

Vassar College  
Jan. 30, 1867

My very dear Mother,

Perhaps you didn't intend to, but then you did it all the same, perhaps however you didn't know, so that's some excuse for you. Are you aware that influenza is if possible more contagious than the small pox? I am not certain whether or no the M. D.'s are cognizant of this marvellous fact, if not it remains for me to add to the cause of science another profound discovery. My proofs are positive. Didn't you write to me while suffering from a severe attack of influenza? Didn't I receive that letter? and was I not filled with the most moving sympathy for my afflicted parent? In just six days didn't Minnie and myself fall victims to the same dire disease? Isn't my case clear? What does it matter if Minnie did take her constitutional in a damp snow, and come back sneezing? What does it concern any one if I did wake up Sunday morning a full a breeze blowing upon me, that has nothing whatever to do with the contagion of influenza. Suffice it to say that Minnie and I have entertained the company with our dulcet notes for three days, while Helen has chimed in on the chorus, but as she is almost recovered from her attack her assistance is almost valueless. Prof. Knapp this morning struck by the desolate condition of the inmates of 23, offered me the use of his room if ours was cold. Ours being warm I declined with much grace, doubtless making a deep impression upon him. We are nearly well now, but I have been instructing Minnie in the order of exercises for Friday night, namely, that Minnie should arise and say. Allow me to introduce to you (sneeze) Mr. (sneeze) Manning, (cough), (violent use of handkerchief), (three or four sneezes, obliged to sit down amid the cheers of the audience). Wouldn't the effect be telling? I suppose that my course of conduct in chapter meeting will be very simillar to that. We were this morning honored by a call, which some what startled us, from Horace Burt. Minnie, whom he came to see, couldn't see him, owing to aforesaid use of handkerchiefs, and so the pleasure of entertaining him fell to Hattie. Helen saw him a few minutes, as did Clara Glover, I was likewise debarred. Fortunately he could not stay but a short time. Hattie took him over to the Observatory, but not being able to find Miss Morse couldn't show him the house. I am very sorry, as, of course, that is all any body cares for here. Do write to me just as soon as Sarah is sick. I am feeling very anxious about her. I dream about her almost every night. Saturday night the Seniors and Juniors together with the members of the Faculty and their wives, took tea in Miss Lyman's room. The tea was very nice indeed, such delicious soda biscuits, and beautiful cake. We all enjoyed it very highly indeed - Miss Lyman has curiosities enough in her rooms to occupy a person fully a week. Every body was very pleasant indeed, even Dr. Raymond was not disagreeable - Yesterday was Miss Lyman's birthday, she was either fifty two or three. She made us a long call yesterday. I am sorry to have taken up this letter with so much nonsense, but I can't write any more, because the omnibus will leave very soon - The girls send much love - Please tell Willie that I'm sorry not to have written to him oftener but hope to retrieve my characters before long - Much love to every one - I do so much want to see you. Nellie has been having a nerve killed - I must stop now. Good bye dear -

Your loving daughter Mattie -