

Vassar College

Poughkeepsie, N.Y., March 8, 1876

My dear father and Mother:

I am so happy this afternoon I do not know as I can compose myself enough to write an intelligible letter. For some reason Madame Rock will not hear us recite this afternoon and as I did not know it until just now had learned my lesson, so I am prepared for to-morrow. I learned my Latin last night for to-morrow, and will have over an hour to learn my Rhetoric before I recite, so no more lessons to-day!! I did not receive a letter this morning but suppose it is because pa did not mail it Sunday evening. It has rained hard all day so we are excused from exercise. The snow is all gone and we are having a warm rain. I hope it is as warm at home. Helen came home Sunday evening and brought crackers, sardines, jelly and candy. Monday evening after study-hour about six of the girls came in and we feasted on crackers and sardines, for vinegar we substituted lemon juice. While she was in N.Y. she went to see Julius Caesar, and to hear Moody and Sankey. There have been a number of parties gotten up to go down to see J. C. some six girls ask Miss Terry if they can go. Then they invite a teacher and pay her expenses. It costs about \$6. Carrie wants to go but won't unless I do. I told her I could not afford it. I would prefer to spend my six dollars in some other way unless I had an abundance of them to dispose of. I received a letter from Ben Monday morning. I think, unless you insist, that the correspondence had better not be broken after I wrote him what I did but that we had better not write so often. It is such a short time now before

June, and then there will not be any more of it any way. I do not want to offend him and I would not know how to tell him I did wish to write to him. I wish I had gotten a letter this morning, but then if I had I would not have gotten any to-morrow. Ma, I do not know how I do want my overskirt made and trimmed. I would like it trimmed with silk. there is so much on the dress you would not hare to buy much. I think a plaiting around the bottom of black silk, about 1/2 finger wide three plaits in a cluster (and not stitched near the bottom) headed with a band and cord of silk. Make it as long as my plaid in the back and a full back, be sure and make it very long. Have the front longer than the sides. Take a peice of black silk the length of the front of overskirt pattern 1/4 of a yard wide (bias) at the bottom and and 1/2 a finger wide at the top, and then put about six [dries] up the middle of it, 1 so far apart. Then turn the Japanese in, and making a to little ruffle [shir] it on to this silk. Then [shir] the sides seams in the back in the same way. Then about 1/2 yd from the belt put a large bow of black bow (ends 1/2 fingers wide) silk lined with the Japanese (the whole bow lined) on the left side, I mean a little to the left of the middle of the back of the overskirt about where the sideseams joins the back breadth. Then put a pocket of black silk, made in a triple or quadruple box plait and a bow of black silk on it. I believe that finishes the overskirt. I want it made so very long so it can be looped to make a bustle and so obviate the necessity of my wearing. Could there not be some kind of stiff lining put in to the back, only extending about half a yard from the waist, so it would not show? I would like the basque made just about the same as my plaid, the same shape & length, trimmed around the bottom the same as the overskirt. Then in the back I would like those little tiny folds I spoke of, or if you prefer some other trimming, put it on, maybe three narrow bands of black silk corded on both sides, an inch a part at the neck, then nearly meeting at the waist and then separating again. Instead of a standing collar would like a narrow plaitin of black silk either in clusters or not don't care, the same width or rather height of

a collar, and so I could take it off when I chose. But if it would trouble you put on a collar like my silk. Then put either black silk buttons quite small about so big or else buttons like those on my plaid but think the silk ones would be prettier. Then make the sleeves of Japanese very small (basque very short in the shoulders) but longer than my black silk sleeves and put a little plaiting black silk like that on the overskirt and basque on the edge of the sleeve then a little cuff of black silk something pretty above the plaiting and either buttons or little bows on the cuff. Can you understand this all. I am afraid you can not. It is the plainest way I can think of and yet I am afraid there is too much work on it. But it will be very stylish and pretty made this way. Those ruffles that are now on it will do for the plaiting. Make the plaits very fine. Please do not put any Japanese silk on it for trimming, and besure it is long enough in the waist.