

May 7.]

Dear Mother and Father:

I thought that there was something the matter that we got my course arranged so easily. I was talking to Miss Kitchel yesterday and she urged me so strongly to take a writing course in addition to a literature course, this making English a twenty-four hour major, that I went to Miss Wylie's informal talk fourth hour this morning on the exact values of the different courses in English, their sequence, and the advisability of grouping certain ones together. She talked and answered questions for one hour. I got a lot out of it, but my desire to change my course does not come from what she said. She did not crack up her own department--in fact, her answer to almost everyone was, "Take what you want to take, don't take something just because you think you ought to and if you expect not to like it". She very strongly advised that you should take one writing course if you expect to take literature all the way through, and vice versa, one literature course if you expect to take writing all the way through. She thinks it is too one-sided to take all courses in one phase of the subject. However, that is not what influenced me so much as what Miss Kitchel said yesterday, and what [Miss Wylie] corroborated all through the discussion this morning. I have improved very much in writing this year, but there is still room for more improvement, and I ought to continue not so much for the sake of reaching such a very high level as for the good it will do me in all other subjects, because, no matter what you major or specialize in later, you have to express it through English, and the more forceful your use of English is, the better you will do with your subject. At the end of the discussion I told Miss Wylie that I had not done as well in English as in all the other subjects this year, that I intended to take a literature course next year and wanted to know what her advice was about talking[sic] a writing course--whether they were intended just for those who were particularly good in English or also for those who felt that they had gotten a good deal out of their practice in writing Freshman Year, but still thought they ought to continue to improve some more. She very strongly advised taking critical writing next year in conjunction with a literature course, not only for the practice in writing, but for the training of your mind in developing logical[sic] thinking, in appreciation of words, and in general intelligent brain-work. She thought it would be a splendid plan for me to take it, but she said, "If your life next year will be absolutely empty for lack of the subject you will have to drop in order to get in, by no means take it". On thinking the subject over, I decided I still want to take history, economics, a literature course, and I must take science, so the only thing to drop is math. In doing so I would probably be sacrificing an A for a C, but I think that simply shows that I have gotten one thing out of this year anyhow, a realization of the insignificance of marks. The math department is supposed to be one of the easiest here anyhow, most of your thinking is done in the classroom and at the black-board, by the obliging professor.

Therefore, the mental training that I would get out of that would not be very great. It would be merely pleasure. I certainly ought to get enough training in exactness from science to offset the lack of another year of math. The question resolves itself, then, into this, (As I used to say in Peabody debate), Will it not be more valuable to me during my college course and after I am out of college, to be able to write and express my thoughts ably that it will be to take another year of math, for the pleasure to be gotten out of it? You can get all the necessary information out of the catalogue about the course in critical writing. It is the only one of the writing courses that appeals to me, and Miss Kitchel agrees that it is the one I am best suited for. I don't think I would be strong on narrative writing!

I am glad I have my second year of language off my hands anyhow!

I ordered a class picture yesterday. It is good, as a whole, but I am awful on it.

Phyllis was up here for an hour last night. Her latest is that she is going to get four C's and a D. I think so, too!

I just discovered that Third Hall is given again at Commencement, so if you come for your reunion, Mother, as you certainly should, you will see it then. There are chairs--I don't have to sit on the ground, but I'll wear my winter coat and take a blanket anyhow. I had an unusually good day yesterday, which was encouraging after walking to the Inn to meet you, Father. Today is not quite so good, but even so, better than the past.

If I feel as well tomorrow and Sunday as yesterday and today, I shall go back to my room Monday. Dr. B. says I can use the porch here whenever I want. I feel quite sure I won't be making a mistake, but if I find that I have, I can always

come back.

Otherwise I don't think there is anything else to tell you. I cannot quite make myself out, voluntarily giving up a course that I know I will do well in, for one that I know I need more. R. S. V. P. immediately and in detail what you think on the subject as elections are due on May fourteenth, and also your advice is always right, I suppose due to your great experience!!

I studied English Speech two hours this morning and Miss Rogers said there was a noticeable improvement.

Wishing you the same,
[Fannie.]