

Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

[Feb 14, 1911]

Mother, dear -

Do write me and tell me that I haven't utterly passed the pale of your approval because of my math. I've been dreading to hear from you on the subject because I'm so awfully ashamed and chagrined - I haven't been to call on one of my Junior friends since semester's because of it - I'm simply disappointed to pieces in myself. The girls say I'm a "chump" and numerous other things to feel so badly about it, but I can't seem to help it. I have a state-secret to tell you, which mustn't be let out in any condition - Miriam Payne has utterly flunked out and has gone home! She was taking but four subjects and miserably failed in three, so Mrs. Payne came up today and took her home. It seems a pity for Miriam did love it so, but she was never strong and couldn't have kept up much longer anyway - she was on the verge of giving in before exams and when she was told she must leave college, I guess it broke her up considerably. She had a single in North - not a very desirable one, to be sure, for it was

between the elevator and the dining-room, but nevertheless 'twas a single and in North. I went over to Lady K. today and asked if the room could be placed at the disposal of either J.E.M or myself, She of course replied, "Well, I can't say anything definite yet," as usual, "but I'll send for Miss May tomorrow or next day and see what I can do for you over there." She has never conceded as much as that before, so it's some encouragement to have her say that much. Poor J.E.M. has been having a hard time with herself this last week - she has one of Evelyn's boils right in the middle of her back which has been very painful and bothersome - I wonder if she's going to have a siege with them like Ev's.

I received the box today - it came in Saturday but I didn't see the express-list until after the office was closed, so I couldn't get it until today. Where did you get the darling skin - are you sure you need it in the house - it looks

2/

perfectly dear on our Table. And my white slippers - they look better than they ever did before, don't you think so? You needn't have sent me your own perfectly good lace-gimpe though it was dear of you to do it - I doubt if I need it as much as you do yourself. My other corset hasn't arrived on the scene of action yet - I don't see why, do you? The lady-in-the-store said it would be done last week, if I'm not mistaken. How did you ever get my dress mended, new coat-collar on stockings darned and 1001 other things done so soon with all your other business - you must have hustled like mad. Speaking of clothes, I do wish you could have seen the 1912-1914 championships ice-hockey game Today. We all dressed in white, white linen skirts and shirt-waists, white sweaters and skating-caps and red armbands with 1914 in white on them - cutest thing you ever saw. The Juniors were also in white but instead of the red arm-bands they had yellow bands on their caps - It was

as pretty and clean a game as I ever hope to see. Edith Taft, also in white with red 1910 numerals, refereed for us. The game came out 2 all, so we played a third 5-minute half as a rubber - that came out 3 all, so we had to play a fourth half resulting in the score 4-3 favor of 1912. Such excitement! oh! My! You should have seen little Muriel in a huge long white linen skirt belonging to Marjorie Woods, an enormous sweater of Martha Stong's and Martha Hollister's dinky cutey white knitted cap - believe me, she was a sight for the fishes.

Much was I thrilled Thursday when I took my first lesson with Miss Chittendon. Have you seen her? If you have, you know

just what a queer short little lady she is with with her little grey bang in front and her Psyche knot in back - she had on a green cloth skirt and short green corduroy-velvet jacket that afternoon. She talks in little, sharp, short, jerky sentences that almost

3/

petrify a meek little nobody like yours truly. I marched in with a bunch of music as big as a house under my arm. Says I - "I'm Muriel Tilden, Freshman, and I brought over all my music to let you see just what I studied."

Says she, "That's right. Sit down . Let me see it.
Hm-Hm-Ahem - Play something."

"What?" ask I

"Anything." says she.

So I sit me down [aforeminst] the steinway grand and proceed to render a most awful apology for the Second Movement from Beethoven's Pathetique Sonata. She meantime walks up and down the room. When I finished, she said "Well, you lady, you've had good instruction, excellent instruction; where did you study?"

I told her. "Never heard of Miss Galalgher" remarks she, "but I guess she must have been a good teacher." I casually had remarked beforehand about the Damrosch Institute - tactful or not - it seemed to work all right. The she said "You have lots of music in you

but I can see that you haven't practiced for some time. Furthermore, you haven't played that Sonato with your notes for a good while either."

I acknowledged the error of my ways and then she inquired as to what I wanted to do with my music, why I was studying, etc. I told her I wanted to be a concert-pianist and she said 'twas all very well and good, but there was no money in it. I didn't dare say I didn't think so, for I supposed she ought to know so I merely smiled and said that that was my ambition at

present. She then brought out a book of "Scarlotti" and gave me a piece of his that she cracked up to the skies and said was frequently played by the great artists - so I [am] worked like a trooper on it. Today I had what amounted to a technique lesson ($\frac{3}{4}$ hr) with her subordinate Miss Williamson - mostly arpeggio-work, scales, etc. Thursday, I attend "class"

4./ when I am to play aforementioned piece for the edification of the other members - It seems that this class is held every other week, when each student renders her lesson in the presence of certain of her fellow-learners; after she has finished, Miss Chittendon criticizes the performance and we are supposed to absorb her words of wisdom and profit by them. My weekly Monday lesson with Miss Williamson is private, though, as is the one I have alternate weeks with Miss Chittendon. I have arranged for a practice-hour a day, including Saturdays, but today I spent some extra time out there in Music Hall working on my lesson - we are allowed to go over in our spare time and use any vacant practice-room available.

I was much pleased at something Edith told me today. You remember my Physics last semester wasn't all it might have been until the very last part of the term. Well, we have

a different instructor, a Miss Carter, for our lectures this semester instead of Prof. Chamberlain. It seems that Edith told Miss Carter that my class-record wasn't up to that of my exam and lab-work and asked her to keep a special eye on me. Miss Carter accosted Edith today and said, "Mis Taft, I can't quite understand why you wanted me to particularly notice that little Tilden girl - she seems to understand the lectures perfectly and always answers my questions correctly." Now, aren't you pleased, even though I didn't pass math? Everybody else seems to be very confident that I'll pass my re-exam. But if I couldn't pass the semester's - I can't for the life of me see just how I'm going

to get through another. Even Miss Richardson said she didn't see any reason why I

5./ shouldn't be able to pass a re. Here's hoping anyway. We are taking algebra this semester (thank goodness) and of course I am enjoying that I getting along in it swimmingly. That reminds me, the swimming-tank in the gym has been filled and we have the best times in it. We are trying out for a 1914 water-basket-ball team and I'm called out for a trial tomorrow evening at 8:30 - much fun! Much excitement! I am getting so that I can almost dive so as not to resemble a "cow", which beauteous animal you likened me to last summer, remember? I do hope we can go to Chatham - I'm quite thrilled over the prospects of a game on Atwood Davis' tennis-courts with Ruth Carter. I haven't seen her long enough at any one time since semesters to ask her whether she remembers you or not, but I'm not going to forget it - no danger-

I have the little apron that

Grandma sent me for Christmas very nearly finished - it isn't beautifully embroidered - but it looks quite nice.

If at any time on a stray shopping-expedition you should see a cutey night-gown, most dainty and [cunning], that looks as though it weren't too difficult for me to embroider for Edith - will you just purchase it and the needful materials for the creation? I have oodles of things more I could say, but the postage on this will more than break me if I write much more, besides my precious little alarm-clock points warningly at the time. Hoping you haven't forgotten the allowance-proposition and that things are running more smoothly at 291, "I remain,"

Lovingly.

Muriel

P.S. Do ask the little ones to write and don't forget Evelyn is to spend Sunday soon.

M.

[written upside down in the top margin of page 1]

I never could read this all over, so please excuse all errors.

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y.

1--30 PM

FEB14 11

B.O. Tilden

291 Westminster Road

Brooklyn, N.Y.

[written in pencil, upside down on front of envelope]

oranges

beets

Chicken

2112 [Ber]

[written in pencil, sideways on back of envelope]

[Column 1]

Coffee

Prunes

Milk

butter

cheese

Pumpkin

[Column 2]

choc

sugar

beans

Soap

[bottom]

fish bake

sweet po

string beans

grape fruit
[...]