

Vassar. Mch. 20/70 ,1870,

Dear Mother--

" bildet ein Talent rich la der Stille. Lich ein Charakter In dem Strom der Welt." "It forms a Talent itself In Stillness (quiet) Itself s Character In the Stream of the World. So says Goethe. And I've been making a Talent here in the quiet of my life as I couldn't If I had entered into the rushing foaming stream that flows even here. I had been in the hurrying waters too long not to appreciate an opportunity to lie on the banks & rest, watch others, and gain strength for the coming years. Moreover I am a thorough-bred Democrat, clear to the marrow, as perhaps you have reason to know. And there is too much of aristocracy and particularly monarchy in the air of the College for me to safely pass freely about without coming in collision with it when there would be great danger of an explosion. I early learned where the powder magazines were situated and carefully avoided the vicinity, but did not put out my candle, for now I begin to see that my little light has had its effect an extra covering is thrown over the fiery material when I am around so that I can come nearer, and I feel that I've conquered. Again, time is too precious to me to waste in chitchat for gossip. I of being in Vassar College worked too hard for the opportunity to throw any of it away, very few people pay well in intellectual or moral coin for the time spent. Therefore the greatest misfortune to me would have been popularity at first.

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Once more, it doesn't pay well to strain one's mind & spend one's time to be sure of rattling of rules or facts or a string of words in exact order when there are so many principles lying in them which are rich in thought for information. I didn't take the 200 topics in Chemistry and prepare for examination by studying day & night with the determination of knowing them word for word from beginning to end as one girl did I didn't fail in the examination as she did when a question a little off the track was put & I wasn't sick a fortnight as she was. I gave much thought to my plan of life here. It was the result of cool deliberate judgment and I am satisfied with the fruits, I wouldn't do differently if I were to do it over. It is said that no decision could be arrived at as to who were most there were a no. who were so nearly equal deserving as they took the marks which everybody acknowledges are not the criteria of scholarship each teacher having a different idea & so few taking into account all the causes, I was astonished that these here who I know are so opposed to say system of marking at all, should allow anything to be decided on them. It changes no one's opinion, and it is much pleasanter to hear of people's saying that they expected one to have been appalled and thought they ought than to feel that people were surprised that one should be so put up.

I have not many particular friends but those are very strong ones and every one who does know me values me. My example has been marked enough to have some influence. Even Miss Avery is exceedingly gracious

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in class for It is a remark that she likes me. If I have kept my vow of never forgetting near her to be excused from anything. And Miss Lyman is very warm in her commendation of my success in infusing life & interest into Latin & coaxed me to undertake another task, when there is another girl who has been a teacher who would like to take a pupil or two. I thought perhaps I would be doing as much good in helping others as in reading for myself and every dollar helps. I don't think I can

be called an idle individual about now. 5 studies Laboratory & observatory practice & earning \$ 1.50 a day, as much as most girls do who work all day. Tell Father I guess I'll beat him. And the money is not all I have gained so much courage to find that my knowledge comes back to me & that I am successful in imparting it. The recommendation that will be ready for me will be valuable some day. I hear commendation of my Essay from all sides and praise of my manner & voice & lack of Elocutionary emphasis. Miss Swayze called me to her after Elocution class the other day & said how well you read. Well I must hasten to the news items. I've been in the Laboratory some helping get ready to make some casts for your mantel shelf and this week we are to begin to learn photography. Last night was a clear night for a wonder and I was out on the stone steps of the observatory 2 1/2 hours, got pretty tired. There was a beautiful aurora—red streamers &

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brilliant white ones. The night before we saw the planet Uranus thru the great telescope 17 hundred million miles away. This morning I went out with Miss Cambell, were out 1 hour 1/2. The crust bears us & we went way up on my favorite sunrise hill. The sun is warm & the air good I shall lay up a store of oxygen for all the week I don't get out doors much now. But shall make time when the flowers come, & I'm looking to those June days when free from all care I'll go to the Catskills & enjoy myself—only ten weeks more. I had letters from Lizzie Billows Annie & Charles Wilson of Boston—he says that the sulphur he sent me came from Mt Vesuvius the emery from Smyrna, Turkey. When you get time please label them. Abbie & Andrew were well. Oilman was being doctored by some one in Boston for deafness. Annie says George is getting better but has been very sick. She was pretty tired. Lizzie has been sick with Erysipelas was in bed a week not Niagara very strong yet still in Boston all send love to you. Miss Yeoman (Josephine Jf. from Suspension Bridge, N.Y.) spec. '69-70, is quite sick they won't let even me see her. I am a little fearful. She will not be strong again her lungs are very painful.

I am quite well, only I don't feel very hungry mornings as usual at this season. My head doesn't trouble me and my back is quite well I guess. I haven't heard anything from it for a long time. Remember me to Mrs. Merrifield when you see her. Tell her I wish she could spend one day here. Feb. 19, 1869 - 5

I know she would enjoy it so much. Please ask Mr & Mrs. Marshall if there is any prospect of their coming this way while I stay. I will send them an invitation for some time Commencement week if they like. I wish I could come in & enjoy their society with you. Too bad about your pie scrape. You see murder will out, Uncle Sam is pretty good at defending his rights. I'm glad the plants are doing so well & afford so much pleasure. I want you to have a wire dish like your china fruit dish with ferns &c. One of the teachers here has one that is lovely. And another thing. I saw for you a wire rack hanging against the wall for newspapers, something like this in shape the whole thing about (diagram) 3 ft long & 2 1/2 wide the outer or basket edge about a foot deep with perhaps 6 inches space between it & the back. And a little place at the top for letters. It would be the best thing I can think of for your comfort & will look so pretty with your stand. Have father see if he can find one for you or send for one. Don't you think our class stamp on this envelope pretty?

I wish I could find out who A.G.W. is I like his or her (I think it's he)
Journal articles much. I think the Journal is doing well to publish such. I
believe in newspaper Influence.
Mary A Mineah, '70,