts her to bed, goes herself to bed, - and has her gruel as the last thing at night, - with some gruel always kept warm for during the night. She feels she says sometimes like a mealie mill has to grind such a very great quantity of mealies for herself and for that large consumer, Miss Edith. Excuse my quoting this (without her permission) to you. I am very glad my holidays are still lasting at least some part of this month. They just begin to put up the bookcases in my room, which looks rather smart with a handsome chimney piece. The whole Library presents now a very different appearance, its outside being nearly completed. The last two years about £4.000 has been spent upon it as Parliamentary Grant. So I am almost all day at home & can help

nursing baby, - in the mysteries of which department (I mean that of nursing) I am gradually initiated. O have also to play with my little Bella, and to let her read & write. Further I have to tease Nellie – and I am afraid that part of my task is the only one in which I may be said to achieve any perfectness. Baby is just roaring as if being roasted alive, - she is up stairs I suppose under process of being made right and put to bed. I sit just under her in the drawing room, at the foot of the sofa, where my study table stands, and write you all this nonsense. The screaming has ceased, it did not last above a minute, but baby has certainly good lungs. As she is a most perfectly healthy baby, - of course her mama (and sometimes also her foolish papa) is frightened about all sorts of imaginary ills. You may be sure we worry ourselves quite sufficiently about the little thing, who has grown considerably more human since her appearance in this “vale of tears”, as we do not call it. It is very interesting to observe the gradual growth of humanity in the little animal; for you must know (shocked or not shocked) that we are firm believers in the Development theory. Apropos: Have you read the reverse of that doctrine in Kingsley “Water babies”, when he speaks of the degeneration of the D’oas youths [?] into “Habababoos”, as we call them. If I was very rich, I would buy that book and send it someone as a present, but at present I feel I have no right to do any such thing. In fact it is charming nonsense, though there are few people who will not find it silly. But Paterfamilias knows that also silly things have their rights. Therefore – I am afraid I must conclude this letter with best love to you and all the sisters and brothers, your affectionate

Wilhelm