



Vassar College, April 22. '71

Darling Mother:

I was very sorry to hear that you have been sick. Was it a cold? Now I wish I could fly to you this aft. and kiss, kiss, kiss you and find out just how you are. I am more liable to homesickness on Saturdays than at any other time, and now it seems to me that if I could just sit down to the tea table with you tonight, it would be happiness enough.

I am glad Ellen is with you. I presume the bad cold which she has had lately, have made her look poorly. I can fancy how valiantly she has gone about the mending and how much she has accomplished. I sate and sewed by myself this morning. I tried to induce Dr. Avery to keep me company but she preferred to sow in the garden. Then I went in search of Miss Lord & could

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Date: April 22, 1871

Description: Eunice Sewall on Vassar library job, Poughkeepsie, NY

not find her, and of Miss Darnie who  
was busy and finally sat down  
alone & finished off my calico dress, all  
but the pocket which I will do this evening.  
I wish you could get rid of the "awful  
house-cleaning." Does your new Bridget  
amount to anything?

I want to send you the money  
for a new matting for the dining room  
but I have not got it to send. How  
many yards will it take?

I can't help wondering how they man-  
age at Mrs. Thurnall's to accommodate  
Mr. & Mrs. Fox and two children.  
They have come on early. Is the time  
fixed for their visit in Portland?

I am grieving over the loss of my  
associate in the Library, Miss Mann.  
She is to take charge of the French classes  
on Monday, and that takes her away  
from me. The former teacher, a French  
lady, a curious woman, & not at all fit  
for her place here, is going away. Miss  
Mann & I have got on delightfully  
in our work, and I shall miss her help  
very much, although some one else will

not find her, and of Miss David who  
was busy and finally sat down  
alone & finished my calico dress, all  
but the pocket which I will do this evening.  
I wish you could get rid of the "awful  
house-cleaning." Does your new Bridget  
amount to anything?

I want so much to send you the money  
for a new matting for the dining room  
but I have not got it to send. How  
many yards will it take?

I can't help wondering how they man-  
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take her place. Changes are not pleasant when one is perfectly satisfied.

I shall have to magnify my office to you when I get home and tell you how much a librarian ought to know in many ways. If you can obtain the North American Review for Jan. 1869, and will read the article on Harvard College Lib. and its catalogue, it will explain the special culture needed for the work.

I have done nothing yet with reference to stopping in Boston. I fancy most kinds of work grow more or less monotonous at times, it depends on the spirit one is able to throw into it. Sometimes I think it better to be dealing with live people than dead books, and sometimes I turn to my books in relief. They do not thwart me, I know how to manage them, and I do not know how to deal always with the hearts committed to my care. And when I am dull & stupid, it will not exert a depressing influence on the books that line my library walls. Then I am tempted to laugh. You will think I am put to it for reasons, but I was

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thinking of the young ladies who sit near me at table now, and of our talk which does not always "flow," in spite of my efforts. If there is any one I am tempted to envy, it is the woman who always has something to say.

Is it possible that my sister, "timid as the fawn" is to personate the "British warrior-queen"! I fancy her costume was a very simple one.

Sunday Ev'g.

I have just come from prayer meeting to the Library. We had a very pleasant meeting. I rely a good deal on Julia Horton. Her Christian influence ~~with~~ is earnest and decided, in a quiet way and I can see its good effect on some of her associates. One of the elder students, who has been in my corridor for two years, an earnest Christian girl, has left on account of her health, within a few days. She is going to Mrs. Gleason's Water-Cure. Another of my good girls has left quite unexpectedly and sails for Germany on the 2<sup>d</sup> of May, to be gone two years. Another has been called home by the

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illness of her aged Father. Three others of my corridor who went home during the holidays have been sick and have not yet returned. When one is kept home in that way who is not a Christian and to whom I have never spoken personally, I feel so burdened as if I had lost that opportunity and perhaps failed in duty. And that is the most perplexing part of my care & responsibility. It is so hard to speak to one unless you come into intimate relations with her or unless there is some special opening, and I do not get so near to half or even two thirds of my girls. I thought this forenoon, if I could only have the Lord speak directly to me and tell me just what my duty is, I could be strong to go forward & do it. I think harm is sometimes done by the injudicious way in which persons are spoken to on religion, and yet I fear I err in the other way.

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This has been a very windy,  
cool day altho' the sun has been  
shining brightly. I found it difficult  
to walk against the wind when I went  
out after dinner. Only one more Sunday  
in April. I think of you at home on  
these cold, windy days and I hope the  
weather will soon be settled here. Our  
supply of coal is nearly exhausted and  
there is none in Po'keepsie, the consequence  
of the miners' strike. We depend on it  
for light as well as warmth and it  
is a very serious matter for us to be with-  
out gas even for a night or so.

What a dreadful state of things there is  
in the mining districts. One of my  
girls is from Scranton, Pa. Her father  
who is a proprietor in one of the mines  
says that the companies are in the  
wrong, and have greatly wronged the  
miners in the matter of wages. She says  
the miners and their families some of  
them are actually starving, people are  
doing what they can to help them, but  
all the classes in those districts suffer  
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industry.

Julia H. told me of the death of Mrs. Dr. Murrell, (Sallie St. John). I remember her as she used to look when she rode in to school in the horse-cars.

I suppose Merrill and Mary are on their way North by this time. I want to hear about Ellen's different visits, I presume it will be such an old story by the time I get home, that she will be tired of repeating it.

Did I tell you that my vaccination failed to take effect? I need not dread small-pox. Indeed, I think I have very little susceptibility to contagious diseases.

Monday.

I intended to fill out this sheet, but must ask you to take it just as it is, with a great deal of love to each of the dear ones at home. I hope this will find you well once more.

Your loving daughter,  
Eunice D. Sewall.

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