

Vassar College.

April 26. 1896.

My dear Mother,-

Today I write your birthday letter, to wish you a very happy sixtieth birthday, and a happy year to follow. How I should like to be at home to celebrate it- This is the last birthday before I get home.

We are having such beautiful weather now-we want to be out-of-doors all the time - but there is so much that keeps us indoors. Ray and I have taken a membership in a Wheel Club - which means that we each rent a wheel for an hour three times a week, at the rate of seventy-five cents a month. I think I can learn to ride, and get seventy-five cents'

worth of fun out of it. The wheel has not come yet.

We were very much excited yesterday, because our class suffered two important defeats,-the first in the afternoon when we lost a match game in basketball with '96, and in the evening, when we lost the debate between T. and M. and Qui Vive. We had no expectation beforehand of winning the debate, because we have practiced debating only this year, while Qui Vive had had practice a year longer- But the game in basketball we had expected to win because we have never been beaten but twice in basketball. '96, however, was desperately determined to win. and played the fiercest game I ever saw them play-so that the game was very close indeed, but they finally made a point just before time was called. We were actually ready to weep, we were so disappointed-

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As I said before, we did not expect to win in the evening - especially as we had changed leaders three times, and Ray was the only one of the originally appointed debaters left. So of course the girls who finally took our side did not have so much time for preparation as the opposite side had. Ray was the leader on our side, and the third member on our side was one of the girls who had played basket ball in the afternoon. She was so tired she could hardly deliver her speech- We were rather disappointed in her, for when she is not tired, she is awfully bright and funny. (She, by the way, is the daughter of an actress, but she is an awfully nice girl - Every one likes her so much, and she has so much common sense- Her name is Marie Reimer). Ray's first speech was fifteen minutes long, and was not so good as her final summing up speech, because she was rather scared at first, and she had to try to remember V^what she had written, while her second speech was extemporaneous, consisting mostly of refutations, and In that she was just as bright and sweet as she could be. She spoke the nicest I have ever heard her speak in public- And some of the things she said were so cute they brought down the house. I dont mean to say her first speech was not good, for it was very good, and very clear and logical. The second girl on our side made a very good speech too, and was especially good at refutation. On the other side the leader was splen-

did, the second speaker moderately good, but the third spoke entirely off the point.

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I think the other side showed more self-possession and ease in speaking, but I don't think their arguing was any better than ours, and I think our side was far superior to them in refutation. However they were enough better than us to have the judges decide in their favor. The judges were Prof. Mills, and two lawyers from town. Oh I forgot to state the subject of the debate, "Resolved that the foreign policy of the

present Administration merits the disapproval of the country"- Our side had

the affirmative. They would have been smarter to state the question affirmative "merits the approval" and then take the negative, for then they would have had the last word- Some of the Faculty thought it should have been decided in favor of '97, but of course we have to rest content that the decision of the judges was the best one. The only times we had hopes of winning was after the speakers had finished, and ours had done better than we expected and the opposition had not done so well as we expected. '96 fairly stood on their heads with joy at winning, for it is so seldom that

they get ahead of us in anything.

Well, I ought to have written first about Proxy's arrival but that has been so crowded out by later events that I was thinking it occurred a week ago. Of course there is a great deal of uncertainty in preparing for the arrival of an ocean steamer, but the committee had things so systematized that they were telegraphed when the steamer was sighted, when the

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passengers landed, and when Proxy left the Grand Central for Poughkeepsie. The entrance and second corridor were decorated with rose and gray cheesecloth, and palms. Down in the entrance there was a big square pyramid of palms—to which Dick Taylor had added a handful of dandelions as his contribution to the floral decorations. Dr. Taylor was to arrive at the college about quarter past five, so at five everybody in college went out and we arranged ourselves in single line up and down each side of the road leading from the lodge to the front entrance, and we extended from the lodge nearly to the door. Then the Faculty and officers were all standing around the door. We waited till we began to fear Proxy was not coming then after all, but about half past five the carriage appeared, and the girls began to yell with one accord, "Welcome Proxy, Welcome Proxy, Vassar, Vassar, Vassar *s Proxy!" All the while that the carriage was passing up between the two rows of girls, we kept yelling this, or else, "Rah! Rah! Rah!

V-A-S-S-A-R.

Proxy!" —(prolonged)

Then we all fell in behind the carriage and followed it up to the door, where we stood and listened while Proxy spoke a few words, telling how

glad he was to get back, and how much he appreciated our hearty welcome. Then in the evening we had a reception arranged for the poor man, who must have been tired out- At this reception we all gathered first in the Apr. 26, 1896 - 5

second corridor, around a platform which had been erected, and we sang a song which had been written for the occasion. Then the President of the Students' Association made a short speech of welcome, followed by Prexy, in another speech, not very long, in which he said he was glad to be stand-

ing-en* even on that platform, for he had been reeling for the past seven days- It seems they had quite a stormy passage, and he was seasick all the time. He looks a great deal better - and is very brown. He met a great many friends who were living abroad, who showed him around, and he had a most delightful trip. Noae of the Faculty wrote him a single word about college matters while he was goae, so that his mind would have a complete rest from worrying about things. He says he enjoyed most the trip up the Nile, \in which he spent three weeks- I suppose he will tell us some time in chapel about his trip.

After his speech Thursday night we all weat and shook hands with him,-after singing another song composed for the occasion.

Saturday evening the Faculty gave a reception to Dr. Taylor, so that he had not much chance to rest - the Seniors having given him one on Saturday afternoon in the Senior parlor. Well, we are all very glad to have him back again.

Friday is Founder's Day, and we have a holiday- which means that I will be working all day on special topics- It keeps me busy to do all these things while I am tutoring four times a week. My tutoring will only last two weeks longer, though.

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I hope the whooping cough next door is vanishing -

I thought you would want Ed to come home as soon as he could so I advised him to go. Can't you leave the house-cleaning till I am at home to help? With Edie as poorly as she has been, I do hate to think ol her attacking housecleaning, and you know I like housework. I have such a large part of the year without it that I don't get my share.

My love to all the neighbors and friends-

Tour own daughter

Adelaide. ^Claflinj