

Vassar College

Jan. 17. 1875.

My dear Mr. Barns.

"I wont be dictated to, you see," but to proceed. Your welcome letter of the 14th was only rec'd. and as you may witness most promptly answered. Dont be entirely discouraged and think you will always, so soon, be in my debt - but as I answered all other letters yesterday and today felt some what in the writing humor, which is rather unusual, I concluded to make you my victim. Is this apology sufficient? I will consider it so an continue by telling you how delighted I was to hear so soon and in such detail of home news. I am getting quite discouraged about myself really for it become harder for me to return every time I go away I am afraid society is having a demoralising effect upon me and the worst of it is I dont know any remedy.

I dont suppose for a moment I should be contented to spend week after week and month after month in the frivolous way I spend my vacations - but when home upon such occasions as the above it is with me "eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow ye die" and I make the most of all that is going. But now I have returned to my Alma Mater and as you say that wh. was but last week a reality is fast becoming a dream. Yes it was just about this time last Sunday when we were enjoying our "cigars up stairs". But why did I ever say any thing about that. Indeed it makes me quite ashamed when I think of it- ashamed that I ever entertained such selfish sentiments and more so that I put them in words - but that is only one of a great many things I have been sorry for and I suppose it will trouble me as little after a while as the others do now. Has it been so long since you went to school that you have forgotten what dreadful days Mondays always are and how we all dislike them? You have? Well I have not - yet of all bad ones it seemed to me that of Jan. 11. was about the worst. This time it was not a fright for this or that particular lesson wh. might have been imperfectly prepared- no the feeling was infinitely worst- I felt that the contest in that case was not for the day but would probably last until June next. Now this is a great confession for I dont think any body began to know how badly I felt about leaving. But I am very happy to say that my fears have now entirely left me- and I am looking forward to as pleasant a future as the past has been. Of course I expect to detract the pleasure afforded by the old friends who are no longer here with me, but there are those left for whom I care a great deal. A book was my sole companion on my journey back though my attention was some what attracted to a young bride & groom who by the by very soon disgusted me and I was happy to find that near me sat two Germans, (young girls) who seemed very talkative and to whose conversation I could listen without the least impropriety for they doubtless thought I could understand none of it. Be this as it may I was pretty interested in endeavoring to understand and before I quite realized it we were in N.Y. I crossed the City without difficulty and was about seating myself in an ordinary car of the Poughkeepsie train when I came to the conclusion I did not care to be in ^so [crossed out: such a] close proximity with ^a rough set as seemed to be occupying it so I picked up my things and went into a drawing room car. There I made the acquaintance of a lovely family from Albany and my ride was thus ^made very pleasant. Of course I had a great deal to tell and be told when I got to the College - one very interesting fact was; that I should surely be called upon to recite the next morning in "Mental" Think of it 32 pages in Stewart and 20 in Reed to read, besides some in Hamilton to learn - and a headache in the bargain. Well, I did not attempt it, and was not called on either, wh. I considered proof that I had done the right thing

when I chose bed in stead. Probably you would smile if you could look in upon me now - trying as best I may to fill the place of Librarian. With all the airs possible I am sitting at the great desk and am really very dignified. Some people think I can be if there are some that dont. The smile upon Prof. B.'s face is a little difficult to interpret. I am afraid he does not stand quite as much in awe of me as is the proper thing under the circumstances. When I first saw him he expressed himself ^as so sorry not to have received Papa's note of invitation sooner. He said "I would have answered it I would have marched straight to the "City of Brotherly Love". And dont I wish he had. If it was not real dreadful I should certainly think I liked him a very great deal. He is just splendid, wonderfully interesting and the possessor of exceedingly fascinating manners. The only thing is, I dont believe he thinks his wife perfection and I am sure I cant blame him for that. I will tell you no more ^of him with the hope that you may some day be able to judge for yourself.

On Thursday evening last we had a very entertaining lecture from Mrs. Livermore who was here visiting Maria Mitchell. It is needless to tell the subject of her lecture - indeed she gave none - I will only remark she had 400 attentive listeners and 400 ardent admirers- After the lecture Miss Cushing took me, with several of my class mates, upon the stage to meet her - and there before the president, and several of the teachers, imagine our embarrassment at her first question - "Well, my dear young ladies what do you propose doing when you leave here." Of course I could not tell her, before so many that I expected to study law with Mr. Hoffeskee Especially if I did not care to have the intention publicly announced on Class day (by the prophet-) [crossed out: and] ^for in the case of his being present, wh. is not improbably - it would be exceedingly unpleasant. So I did not say anything nor my neighbor nor hers and altogether it was a little uncomfortable and we changed the subject. On Friday evening we had a German entertainment in the Hall wh. consisted (besides essays, songs, & scenes from Marie Stewart all in German) of a german play "Ein Respectable Gesellschaft." Pardon trans. "A Respectable Company." This company consisted of four old men and four old women all over sixty, who were greatly opposed to ^the convivalities of the present day who never sought the society of any body but themselves and who entertained them selves by getting up little plays. Well one of these old women had a neice and one of these old men had a nephew & these young people cause them a great deal of trouble and anxiety & finally eloped Itc-tc. but the funniest part was to see these girls whom we knew ordinarily so well, dressed and acting some body else so admirably that we scarcely [crossed out: knew] ^recognised them. One of the girls Miss Lyman, from Montreal, niece of the former lady principal of the College who died here from great age, acted and looked so like her ^aunt that at first many of us hesitated as to whether it was the proper thing for us to give way to such laughter, but she became so ludicrous finally that it required more than an act of volition to stop us - When she fainted and one of the fat old men came to apply the salts wh. she had suspended from her finger by a ring and flourish her large fan - it was too much - and so is this, I must stop. Do tell me who that wonderful person is I met at Media - friend of the Ornes, I have not an idea. No reflection upon your description - I assure you - I guess I never met him. Well you seem to be having a pretty good time at home - coming and going - It is all very well so long as not carried into excess- but you must not forget- well I most not forget either - that you always laugh at me when I attempt to preach - so I wont do it. Only dont let your "good resolution" go for naught. As I find they are observed more or less then can I say more correctless whether I have faith in you or

not. I am afraid at present I have not very much. You are quite incorrigible
at least so thinks your friend
Lucy Sellers.

Lucy (Sellers) Barnes, '75