

Vassar Jan. 28, 1866

My dear dear Mother,

I don't believe that you in all your busy employments at home, can have any idea what a perfect feast home letters are to us. We had been looking for your letter so long that when it came yesterday morning, all the girls around here were ready to rejoice with us. I have just read it over for the fourth time, and each time have found something new to rejoice over. My face is all well now, but your kind sympathy was welcome none the less. I knew at the time that it was with me, but I like to hear you say so. Miss Avery says that I must take care not to take cold, she likewise complimented Hattie upon my fortitude. I certainly didn't take cold by wetting my feet because I haven't done that since I was here but once - when we went down to see Father. Hattie is very anxious to assure you that her health will permit her to be carried home on a litter next July, but not before. She says she can't remember any particular period at which her health has been any improvement upon the present. Mrs. Dickinson will, I think assure you of that. Seriously she is perfectly well hadn't thought of any contrary state of mind. I promise you that if I see any symptoms of decay, or even modified health, I will let you know immediately - I must say that I feel a little bit injured that Father should feel anxious about Hattie leaving me in the cold, when any one can tell you that I have grown thin, with such alarming rapidity during the past week that my very sister says I don't seem like the same person, while Miss Avery has given me over altogether, and says that she can do nothing more - I can't tell you how great a weight is lifted from my mind to hear such favorable reports from the Dr.'s. I was so afraid that while there might be no open rupture there would be continual jars, and collisions, which would prevent mutual confidence and love, I am also glad to hear so pleasing a report of Sara's looks - as I had feared that all her care, anxiety, and hurry, might wear her out. I grow more and more impatient at the thought of being absent from her wedding. Yet I should be very sorry to leave here, a day before the close of the year. Besides I am very anxious to welcome her here, and show her everything and body. Give a great deal of love to Rose and her baby - I am much obliged to her for keeping us so faithfully in mind. That sack for her boy must have been very pretty. Did you embroider it with purple? How did C. L Walker come to be reelected? What style of a Deacon is Mr. Silsbee calculated to make? How is the Church? Do the people agree any better than they did? and what are the prospects for Mr. Freeland's settlement? You never mention him lately. Please give him and wife my love. Did you notice a statement made in a Free Press not long ago that Dr. Kitchel has been appointed Pres. of Middlebury College? By the way I wish you would please send us some more papers, we enjoy them exceedingly - but I haven't seen a Tribune for a long time - Never mind about my album, it will be all the nicer to be new next summer, and I have no photographs now. But Mother, won't you have your picture taken to help fill both Sara's new book, and mine? I leave the subject to your careful consideration - I rejoice with you, Father, and Willie in the possession of your new over coats. What have you been wearing all winter? It is a comfort to think that Father and Will have those much needed articles at last. I do want to see Willie desperately, tell him to have some tintypes taken before he is a day older, and send me three, at least. Likewise please bestow upon him, his sister Harriet's sympathetic congratulations upon his oration, sympathetic, because she, as Presidentess of Chapter B - has been requested to deliver an address before them at their next meeting, Friday - Feb. 2, 1866, at 7 1/2 P.M. Minnie read an essay last

meeting on "Societies and Clubs." It was very good indeed. Mattie spoke a poem likewise very good, and beautifully delivered. Don't I beg of you feel any annoyance about that lecture of Miss Dickinson's. The fun and laughter since, has more than repaid any momentary disappointment. I am thankful that your dream was only a dream. I hope next time you'll be more prudent, altho' in your sleep. Hattie read Emma what you said of herself and Mother. It pleased her exceedingly - She thinks now, that she can get away from here, in time to spend her birthday, the 2nd, at Brooklyn. one of the new teachers has come, and two more are expected this week. Mr. Cartlidge proposes to fix it, so that they can stop over Sunday at Detroit. I know you would have a most gorgeous visit - We are much delighted at the news concerning His Mightiness the Pope, and only wish it was Mr. Killdog whose place he has taken. How pleasant it must have been to have Sara and Mary together, I suppose Mary is wholly absorbed in her baby - and considers it a prodigy, as all first babies are. I am "truly grieved" (vide Mrs. Aldritt), to hear such bad news of Mr. Ball, what's the matter with him? Mrs. Ball told me before she left last summer, that she thought something was the matter with her, but it seems she was mistaken. I do hope she will get along nicely - How hard it will be for Miss Swift and Helen to move. Miss Usher, is I believe rather hoping for a visit from Helen on her way to N. York. We of course, would be delighted. We have changed Corridor Teacher. Mrs. Metcalf has gone on the third floor and Mrs. Wyman, come down here. Our corridor consider ourselves rather more advantaged than the third floor. Mrs. Wyman is very pleasant and good, and I think we shall like her very much. Minnie had sick headache yesterday and I got Miss Avery for her, who merely prescribed hot water as an emetic, which gave her much relief - Minnie this morning expressed herself much disgusted, she said she didn't see the use of having a doctor for the first time in one's life, and then not having her give you any oppodilldoc, or corrosive sublimate, or anything with a name, but merely hot water, which any one can have any day in the year. I seem to have strung out a long letter and not said anything just as I always do, but what can't be cured must be endured - I don't write as often as I used to but I can't bear to stop when I once begin - Oh! I had almost forgotten about exercise - We are obliged to exercise out of doors, fifty five minutes, every day of our lives. It is the only thing on which we are required to report, but we have to on this every Monday night to our corridor teacher, and she alone excuses us, only upon the plea of very bad weather or ill health. Give the usual quantity of love to the usual persons, from us three - Miss Gilbert sends love to all but Willie but Emma with superior charity includes him also -

With a thousand kisses I am your youngest daughter  
Mattie S. W.