

Vassar Jan. 10/66

My dear, dearest Mother,

I don't feel a bit like writing to you this afternoon. I want to put my head in your lap, and tell you all about my visit in Brooklyn, how kind Auntie was, what a delightful time we had, and how very much we like the girls. I have enough to say to occupy several days, and then to think of writing it on a little paper. O dear! I want you to rid your self of any false impressions Bell may have given you concerning the girls dress, for from that Helen wrote after Bell came back I know she said a good deal. (Mother I am writing this while Father is gone, because I want to tell you some things, Aunt Rebecca told me, but which she did not want him to know.) The girls dress very nicely, in perfect taste, but not extravagantly at all: not any more than we would all of us dress, if we were young ladies in Brooklyn. They had very handsome silk basquines last summer and wore them lined and wadded this winter. They don't wear any ribbons, or such little odds and ends that mount up so fast. As for those dresses from China, the trimmings couldn't have cost any where near twenty dollars a piece. I don't believe it was as much for both. The dresses are beautiful, the most exquisite pine apple berage, very different from any I ever saw for sale, almost like a cobweb - They are trimmed with blue silk - and nothing else. I had no idea that I should like the girls so well, they are charming - I hope when you write to Auntie you will tell her something about how much we enjoyed ourselves. And Mother I wish you would write to Emma and invite her to stop and see us when she goes to Missouri next May. I think very likely that she will not be able to, but yet I know that the invitation would please her. She is not strong, and traveling tires her extremely, therefore by the time they reached Detroit, I think they would both be glad to stop over night at least. The Millers liked Mr. Cartlidge very much. Mother, Auntie wanted us to charge you not make a confident of Bell. She said she mentioned it in her last letter to you, but not as much as she wanted to. She says that Bell has improved very much since she was married, but still she is not to be trusted. She will, and did, repeat all sorts of things that you said to her, about Aunt Martha and others, some of which Auntie thought it very doubtful if you originated them. She said it was not safe to trust her with any thing you didn't desire to have promiscuously repeated. She seemed very anxious that this fact should be repeated impressed upon your mind. Aunt Charlotte is going to Brooklyn to live in the spring - They all of them seemed anything but delighted at the prospect. Aunt Rebecca said that she didn't want to talk about her, because she knew that every word she said, would some way be wormed out of her, but some time she wanted a regular "goings in" on the subject. They don't appear to anticipate a great deal of peace and comfort in store for them. Did you know that poor little Emma fell down on a tumbler last summer and cut her hip, hurting her so badly, that they are afraid she will always be a cripple. Isn't it terrible? If you knew it, why didn't you write to us? It must be a dreadful trial for Aunt Phebe. Emma Hopkins thinks that Aunt Phebe's family are the most perfect models that ever came into the world. (The same authority states, that Mary Leach is maturing or rather being matured, to such an extent, that by the time she is twelve years old, she will be in her second childhood. Did you read her letter to me? The style and matter were sufficiently childish certainly, but perhaps you noticed that she is studying Greek. Think of that for seven years old! I presume Hebrew will follow soon. Aunt Rebecca took it into her head to find me much more "delicate" than she had expected, therefore don't be alarmed, if you receive all manner of documents from her explicitive of alarm.

Because really every one says that I am fleshier, stronger, and healthier than when I left home. I was not well while in Brooklyn, for I was quite tired from school, and then took cold, which added to the fact that I was unwell made me feel mean, but I am very well indeed. The Miller girls are so very feeble that they tremble for every one. Fannie was unwell when we went there, and in the same condition when we left. Auntie and Uncle both, said a great deal about Hattie's strong resemblance to Mother. Auntie could hardly keep her eyes off from her. She didn't think that I looked nearly as much like Aunt Martha. Oh Mother! I beg leave to inform you that I have been exalted to the position of Latin teacher! Just think of that will you. I had the honor of teaching a class of twelve young ladies in Livy this morning. Yesterday I heard the same class in Prose. Your curiosity is roused now, isn't it? To explain, Mrs. Wyman our Latin teacher was taken ill into her bed with the pleurisy (Miss Gilbert says, spell it plewricy), and immediately sent for me Taking me by the hand, she solemnly adjured me to hear her Latin class, and allow her to be ill in peace. In great exultation I promised to do it - and immediately left the room lest she should change her mind - Imagine how grand I looked, sitting up in front of the class, in which I had formerly recited, and with the greatest possible dignity requesting "Miss Baker to begin" - I felt extremely complimented by Mrs. Wyman's asking me, and informing me that I could do it "just as well as any body else" - She hopes to be well tomorrow. I don't believe that teaching is my peculiar vocation - Hattie and Minnie have been undergoing an experience - Prof. Knapp invited those two young butterflies to attend Miss Anna Dickinson's lecture, in company with himself - The result was most unlooked for. Hattie suddenly grew deaf and blind, so that she was unable to notice us in the least, while Minnie strutted to such an extent, that fears were expressed lest she should fall over backwards. I murmured to myself as I saw them flutter off to ask Miss Lyman's permission "Pride goeth before distraction and a haughty spirit, before a fall-" Nevertheless I did my best to assist them, by making very pretty brown velvet hat for her to wear - i.e. Minnie - At six o'-clock Minnie, Hattie, Alice Hubbard, Miss Grant, Miss Avery and Prof. Farrar sallied forth in the omnibus. M. and H. contemplating picking up Prof. Knapp at the Forbus House, where he boards - The omnibus stopped, and there was a moment of breathless silence, after which the Prof.'s dear little moustache and pale face appeared at the door to say, "That he was very sorry but he had received a letter which obliged him to attend to important business immediately-" &c &c ahem - he was very sorry indeed, et cetera. Oh my Mother! had you and I only been there to see the crest fallen countenances of those fair damsels, to assist their troubled friends to pour the oil of consolation over their troubled spirits, and, afterwards to have reaped the reward of our labors, in oysters and cake at Mr. Swan's (the Sec. of the College), this however is not to be repeated. I believe they enjoyed the lecture highly and afterwards received the excuses of the mortified Prof, with smiling faces - Have you had any weather in Detroit? If not we have plenty to spare. Sunday was a bleak, cold day. Monday the thermometer stood at 15 in the morning and did not fall during all that day and night below 15°, which accompanied by a very cutting North west wind, rendered the day nearly, if not quite, as tedious as that memorable New Years Day - Prof. Knapp walked out, being unable to get an omnibus, or driver, of any kind - and nearly perished. His left ear was very badly frozen, he went directly to his recitation room, but Miss Lyman succeeded in coaxing him up to her parlor where ("tell it not in Gaithe), he was treated to hot sling. He held his handkerchief up to his ear all day long. It must have pained him very much, thawing out in that slow way - Some of the girls came into Po'keepsie that night, and could

not get anyone to bring them out for love or money, and had to remain in the city over night. Yesterday was less windy than Monday but yet very cold, today is beautiful, very clear and cold - Is the Week of Prayer observed in Detroit this year? We have had a prayer meeting every evening this week. Miss Lyman has conducted them. I have enjoyed them very much. Miss Lyman does not always impress strangers very favorably, but she has a very fine mind, and I don't think I ever heard a lady speak and pray, so beautifully as she does. She always says just what you want, just as you want it. She spoke last night of South Hadley's devoting one day to pray for Miss Fiske's school, which reminded me of that prayer you have. I wish you would send me a copy. I know it would interest Miss Lyman. You don't know how much our room has been, above all the other rooms in the house. It is the only private room - i.e. one belonging to the young ladies - into which either Mr. Mitchel, Prof. Tenney and I think Prof. Farrar have entered. Mr. Mitchel has been here three times. I gave him some of the doughnuts Auntie gave us, greatly delighting his hearty thereby. Prof. Tenney lives next door, and we have fallen into a habit of spending about two hours per diem in there. He is a dear good man, his wife ditto, and they seem to enjoy our coming - (Minnie is filled with astonishment at learning that Mrs. Tenney is a man). Prof. Farrars is an elegant place to visit. I spent about an hour there Sat. eve. half of in in the dining room and kitchen - I forgot to say that our room was the first one that Mrs. Bannister was in - How many callers we had who never came before. They must have had a nice time at the Dr.'s. How do they get along? What do they call Mrs. Pomeroy? Have you called on her yet? What a pity that Mrs. Wilkins is sick again - I hope she will live - I wish I could see Mrs. Carnis the bride, where did he know her? Give a great deal of love to Mary Colburn and her baby - I wish I could take the dear little one in my arms, and kiss it - Please give a great deal of love to Mr. and Mrs. Freeland - I would give a great deal to shake hands with him - Ask Carrie if she has forgotten me altogether - Tell Willie that I believe the sight of his hand writing would make me to sing Madame's hymn - You have no idea how much we all enjoyed our letter from you. Tell Sallie to be good and forgiving and write soon - I hope you won't be discouraged by the length of this epistle but I have so much to say that I can't bear to stop even now. Excuse that blot, my wretched pen fell off and did it. I do want very much to kiss you good night Won't you be sure and come here in the spring. You know you ought to have come this fall. Don't you suppose Father will be willing? Has Nellie finished reading my letter to her? Good night my darling Mother

Mattie

Hattie wants you to ask Father to send us some money Ours has given out almost