

1894

Antwerp, July 3

My darling Helen: I begin a letter to you with very little material with which to fill it. It is a pretty sudden, though not wholly unwelcome, come-down from the rush and gaiety of London to find ourselves in this quiet place, being a mile and a half from the city in a river which looks for all the world like Passaic Bay which we pass on the way to Elizabeth by the N. J. C. And yet there is this difference, that here there is not even the semblance of a hill, such for instance as is to be found at Aunt Annie's in Elizabeth or one on Staten I^d. The Scheldt runs very swiftly between low meadows, protected by the famous dykes of the low countries - and the moment I looked at them I said "malaria probably, mosquitoes certainly." The latter we have had, though not nearly so badly as I feared, the former

not. I find Antwerp quite uninteresting, which
is due largely to the fact that I have lost interest
in places, and in sight seeing, for the most part.
There is a fine Zoological garden upon the track
of which Mr. Livingston put me, and I find a
wider interest in watching lions and tigers
crunching bones - than there are many fine pictures
which I have not yet seen. You may perhaps have
heard already from Katharine Livingston of my
meeting with them. It was rather a curious com-
bination of incidents. I had gone to the post office
to buy some stamps, which I rarely do - but find-
ing a long queue waiting I soon got tired and
started to come away, and at the swinging doors
I met Mr. Livingston just about to enter. He
recognized me, whereas I failed to know him.
It is four years since we met and he is looking
gaunt and rather worn, which is not wonderful
after the terrible affliction and strain he has
undergone. He had also the advantage over me
of knowing that I was here, which his appearance
was totally unexpected to me. At his proposal

I went to the hotel, a few steps away, when we talked for half an hour, then went again to the P.O. when I bought my stamps. As we entered I met our Consul just coming out, who gave me a late Paris St. G. Herald. I don't know what curious feeling prompted me not to mail our opening letters in which I had asked Mr. Herbert to detach me in case Adm'l Ramsay was coming to the Chicago; but I did withhold it, and on coming out and opening the paper I found that the Commodore of the station was said to be expected to Adm'l. The Island. Had I not first met Livingston and then the Consul the letter would probably have been sent. Of course you will not speak of the letter. The next day - Sunday - Mr. Livingston came on board with Katharine Mrs. Gore, the latter's daughter, and a lady whose name I forget. I took them over the ship and they remained about an hour. Katharine was looking very well and pretty, but I was distressed to see signs of dislocation running along her upper teeth, which are already a disfigurement and look ominous for the future. Mrs. Gore I had never known but thought my pretty English friend Rosie Schiff has also very delicate looking teeth - a great pity for she has a most attractive smile. Mamma's letter of June 22 reached me a few moments ago. I don't myself quite know the difference between L.L.D. and D.C.L. The former is commonly used D^r of Laws, the latter D^r of Civil Law, i.e. Roman Law. In both cases as applied to most recipients it is of course a purely honorary appellation. You have a house full sure enough, but I am glad if it I think it good for you all and could wish that Miss Eszi, or some other, were going to stay. You seem to walk your way very well, but dear little Nell, from whom we more expect such a length, seems to have a dependence towards strangers, which having them in the house wd.

tend & despair. The mixing easily with strangers
is sometimes a natural gift, but where it is other-
wise custom soon rubs off natural shyness. There
are few men naturally more retiring than myself,
yet this cruise has resulted in making me perfectly at
ease in all companies and all places, except when
making a speech, and even that was getting easier.
I am going very shortly to order for you Parry's
Art of Music which you must regard as a birth-
day gift. If I only knew of something for
Nelly I would send it her also. I think I will
any how and if "Ships that pass in the Night"
is not too expensive I will send it then for her
birthday. We are greatly fearing - at least I
am - that the Chicago will have to stay out
over the winter. I trust it may not be so.

Tell mamma that was all nonsense in the Times
about our repairs. The truth is the boilers were
known to be in bad condition when we left home,
but it was thought they might last a year and
then home. When we got here they were found to

be in such bad shape that they could no
longer be tinkered and it has been necessary
to spend \$15,000 which ruins them so
much that they can run on until the gas
house for new boilers, engines and decks.
It is a dreadful disappointment for me. Tell
Mamma to bear up for the stress & feel it
less than last time I was away. Tell her
also to remind Will Harrison that Harper,
on declining my first book, wrote that their
professional readn, which speaking well of it
advised against publication. He evidently was
not the accomplished littérateur of whom
the World has a story that he at once recom-
mended it. Who he was I don't know - I only
above can claim that. Love & Mamma & Tell
her that if it is any comfort to know I am
as anxious to get home as she is & have her,
she can have it. I have secured another copy of
that London Review she saw the W. Post. Love &
the Children
Yr. loving father

Via London July 3. 1894

Miss Helen Evans Mahan

Quogue (Long Island)

New York

United States of America