

Vassar —

Dec. 27, 1872.

Dearest Cara,

Today I expected to be speeding along on the "chemin de fer" to Troy. But alas! we are all doomed to disappointment! Here am I blocked in by snow and compelled to remain at College until Monday and perhaps much longer. "Such a snowstorm the very oldest inhabitants have never before known." This little phrase is used every winter, but this one with truth, I think. The horse cars have stopped running and our only communication with the outer world is by means of a sleigh running twice a day. But "for a that" we are gay and happy still. Indeed, I do not consider it a very great misfortune to be unable to go to Troy, for there are some real nice girls here and we have a good deal of fun, because we learn to know each other better. Christmas day was not a bit like Christmas. It was a bitter cold day, the thermometer 4° below zero, but Milligan, Eva Tappan and myself went in to hear the childrens Carols in Christ church at ten o'clock. Some of them which I had never heard before were very pretty. Then we went down to service at the Holy Comforter, a high church\* The car not being ready to bring us, out we had to walk up to the Morgan House and wait sometime. Without exaggeration, I can say that we nearly froze. I think I never knew so cold a day. Our Christmas dinner was better than usual turkey, duck, mince pie and plum pudding. Half the amount of dishes at home would have been better.

Parlor 63 contains a very nice set of girls. Hattie Stetson, Pattie Thum, Lida Magowan and myself. (Is not that a conceited remark?) It is a most amiable parlor, and where one goes, all go, Christmas Eve Parlor 63 was quite fashionable. It was first invited out to a very tempting supper of coffee and other delicacies. Then to a Christmas tree, which was intended only to be looked at, as no presents were distributed. Here we again partook of coffee and fruit cake} the latter I politely took and not being able to eat it stuffed it into my pocket for safe keeping. Then followed a dance in the College parlors on the best new carpets. We feared at every wait that Miss Lyman's ghost would rise and reproach us for our sacrilege. Just now imagine us seated in those same spacious apartments with Winnie (Miss Lyman's lactotum) frowning upon us lest we spill one drop of ink, since of a pin head, upon those precious Aaminsters. But to return (ahem) to our Christmas Eve. Leaving the parlor at half past nine we returned to 63 and amused ourselves, with reading, backgammon, and the like, until twelve, when Lida and I finished off the evening, or rather, began the morning, with study for we retired to our downy couches at one o'clock. The next evening, at the supper table we decided to attend a masked and fancy dress ball in the College parlors. Two young ladies were transformed, by my magic fingers, into an old lady and a robin, respectively.

Graham, my last years roommate made a very lady like old housekeeper wearing a stiff cap, long apron and carrying her reticule and scissors at her side. Lida Magowan was the robin and the chief attraction of the evening. No one could recognise her, and she did her part to perfection, hopping about and chirruping in a most bird like fashion. By the time I had arrayed these two and cut out numerous K's for a Ku Klux Klan I had only time to doff an ancient red overgown and turban, in which costume I enjoyed myself very much. Dr. Avery being our Lady Principal in

the absence of our true head, our hopes are all Hygienic and end precisely with the first stroke of the retiring bell at half past nine. Of course we can not retire at such an out of the way hour, so we amuse ourselves later with cribbage and backgammon. But that unfortunate evening, just as Hat and myself were deeply Interested in a game of cribbage Miss Smiley, our corridor teacher came, and advised us to retire. This we did the more cheerfully as it was about twelve and we, with difficulty, kept our peepers open.

Since It was my intention to leave today, I received my New Years callers last evening. Parlor 63 of course shared the fun together. Pattie was my mother, Mrs. Weatherton while Hattie, one of the tallest girls here, was little Susie, the nine years old daughter, an Impertinent little chatterbox. Lida was Josephus the waiting man. He received the cards, took the gentlemens hats and prepared and served the refreshments, which consisted of snow cream, lemon ice, cake and crackers. Joseph's part, you can perceive was a very laborious one yet mother and daughter found the boy "very careless" "so thoughtless" etc. This, of course, to excuse his not being In all places at one time. I was the charming young daughter, fresh and bloomy, whom, let me whisper, had been only five years in society. All the gentle-men who were young enough made lore to me, and many are the duels to be fought on my account. Then there was the governess Miss Limmeth, a very agreeable personage, quite proper. Our callers ware numerous and of high rank, some of them, at least. Sir Charles from Eng. was a most charming gent, lacked much of the races, was thoroughly English. Really, Graham who took this part looked and acted so comically that I am convulsed with laughter every time I think of her. You ought to have seen Dr. Arery laugh to see Sir Charles dance, for after the reception was over we all wont down to the parlors and had a dance. Wild Bill direct from California also made us a call. Milligan, this was, whom Susie impertinently told he had no mouth. This Will had a nephew who was very much attached to me and upon whom I looked with a farmy eye. Gustavus Adolphus Briggs was a most charming young man: he, also, In addition to his personal charms, expected a handsome fortune from his wild uncle. Hence he tried to prevent Will from being attentive to my dear widowed mamma. I wish I could picture for you the charms of my dear Gustavus for indeed I was about as much smitten as he. Gustavus was Laura Browne, from Vermont. She is older than the rest of us and very, very talented. She wrote the article In the Miscellany upon M. Taine. By the way, I think I have not sent the magazine to you yet. Whan you get it, please read the article I Just mentioned, for it la about the best In the book. Then another line character was G.A Fitznoodle. This was carried out to perfection. Miss Lowrie it was who quite overpowered us by his grand words and compliments. I must not forget to mention Josiah somebody, I forget the name, and his son Zekiel. The old man would persist in telling me of quiltings, corn huskings and such like things which of course I had never heard of. Then there were a lot of Russians whose names my tongue could never twist nor my pen write. Everybody agreed In saying that they never either made or received pleasanter New Years calls.

Yesterday I received Papa and Mammass letters enclosing my Christmas present. They do not say what they wish me to get with it, so I think I shall get Jean Ingelows poems, Undiae and perhaps some pretty picture or another book. Tell me what you had for Christmas presents and all that you are doing.

The snow is piled up in our window sill over a feet high, and in the corridor it drifted down in the window ledge inside and has not melted yet. But it is not as cold as it was Christmas day. Our parlor is warm enough when we sit within a foot of the register, but in a corner of the room one's hand will became too cold to write. Annie Meeker, one of my former parlor mates has Just send me a Christmas letter and little plastic head of Clytie. It was very kind of her to think of me. Please excuse the different kinds of paper on which this lengthy letter is written. But while in the parlor my paper gave out and Lida gave me some of hers. I hope you will not be entirely exhausted before you finish this. Indeed I grudge the stamps which it will need for supply is getting low.

With a vast deal of love  
I am lovingly Julie