

Vassar College. Dec. 16, 1866.

My own dear Brother,

Your letter was received last Monday, and was the occasion of much serious and some sad thought, especially the question, "Is it a living faith or a dead acquiescence"? But that reflection has occasioned good results: for I do honestly and earnestly, at this very moment, feel more certain that I have a love for fcdnd living faith in Christ in my heart; and that I have a stronger desire and purpose, than ever before, to make that love the guiding star of my life, and to grow more and more each day into a nearer resemblance and closer communion with our loved Saviour. I do not say this merely to satisfy you, nor is it a sudden outburst of religious fervor or seaU but it is my firm conviction, and it is my intention to live up to this conviction; and it is my most earnest prayer to the kind Father, that he will nourish and strengthen within me this germ of holiness, until it shall become a mighty tree, whose fruits, however humble they may be, may yet give nourishment and life to some of the children of this world. I do not mean to be presumptuous, and assert that I am firmly settled and grounded in the faith, so that nothing can shake me, for poor human nature is so weak, that I know not how soon some unlooked-for temptation might assail me in some particularly available point and the weakness of my boasted strength be revealed. But yet, if I only keep firmly hold of the one idea that Christ is the "Rock of our Salvation" the strength of our strength, we need have no fears as to our remaining firm under any trial. But still, I think the great danger Dec* 16, 1866 - 2

of falling back is not when the great trials comes for then we are apt to be aroused from our lethargy and say, "What does this mean"? "This muSt come from God"; but the difficulty seems to me in bringing our Christianity to bear upon the minute details of daily life. To my mind, the man or woman who is shedding the light of the gospel on his or her daily life, not ostentatiously but "doing whatever their hand findeth to do, heartily as to the Lord", is as true, if not a truer Christian, than the one who, In some startling emergency, performs some truly heroic, noble deed. Not that I would under-rate the latter. It is grand, it is glorious, it is inspiring. But the other seems to me more likely to be underrated, and it does not seem to me to require the same fortitude and patient continuance in well-doing to, for instance, die a martyr, and thus in one act gloriously declare one*s love for God, as it does to live the life of a Florence Nightingale, or even one in more ordinary life, always denying oneself, always "bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ". I have sometimes thought this was especially so, where one did not seem particularly "called" for any one thing, and in common life the majority are such. The wheels of life go round and round in the same track day after day and the scenes through which we pass vary so little that we are apt to forget that God's is the guiding hand, and that, "wheresoever the Spirit listeth, it goeth." How little real belief there Is in that one doctrine of God's providences. If we really and fully believed it we would spare ourselves much worrying and anxious care for the cares of this world. To how many Nov. 15, 1874 - 3

will the Saviour's remark to Martha apply, "Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful"• There is only one thing that is more difficult than living a true Christian life; and that is,

attempting to live without Christ in our hearts. And this reminds me of a remark of our Bible-teacher. In speaking of Christ's miracles, he said, "But these healings of diseases of the body are nothing, in comparison to those he works in regenerating a human soul; and further, the greatest miracle Cod can perform, is wrought when a man or woman lives seven days of a perfectly holy sanctified life, i.e. lives seven days of a life in that manner." But to return to what I was saying; living without Christ is either an unthinking, hastening rush through life's scenes, or the dogmatic, obstinate refusal to see of the faithful or atheist, much more of the former than of the latter; indeed I think four fifths of the people, who are not Christians, are so because they do not think. The child of God will have as many and it may be more trials and vexations to trouble him than the ungodly man, but he has an "elder brother" who never fails to aid him, and if he only puts his trust in Him, he can do all things through Christ which strengthened him". I want to make my religion influence me, in every act of my life. The religion that merely makes one have a solemn countenance and general appearance of gloom Sunday, and allows him to commit all manner of evil deeds during the week is not the kind I wish to gain. But, on the contrary, that kind which, in the language of a minister who preached for us a Sunday Dec. 16, 1866 * 4

or two ago, "shimmers in the closet, sparkles in the prayer-meeting and radiates through the whole life." Pray for me, my dear brother that I may have more of the pure Christianity of our sainted mother. I feel that I have made this quite long enough already, though I hope it may not be tedious. We have had some very cold weather this week, and the result was, good skating Friday and Saturday, I was out a little while Sat. morning and enjoyed it. Today we have had a heavy snow-storm. Vacation commences on Friday next. I shall remain here. The girls who came with me will remain also. I heard from Carlos Friday: he spoke of having visited you. How I wish I could have been with you. I received Lucy's and Ella's cards. I hope you will write to me soon again. Letters will be very acceptable to me in vacation. Give very much love to Mary for me. Tell her I will write to her before very long. Just give Robbie a good spanking and many, many kisses for me. The dear little fellow. How I would love to see him; I suppose he talks and walks by this time, doesn't he? I hope you will keep a current record of all his smart sayings and send them to me. I must bid you good-night. With much love and a prayer for your temporal and eternal wellare. Your Sister

Annie M. Glidden.

,Annie (Glidden) Houts, '69,