

Vassar College.  
Sep. 27. 1874.

Dear Evie,

I have been sitting five minutes with my pen suspended, trying to think how to begin, which was rather unnecessary as I want to accomplish a good deal in the reading, and letter writing line to day, so I will just dash right in. My rocking chair came on Thursday and to my surprise, turned out to be the doubled up one, it is so pretty, the prettiest in the room, that I can't find it in my heart to scold mamma for her extravagance, so I thank her very much instead.

I was invited to the meeting of Chapter Beta on Friday by Miss Fay, that gushing girl whom I think you have heard me speak of, there was an original story by a Senior which kept us in roars of laughter most of the time, how she ever wrote it, I can't imagine, then scenes from College life, a poor Prep, crying as if her heart would break, who, every little while would give her handkerchief a little squeeze and so let fall a copious shower of tears, then the Freshman ghastly white (with cornstarch) a book in each [crossed out: her] hand and one on her head and piled three deep around her feet; next the Sophomore, "Eager for knowledge, wisdom wit" as the Pres. of the society said, with specs on her nose and a moat absorbed expression writing furiously, the Junior was merely a paper tombstone with "Departed this life, a Junior" on it, and the Senior was a view of their privileges being a table piled with eatables and other things "too numerous to mention, I thought of you a good many times playing at the swarry and wished I were home to hear you. I hope you got along all right and were not as nervous as you expected.

The President thinks that Greek has been neglected here, and advised the regular students very strongly to begin it this year in place of Latin or French which could be taken up later in the course, a great many of the girls have done so, but I did not wish to give up any of my present studies for it even if I had been very anxious to study it which I was not, though it would be nice to say you had studied such a difficult language.

I thought that Miss Fay wouldn't be quite so sweet after we hadn't seen each other for so long but she is worse than ever, over powering\* she tries to hug me on all occasions which I resist by all sorts of shivers, and squirms as my way is you know only I confess, they are somewhat exaggerated for her benefit: I knew last night she would want to kiss me good night, so as there was a strong odor of pole cat in the air, I kept my handkerchief to my mouth to prevent her and am happy to say succeeded: she is just another Sallie Berger and I would never go near her if she hadn't so few friends.

—I had to stop writing and dress for Chapel although it was three quarters of an hour before it began but I invented a new way of fixing my hair with puffs, which takes so much time I have to begin early: we are to have the Episcopal service this morning, preached by some minister from Po'keepsie High school. I am ever so glad, for the other is so monotonous. Our parlor is beginning to look more like a parlor and less like a pig pen, though boxes of books and pictures still adorn the floor, we made an attempt to fix it up on Sat. and succeeded to the extent of putting up

one picture; I hope next week [crossed out: w] or rather this week we can finish it: our carpet is much prettier than the one we had last year, brown and yellow stripe with little white leaves all over it. I went up in 52 last night and lo, they have another red & green carpet, a new one, and more fiery than ever, it must be a seviceable color or they wouldnt use it so much. Do you remember that girl whom I said lived in Saugerties ? she rooms in this parlor and [crossed out: a] when I brought out Pappa's picture she looked at it in perfect amazement, and said she knew a gentleman who looked exactly like that, and sure enough she meant Uncle John, whose church she went to, isn't It strange she should be in the same parlor with me?

Did I tell you that Miss Hoyt was a first Prep? I am so glad I am not one for I didn't realise what a "deggeradation" it was until now I am something more.

Annie Barcalow was not permitted to be a special as she wished, one reason was that she was not old enough, she calls herself nineteen [crossed out: I believe] and you have to be twenty before you can be special, it will be a pity if sho has to go back to our class but she can easily make up if they will allow her. I suppose my pictures have not come. I have written to Agnes and as soon as I get an answer will write to the Photographers and see what is the matter. I bought a Miscellany yesterday which I will send to Mamma, it is the one for July, I believe. Tell the children to write to me, I hope to hear that Mamma is well in your next letter. Tell me every thing about the Dramatic.

Tell Momma there Is a beautiful edition of of Warner's works in the Library hero, bound in brown & gold and Illustrated too. it is published by Osgood, and I think would do very well for Mrs Loomis. I know you dont like to read crossed pages and I dont like to waste paper so I wont write any more. Give lots of love to Pappa & Mamma.

Your loving Sister Mamie.

[Mary E. Gaston, ex-'78]

[Note by E. K. Van der Veer '06, donor of letters: This rocker went three times to Vassar – in 1874 with Mary Gaston, in 1906 with Elisabeth Van der Veer; in 1922 with Mary M. P. Gaston. It was left at college – fate unknown.]