

Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
May 2, 1880

My dear Mithery-

I shall take it for granted that you are very anxious to hear all about Founder's Day for every thing so I am going to begin at the very beginning and tell you about every thing, that is unless my strength for paper give out, for I have a great deal to tell. I only wrote my little speech a week ago yesterday and on Thursday Prof. Backus conducted me up into the chapel and I had to march up onto the platform and hold forth to an awful array of empty benches with Prof. B. in the background. He made me say it over and over until I got over being frightened at the sound of my own voice and could regard the performance in a very practical way. It seems just as silly now as it did then when I stopped to think about it, but a more awful, non compos, feeling than the one that escorted me up the aisle every time, I trust I may never experience. Then I had to rehearse again before Miss Hiscock and two of the girls for that was "non compos" -er than the first time. Lola and Millie came up Friday afternoon and a good many of the old girls were here so that it was very delightful for us. I had argued the matter pro for con, between my desires for the state of my finances for in the end concluded not to get any roses to wear with my dress. But Helen in a most delightful way presented me with ever so many perfect beauties in the afternoon, & soon after Estelle brought me some choice Jacques Minot roses, so that I was more than abundantly supplied. Oh I must tell you about my gloves it was such a joke- You know they were yellower than any other part of my attire except the toes of my slippers- In the afternoon Jane tried on her pretty pink dress & then found that her gloves looked fairly grey beside it. After some vain attempts to find a yellower pair, a happy thought struck us her gloves were the same size & length as mine so we decided to exchange. There was never anything more fortunate for me for hers were just right for my dress. I changed the appearance of my dress a little by using the extra piece of lace for a sort of kerchief so that none of the cashmere showed in the front. (Chapel bell has rung.) Just as the girls were arranging my roses - Lola sent down some more exquisite roses from some one of the gentlemen who came with her had brought up. I may as well say now - as I know you will be glad to hear it - that Mr. Eugene Colgate ("Gone to G.") was the bringer of the roses and grand ones they were too- I wore just about two dozen of them in a great bunch at my waist and they kept perfectly all the evening and some of them are still lovely in a vase in the room here. Lola's brother came up with her and Mr. Colgate, but Mr. C- especially him took my attention, as I had heard so much about^ His appearance is very different from anything I had dreamed of- He is tall and large with darkish hair and moustache and looks every day of twenty eight or thirty years- His manners, either from his French training or something, are as perfect and dignified as if he had spent thirty years in society. I describe him as accurately as possible so that you may try to harmonize this person with the "cowboy" we teased Lola so much about. At seven o'clock I called for Mrs. Ray & then we received, with the vice-president, Ada Thurston, until after eight o'clock. It was rather tedious work especially as I was oppressed with the thought of what was coming. Once I thought I would try my remarks over to myself and to my horror couldn't remember what I had known perfectly for days. I concluded that things were getting to a pretty pass and did some severe mental "bracing" during the rest of the time. Then we went up to Mrs. Ray's

parlor, and after some more waiting which reduced me to a very rigid state the procession started. President Caldwell and I leading out. As soon as we were in the chapel I felt & heard every body just turn around & gaze, so studied my slippers as I hadn't quite the hardihood to meet their eyes, & thought it better to reserve that pleasure until I went out of chapel with a relieved mind. The chairs on the platform were awfully high\ my skirts were starched exceedingly stiff, and I had a terrible consciousness that I

was displaying more than the tips of my slippers. I couldn't make any change of position then so didn't stir while the President made his opening prayer. Then came my show. Non compos wasn't any state compared to the one I was then in. My voice sounded so queer that I had a wild desire to laugh (which I suppressed) and I tore along without knowing how anything I was saying would sound to all those queer looking pink things which were supposed to represent faces. Well I finally got through somehow without making any break-- I left out two words though and made the audience 'sympathize with the () exercises of the evening' instead of "with the spirit of the exercises". However no body knew the difference, and a great many of the people afterwards asked in incredulous tones if I really was frightened, so I imagine that most of my show was invisible. I got back to my seat safely, my train behaving like an angel & never turning over or under once during the whole evening, but when I sat down my dress would not stay down, so I finally grew hardened & concluded to appear as if that were the way I "always came down stairs." To relieve your shocked feelings I will comfort you as the girls afterwards comforted me with assurances that there was nothing objectionable in view from even the nearest part of the audience. The programme consisted of an address by Miss Harriot Stanton (Class of '78); a song, by the distinguished Miss Beebe; an address, by Mrs. Mary A. Livermore; and another song by Miss Beebe, to which she sang an encore. Then we promenaded out of chapel but it was worse than coming in as far as the gazing was concerned. Though my conscience was clear I had as

little desire to meet people's eyes as if I had been a convicted criminal.

The rest of the evening was lovely- We went down to the collation first, and there I met Miss Stanton's brother who used to be at Cornell. Afterwards the Glee Club sang beautifully, then we went over to the Gymnasium. The regular Gym. was prepared for dancing and the Art Gallery and Museum were lighted for promenading- The half-past eleven bell struck before the dancing was anywhere near over, and after we all came back to the house the Glee Club sang again- So it was a good deal after twelve before the people left, and about one o'clock before I was ready for bed. I didn't dance at all, and my train slid around beautifully but I grieve to say that it has a decided tint around it, for even up on the ruffle, and my slippers tell a tale of the color of the dress. Saturday there were crowds of visitors who came out to see their ladies, and I was busy all the time between Lill and her party and Lola and hers. Poor Lola had an awful headache and just before lunch had to give up and go and lie down. Estelle came for me to take her place so I went into lunch with them and afterwards when we walked out to the garden & spied the tennis nets up, had great fun playing. Mr. Eugene is a splendid player, but seemed to rather enjoy our awkward efforts, and not to be at all bored. Lola didn't come down until it was time for the car to go for the 4.00 train, and then didn't look very comfortable poor thing. So I didn't see so very much of her not nearly so much as I wished to, but will have another chance when she comes up for Commencement.

We were invited to take lunch with the Loomises to-day but this morning it rained so

hard that we didn't go in town not dreaming that it could clear off to be so lovely as it is this afternoon. We were pretty favored in respect of the weather for Founder's Day as there was no rain from Friday A.M. until this morning, which was quite has wonderful considering how easily it sprinkled & puured lately. I haven't quite got rested yet after all the excitement I had Friday night & have just been trying a nap but it didn't amount to any thing only to make me feel stupid. What do you suppose! Something in your watch broke last night so that it wont go any more, and I feel perfectly lost. It isn't the main spring that is hurt for I can't wind it up at all & make it stay; it springs back again so that it jerks the key out, and I don't try it any more- It hasn't kept a bit good time since I took it to have it cleaned, & the hands have caught twice, & then it had to go through this performance. Shall I wait & bring it home when I come or shall I have it fixed in town? They say there is a good jeweler there who understands about watches. I am afraid I shall have to have some new shoes soon too, as mine are growing very shabby looking.

We went in to see Mrs. Dwight the other day and had a very delightful call on her and the baby- I gave her your message then for I hadn't had a chance before. I have been thinking and considering about something very much lately and now I want you to think and consider about it a little. When you and Minnie come up to see me at commencement time I want you to bring Ray too. Now don't commit yourself in any rash way or listen to Papa if he says "Nonsense" of "Don't be silly enough to say yes to any such wild plan of that crazy girl," but just consider a little. In the first place it wont cost any more for he is so...

(Mary S. Morris)