

Vassar College. February 23. 1896.

My own dear Father,-

This letter shall be a birthday remembrance for you, and takes to you all the best birthday wishes I can think of, with hopes for many happy returns of the day-

I suppose you had a little vacation and rest on Washington's birthday- Coming on Saturday it did not give the school-children a chance for it, I suppose. But we would not have it if it came on any other day, for you know the Faculty decreed last year that it broke into our work too much to have a holiday then. Of course we don't have Lincoln's birthday either.

Friday night we had a treat in the shape of a lecture by Dr. Albert Shaw, the Editor of the "Review of Reviews". His subject was Washington, but he did not tell the usual things about him. He spoke about what our nation today owes to Washington. The four great services which Washington rendered were: first, he decided the relation of the colonies to England, namely, that they should be absolutely independent instead of being like Canada to England, or Cuba to Spain, second, he guided the few small colonies through a war with a great Empire: third, he assimilated and united into a harmonious whole all the varied elements in the colonies, and in the fourth place, most important

of all, he instituted an American policy, which was sound and unique: in financial matters he instituted the doctrine of sound money: in foreign Feb. 1038, 1896 - 2

relations he instituted the policy of absolute non-interference in European affairs, for which he was very much censured.- and in regard to England he insisted on maintaining as amicable relations as possible, and advocated settling all disputes with her by means of arbitration. In these respects he was far ahead of his times, and Dr. Shaw said that a great deal of the credit for our American foreign policy and insistence on arbitration and desire for peaceful relations with England, ought to be given to Washington - more than is usually given to him.

His was one of the best lectures we have had for a long time;

Miss Salmon told us beforehand he would be very good, and so we were waiting for him in an expectant frame of mind-

He arrived late; and while we were assembled waiting for him a few girls in front arose and started to sing America. Of course all the rest of us immediately stood up, and we sang the four verses.

Dr. Shaw has a rather disagreeable voice, which grated on me at first, but I soon forgot all about it. He is quite a young man, and was born in Ohio - in New London- He has a very sweet-looking little wife, who came along with him.

Dr. Shaw stayed till last night, so that he saw us all dressed for the "bal

poudre"- You know every Washington's birthday we have a Martha Washington ball. We come down to dinner in our Martha Washington costumes,

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about half the girls dressing as men, and then we omit chapel service - which would seem rather incongruous, and then go over to the gymnasium building about half past seven for the evening-

Over here in Strong we all marched into the dining room by couples, singing America.

Just as on Lincoln's birthday we sang national songs, and war-songs, while we were waiting for dessert,- or eating it. The girls at some table would start up some song, and all the rest of us join in immediately. So we sang song after song- After we finished "John Brown's Body", one of the girls started "Hang Jeff Davis on the sour apple tree"- to the same tune. While we sang it I saw two or three Southern girls looking mad, and I thought it was rather mean of us to sing it. Of course we sang "Star-Spangled Banner", "Marching Through Georgia" and all the rest too.

In the morning before breakfast some of the girls went through all the corridors singing the national songs - like Christmas carols. Over at the gym. they had tableaux- Courtship of Miles Standish, Washington's Inaugural Ball, The Hatchet Episode etc. The girls do seem to get up such fine costumes in such a short time. Of course we all have lots of studying to do every Saturday, so that we can't spend much time on costumes. There were some old dresses of silk - heirlooms, no doubt, but Feb, 23, 1896 - 4

very often costumes improvised out of odds and ends of nothing presented a much better appearance. I wore the green calico of Edie's, with a fichu, and a white cap; my hair high and powdered\* with cornstarch- Carrie was my escort, with a black coat and gorgeous lace front, and hat three cornered with a long ostrich plume on it, and a short skirt. When we went over to the main building, Carrie caught sight of a real man, and was so embarrassed that she turned and fled, and did not put in an appearance again during the evening-

This morning we had a minister from Buffalo, Mr. Gilford- He had some very good thoughts, but was unfortunate in his use of figures and illustrations - they were so striking and sensational as to divert attention from the thought. When he said that some people used the Holy Spirit as a "Divine dose of opium, or ecclesiastical chloroform", I was disgusted.

He was also unfortunate in his wording, when he was speaking of the heroism of 'fishing for men', he said "you could catch a dozen fish in half an hour, but you may have to fish for several years before you catch a man." Such a wording as this. In addressing an audience of young women, proved too suggestive, and most of the girls, hitherto very well-behaved, could not restrain a smile.

Mamma was inquiring about Kate Dunham a while ago. Tell her that she seems to me to be pretty well. She says she is as well as she has been Feb. 2, 1896 - 1041

for the last two or three years. She went down to Newburgh Friday to

stay over Sunday with Miss Gouldy, who was up here last week- You know Miss Gouldy visited Miss Sutliff in Cleveland. I did not get a letter from Mamma this week - I think something was the matter with the mails yesterday, for very few letters came. X am waiting impatiently for one of your new photographs. I hope they are good- With love to all the family from your loving daughter Adelaide. jCalflin,