

Vassar College,
April 13, 1868.

My dearest Mother,

I wish that I were sitting on your bed this bright morning, I have so many things to tell you, and my tongue is so much mightier than my pen. I think I hear you murmur under breath, "If wishes were horses," which I take as a hint to do the best I can with the materials in my possession. Imprimis then, what a jewel of a Father I have! It was so good of him to get me a watch, just what my soul craved. I wrote him a letter trying to thank him, but failed miserably. I was sick with a cold at the time, hardly able to sit up, and altogether lacking in any such trifles as wits. Now that I have recovered my health, I seem to be no better off than before in the latter regard. Do you suppose that my watch would come safely by express? Several of the girls have received them when sent in that manner, but they didn't live so far away. However that may be. Father will attend to it, of course he knows much more of such matters than I do - My stupidity was so great that I also forgot to answer a most important inquiry, namely, how I stand for dresses in which to hear the country's pride do themselves credit on Commencement Day at Yale? I will therefore answer him through you, that I feel prepared, if reinforced by one dress and an outside thing, to make a tour of the world, and stop a while at every place of interest. That one dress, which I shall also need for class-day, I do cherish hopes will be forwarded to me by my loving friends at home, ready made, and complete - I can send word just how I want it, and the waist can be made Garibaldi. As for an outsider, I suppose it would be a sack, which could be fitted to you. With those additions, as I said before, I should be prepared to face a frowning world - The weather is of an economical turn of mind, and is carefully saving its spring clothing, so that imitative human beings feel constrained to do the same. When parties of nineteen go sleighriding in one long sleigh on the eleventh of April, there is no immediate danger of wearing out organdie and cambric dresses - We have given up expecting warm weather, but sit in a state of stupefaction, unsurprised by any manifestations of the elements whatever - I am rejoiced to hear that your eyes are improving without that dreadful operation - I can't help feeling badly to have you put on spectacles, it makes you seem older, but of course it's much the best thing for you. The pincushion fever is raging violently among the Seniors. I have had it and recovered, the only effects being a lovely pincushion for Mrs. Tenney - My convalescence dated from the hour that I began putting in the "filling" - Helen has begun one, but I doubt its being finishe- She, yesterday, devoted herself to reading Mrs. Foy's life, and the lives of Carey and two other missionaries - probably with reference to her prospects - I am delighted at the thought of her going to Beirout - I liked Dr. Post exceedingly, although he does consider women inferior to men - He is devoted to Botany, which will be a cause for friendship between him and Helen. Miss Lord seems to be a very superior woman, I think would be a very pleasant companion for such a life. She is a dear friend of George Walker's, and has a delightfully cool way of holding Prof. Robert up to ridicule after he has been making some absurd statement in Bible class - for both which things I look upon her with favor. I think that she and Helen would harmonize very well - I received Hattie's letter this morning, for which I am deeply grateful - It was mean of her to tell us of good things to eat which we can't share. I am very hungry for a meal in some private house - I could a tale unfold, about yesterday's dinner, whose lightest word would harrow up your soul. In eating her desert, consisting of dingy sugar

kisses and oranges, Helen found a nest of little ants living happily in her kiss - in the generosity of her heart, she didn't disturb them. When I go home, I want to have the entree of your tea drinking and poor people. Can I? Isn't it good that the Ladues are still to be so near? Dear little Norton must be very cunning by this time. Isn't it sad that Michigan, like Conn, should be joined to her idols? I have plumed myself on our dear old state when I saw others failing, but that she too should be wanting seems almost incredible - Whiskey is the greatest curse that has ever fallen upon land. Slavery itself was not so bad, for this contains slavery with in itself. I wish I were a man, or a gifted woman, and I would go from one end of the land to the other, sounding the alarm. Being neither, I shall do what in me lies, wherever I may be to crush it out - College begins again day after tomorrow and I wish it didn't. I have but just gotten ready to enjoy myself, when lo! we must be at work again - Fortunately my work will not be arduous - Love to all - Tell Will that I know my sins, and am going to expiate them speedily. Love from Helen and me to all our friends, especially the Ballards - I should like so much to see them, and hear them. Good bye

Your loving daughter - Mattie -