

June 9 [18]85.

My Darling

I am up to my old trick writing love letters to the tune of scratch scratch scratch. The boys are grinding at examinations\_ You never heard a more quiet room than this room in spite of the fact that there are ten boys & girls writing like mad. There is a grim determination in their look & they tackle the questions wondering if they know anything at all about the subjects therein contained. I know all about it for I have been there before. I never enjoyed exams as I have those of this year. I have been proctor at them but I never before had the addition[al] pleasure of being able to write letters to a girl I loved & who I knew returned my love with interest. They will write for about three hours[,] madly hurrying to get through & trying their best to condense work that would take ten hours into an hour & a half. It is a question[,] why give them so much? The answer is that if you don't give them what would take any trained mind ten hours[,] they skim over the surface so fast that they will do just nothing at all\_ & will get over the whole thing in half an hour. I have gauged them already & the exam is a farce so far as my estimate of them is concerned. I haven't had them under my eye for a year without sizing them as well as I shall be able to. There are some interesting things that come out in such a study of individuals and I enjoy watching the students minds & seeing the individuality of each one[,] how differently they do their work & how each one finally comes out at the end[,] some better[,] some worse[,] & then compare their ways of working & see how much fault is to be found with them & how much is to be found with their individual ability. I am getting fond of the business of managing men & find that I am having more & more of it to do. One gets tired & discouraged & dispirited in his work & I must set him up [up?] & brace him up & keep him going along. Another is in trouble from his love of fun which uncontrolled in a dormitory develops into positive mischief & the boy is in danger & may get great positive injury from the dormitory. A third likes the element of uncertainty & risk & gets to card playing & wasting his time. I tried all those things myself & I know just how seductive the temptation to waste time it is\_\_ I have just gotten through a great complication at the dormitory, the assigning of next years rooms\_ An old system had been in operation by which the men had expected to choose this year. I foresaw trouble last fall from this old system & determined to introduce a new one which I felt sure was fair & so would suit the boys. For the boys prize fairness above every thing & will generally endure a good deal of hard ship if they feel that it is entirely fair & just. I had a double purpose in making this change. I felt sure that it would settle all the difficulties most easily & beside I felt sure that it would give the students a belief in my candor & fairness which I don't deny to you I use every mean to cultivate in them. It is necessary if you are going to manage them to take advantage of their weaknesses if you may call it that & I am always frank (apparently with them & they always are with me I believe.[]) I get along with them very easily & the Dormitory itself has this year caused neither Craig or myself any especial trouble. The drawing of rooms came today & complicated as the problem had seemed[,] my plan cleared it all up & everything worked out all right. The principle I worked on was this[:] to let the men choose their rooms in order of application. The old method was to let the first man who spoke for a room have it. The difficulty with this latter was that the second man who chooses a room[,] not knowing that some one was ahead of him[,] wouldn't apply for another room & some one else applying much later than he could come in for a better room & he might get

none at all\_\_ To avoid this you must tell the second applicant that the room has been applied for & this virtually awards the room to the first man. So far as he is concerned it would work very well but after you get a little way down the line trouble begins because of a second custom in the [ill.] that I do not want to change[,] that is of letting the men there now retain their rooms if they wish. It isn't possible to find out with certainty all who will retain their rooms till towards the close of the year & yet these applications coming in early in the year will be for rooms they have. Of course it isn't possible to bother with awarding all the rooms provisionally without endless squabbles. If on the other hand I allow the first come[,] first choice & so on[,] & then call all together[,] show them all the possible places and let them pick[,] they can't complain & they don't either & I believe that every man feels that he has had fair play & has gotten the best that there was to be had at the time he came on the scene.

I was up till one o'clock last night & on the lookout for rackets but there wasn't any disorder at all and the boys were all quiet & nothing seems in the wind. We are on the lookout. I had just gotten off & it wasn't long after I had gotten into bed when I suddenly heard an immense howl as tho the whole crowd of boys had come out at the same time & set up one united war whoop\_ I was too lazy to turn out of bed & tho I would just let the night watchman attend to it but I waited for more noise & then found out it was the train that runs across about 1/8 mile in front of my room. I thought about somebody a little while & then I dropped off again & went through till 6:30 a.m. I am up a good deal nights now but I get two or three hours extra sleep during the day & that compensates so that I feel fresh & first rate all the time.

I send you a programme of the microscopical soirée. I have checked off the specimens that I furnished & I am surprised to find how † selfish I was & what a lot I contributed. Most of the things performed beautifully tho you can't always count on living creatures & often they do like babies[,] go back on one terribly. You can't control their numbers. 2 fiascoes. The frog's heart must have died in the operation of depriving him of consciousness. Also the living Hydra died but we got another & so that was O.K. There was a perfect jam at first for the lecture was well attended & every one took in the microscope show. Later the crowd thinned out & we had a better time & could enjoy the thing somewhat ourselves. The lecture was very good & very instructive but of course that can't be very well reproduced in a letter. The subject was a parallel between art & literary composition & he drew splendidly & at the same time the thing was not ever clap trap drawing for the sake of show. It was genuinely instructive & full of valuable ideas to any one who would attempt sketching or who would have an intelligent understanding of the principles in picture or decorative art either. I tho't of Jule & wished that she could be present for it was so completely in her line that she would have been very much profited by it I am sure\_ I wish I could tell you or better show you some of the things he showed us but I am helpless when he could do with such complete ease\_ Tonight there is a Lecture on Margaret Fuller by Mrs. May Wright Sewall. I shall be tempted to let Mag. slide, for I think I shall be too sleepy this evening & shall prefer to spend the time in bed. I received your letter last Evening on time and am glad that this attack of that old thing was no more severe. I am not going to say any thing about what I feel about it for I can't help my worry over that Ghost & yet there isn't any thing we can do now to guard against this thing. I looked for a letter today but don't hope very strongly for it. I am so very glad that we are so close to the end. Tomorrow is near & then it will be only one day more\_ I won't try to write more now. Effie my Darling I am afraid from your silence that my letter of Friday[,] the one you got on Friday[,] did

harm at your end of the line tho it did me more good to write than anything short of your dear self or a letter to hit my case could possible have done\_ There is nothing at all that threatens now to disturb our plans & we have every reason to hope to meet on Friday whether it be at Albany or New York. I, I had to close æ in the greatest haste. With deepest love

Your own Harry