

Vassar College.
Feb. 24. 1894.

My dear Papa, -

I want to wish you a happy birthday, and many returns of the day. It is too bad that you have to have a broken arm for a birthday present, especially when the gift is strung out over several weeks. Is it a bad break? Isn't it fortunate that it is your left arm, and isn't it fortunate that it is not in the summer, when your "eleven-inch grip" is needed for tightening fruit cans? But at best it is still very unfortunate. However I have taken action that that shall not be your only birthday present: for I sent by express today, some "Vassar fudges". I made them all myself - the first time I have made any all alone. Ray wanted to make a box to put them in, so I was glad to let her. She worked at the box while I stirred the fudge, and then we both made the flowers. We cant make fudges in the day time because the gas is turned off, and there was such an interesting lecture last night that we did not want to miss it, so we made it after the lecture was over, when all was still. We dont borrow stoves any more, but cook it on the drop light after taking off the shade and chimney. To be sure it makes ever so much soot on the bottom of the saucepan and consequently It takes about half an hour to wash the saucepan, but never mind. I don't know how fudges taste when they are two or three days old, as I have never eaten any that have were more than two hours old.

There was such an Interesting lecture last night, by Prof. Stoddart of Oxford, England. It was on the "Meaning and Use of the Color of Animals in their Struggle for Existence." He included not only the color, but the whole appearance of the animals, and, with stereopticon views, showed animals, fishes, and insects, which protect themselves by being the same color as their surroundings, etc. He told of what use certain characteristics were, and explained many interesting facts not generally known.

Thursday was a holiday - though after this year it is not going to be, because it "breaks into the work," and they do not have it as a holiday at most colleges.

I spent a good part of it in cleaning out my closet. I took out everything from it, and dusted it all, and brushed the clothes, and rearranged the boxes on my closet shelf, etc. It is quite an art to arrange the closet shelf; we have to keep so much on it. You see, on holidays I have to substitute my closet for the pantry at home, (though I don't believe my closet needed it quite as much as the pantry generally does, for there is no one but myself to muss it up.).

From eleven to half past twelve on Thursday Prof. Dwight was in the Museum, to explain the things there. Quite a number of girls went over and it was very interesting, indeed. I thought it was very kind of Prof. Dwight. First he showed us some of the shells, the freshwater shells, delicate pink and green and brown colors- He spoke of the differences in shape and structure, too, all in a simple way that you could understand. The most expensive shell in the Museum cost \$ 80. Prof. Dwight admires the case that holds the shells, as well as the shells themselves- It has not a nail or screw in it, but is all perfectly joined, with very fine glue. It was sold to the college at a great reduction, for \$25000. There was a good deal of coral there, too, and magnified models, in glass, of things that inhabit the sea, and ^that look a good deal like seaweed. There is a very fine collection of birds, of all varieties and

descriptions. Some of them Prof. Dwight spoke of especially in detail, for instance the albatross and cormorants. One of the cormorants cost \$2000, and there are several birds that cost one or two thousand dollars. Prof. Dwight said that the Museum was really very good.

Thursday evening, you know we had a Washington party. Of course there were lots of girls dressed in the regulation colonial style, with old fashioned dresses, kerchiefs, and high powdered hair. But there was some variety in addition. Men were quite plenty, that is girls, in the guise of men. They all wore black skirts, and a few were fortunate enough to have real coats, others took their dress-waist that most resembled a coat, and made large cuffs, and gold or silver pasteboard buttons, large ones- A silk handkerchief, (with gold pasteboard buttons) folded across the front, made a beautiful waistcoat, and the "stock" was represented by two or three handkerchiefs generally- Then immense pasteboard buckles appeared on the shoes. For the three cornered hats the girls merely took the trimming off of one of theirs, and bent them up.

Then there were Spanish Cavaliers, English lords, and French Marquises; to say nothing of a squad of British red-coats, (in red paper muslin coats).

Arle Raymond escorted me; she was Gen Anthony Wayne. She has trouble with her foot, so that she has to carry a cane all the time, and that was quite an addition. She had a snuff box, Edie's silver stamp box, filled with a mixture of salt and pepper, and she offered some to President Taylor.

I wore the dress that Edie sent to me, and the kerchief, and had my hair high and powdered-

Ray was quite a sensation, as a Hessian Baron. She had some rubber boots, borrowed from a girl, a military coat, which one of the girls got from a boy in the Military Academy in town, and an astonishing drum-major hat, or rather head-dress, made of a ^bear skin [crossed out: beaver] rolled up, and kept on with hat pins and a black ribbon under the chin. Miss Nettleton thought it was a real drum major's and asked her where she got it. Ray carried out her character so well, and was extremely gallant, but she says she won't be a man next time, it is too hard work to be so gallant. In one corner of the room they had an "Authentic Collection of Relics", such as a common hand-bell labeled "Liberty Bell, a little dirt done up in tissue paper, labeled "From Bunker Hill," an old broken-nosed teapot, a kitchen spoon, and a cracked cup and saucer, the "Boston Tea Party," a piece of ice in a fruit jar, which was "With Washington when he crossed the Delaware, a very worn out haircloth piano stool, purporting to have been used by Nellie Custis, a section of the heel of a girl's shoe, illustrating the "Stamp Act", and many others equally interesting and instructive.

During the evening there was a cake walk, by ten or twelve girls dressed as darkies. It was won by a couple, one of whom was a short fat man, (a girl who has the most peculiar and ungraceful gait in college) and a very tall thin girl, who took little mincing steps. After that they passed around popcorn balls to everybody. All the tables were decorated that evening and the girls wore their costumes down to dinner.

We had carnations and smilax and candles and some pretty little favors, that Ray made, two or three of us helping her. They were little boxes made of pink crepe tissue

paper, with the top ruffled all around, and a little pink flower to hold each corner. They had a few pink and white peppermint drops in each.

This morning some of the girls wanted to have some kodak pictures taken of them in costume so a Senior was found who wanted to do it, and a half dozen or so of us had her take us; we had two groups all together, and then several of two or three girls. Ray and I had one where she was kneeling before me in a loverlike attitude and I was looking at her with extreme scorn. I don't know whether the pictures will be good, as the Senior did not seem especially careful: but if they are, and don't cost more than six or seven cents, I shall buy one or two.

This letter sounds as if our life was one grand round of fun, but you always have to remember that it is those things that we write about, and of course we don't mention very much the hard work that we have, and the lessons that worry us all the time etc.

I hope that your arm will soon be better, papa, and that it won't trouble you a great deal. I am so sorry you broke it.

I got your letter containing the bill, and I guess it will be all right to wait, and pay it when I feel like it.

Of course this letter is for the rest of the family to read too.

With ever so much love from your daughter Adelaide. [Claflin]