

## II. LETTERS(1887-1901)

### INTRODUCTION

Helen Keller's letters are important, not only as a supplementary story of her life, but as a demonstration of her growth in thought and expression—the growth which in itself has made her distinguished.

These letters are, however, not merely remarkable as the productions of a deaf and blind girl, to be read with wonder and curiosity; they are good letters almost from the first. The best passages are those in which she talks about herself, and gives her world in terms of her experience of it. Her views on the precession of the equinoxes are not important, but most important are her accounts of what speech meant to her, of how she felt the statues, the dogs, the chickens at the poultry show, and how she stood in the aisle of St. Bartholomew's and felt the organ rumble. Those are passages of which one would ask for more. The reason they are comparatively few is that all her life she has been trying to be "like other people," and so she too often describes things not as they appear to her, but as they appear to one with eyes and ears.

One cause for the excellence of her letters is the great number of them. They are the exercises which have trained her to write. She has lived at different times in different parts of the country, and so has been separated from most of her friends and relatives. Of her friends, many have been distinguished people, to whom—not often, I think, at the sacrifice of spontaneity—she has felt it necessary to write well. To them and to a few friends with whom she is in closest sympathy she writes with intimate frankness whatever she is thinking about. Her naive retelling of a child's tale she has heard, like the story of "Little Jakey," which she rehearses for Dr. Holmes and Bishop Brooks, is charming and her grave paraphrase of the day's lesson in geography or botany, her parrot-like repetition of what she has heard, and her conscious display of new words, are delightful and instructive; for they show not only what she was learning, but how, by putting it all into letters, she made the new knowledge and the new words her own.

So these selections from Miss Keller's correspondence are made with two purposes—to show her development and to preserve the most entertaining and significant passages from several hundred letters. Many of those written before 1892 were published in the reports of the Perkins Institution for

the Blind. All letters up to that year are printed intact, for it is legitimate to be interested in the degree of skill the child showed in writing, even to details of punctuation; so it is well to preserve a literal integrity of reproduction. From the letters after the year 1892 I have culled in the spirit of one making an anthology, choosing the passages best in style and most important from the point of view of biography. Where I have been able to collate the original letters I have preserved everything as Miss Keller wrote it, punctuation, spelling, and all. I have done nothing but select and cut.

The letters are arranged in chronological order. One or two letters from Bishop Brooks, Dr. Holmes, and Whittier are put immediately after the letters to which they are replies. Except for two or three important letters of 1901, these selections cease with the year 1900. In that year Miss Keller entered college. Now that she is a grown woman, her mature letters should be judged like those of any other person, and it seems best that no more of her correspondence be published unless she should become distinguished beyond the fact that she is the only well-educated deaf and blind person in the world.

*LETTERS (1887-1901)*

*Miss Sullivan began to teach Helen Keller on March 3rd, 1887. Three months and a half after the first word was spelled into her hand, she wrote in pencil this letter*

*TO HER COUSIN ANNA, MRS. GEORGE T. TURNER  
[Tuscumbia, Alabama, June 17, 1887.]*

*helen write anna george will give helen apple simpson will shoot  
bird jack will give helen stick of candy doctor will give mildred  
medicine mother will make mildred new dress  
[No signature]*

*Twenty-five days later, while she was on a short visit away from home, she wrote to her mother. Two words are almost illegible, and the angular print slants in every direction.*

*TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER  
[Huntsville, Alabama, July 12, 1887.]*

*Helen will write mother letter papa did give helen medicine  
mildred will sit in swing mildred did kiss helen teacher did give  
helen peach george is sick in bed george arm is hurt anna did  
give helen lemonade dog did stand up.*

*conductor did punch ticket papa did give helen drink of water in  
car*

*carlotta did give helen flowers anna will buy helen pretty new  
hat helen will hug and kiss mother helen will come home  
grandmother does love helen*

*good-by  
[No signature.]*

*By the following September Helen shows improvement in fulness of construction and more extended relations of thought.*

*TO THE BLIND GIRLS AT THE PERKINS INSTITUTION IN SOUTH BOSTON  
[Tuscumbia, September, 1887.]*

*Helen will write little blind girls a letter Helen and teacher  
will come to see little blind girls Helen and teacher will go in*

steam car to boston Helen and blind girls will have fun blind girls can talk on fingers Helen will see Mr anagnos Mr anagnos will love and kiss Helen Helen will go to school with blind girls Helen can read and count and spell and write like blind girls mildred will not go to boston Mildred does cry prince and jumbo will go to boston papa does shoot ducks with gun and ducks do fall in water and jumbo and mamie do swim in water and bring ducks out in mouth to papa Helen does play with dogs Helen does ride on horseback with teacher Helen does give handee grass in hand teacher does whip handee to go fast Helen is blind Helen will put letter in envelope for blind girls good-by  
HELEN KELLER

A few weeks later her style is more nearly correct and freer in movement. She improves in idiom, although she still omits articles and uses the "did" construction for the simple past. This is an idiom common among children.

TO THE BLIND GIRLS AT THE PERKINS INSTITUTION  
[Tuscumbia, October 24, 1887.]

dear little blind girls

I will write you a letter I thank you for pretty desk I did write to mother in memphis on it mother and mildred came home wednesday mother brought me a pretty new dress and hat papa did go to huntsville he brought me apples and candy I and teacher will come to boston and see you nancy is my doll she does cry I do rock nancy to sleep mildred is sick doctor will give her medicine to make her well. I and teacher did go to church sunday mr. lane did read in book and talk Lady did play organ. I did give man money in basket. I will be good girl and teacher will curl my hair lovely. I will hug and kiss little blind girls mr. anagnos will come to see me.

good-by  
HELEN KELLER

TO MR. MICHAEL ANAGNOS, DIRECTOR OF THE PERKINS INSTITUTION  
[Tuscumbia, November, 1887.]

dear mr. anagnos I will write you a letter. I and teacher did have pictures. teacher will send it to you. photographer does make pictures. carpenter does build new houses. gardener does dig and hoe ground and plant vegetables. my doll nancy is sleeping. she is sick. mildred is well uncle frank has gone hunting deer. we will have venison for breakfast when he comes home. I did ride in wheel barrow and teacher did push it. simpson did give me popcorn and walnuts. cousin rosa has gone to see her mother. people do go to church sunday. I did read in my book about fox and box. fox can sit in the box. I do like to read in my book. you do love me. I do love you.

good-by  
HELEN KELLER.

TO DR. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL  
[Tuscumbia, November, 1887.]

Dear Mr. Bell.

I am glad to write you a letter, Father will send you picture. I and Father and aunt did go to see you in Washington. I did play

*with your watch. I do love you. I saw doctor in Washington. He looked at my eyes. I can read stories in my book. I can write and spell and count. good girl. My sister can walk and run. We do have fun with Jumbo. Prince is not good dog. He can not get birds. Rat did kill baby pigeons. I am sorry. Rat does not know wrong. I and mother and teacher will go to Boston in June. I will see little blind girls. Nancy will go with me. She is a good doll. Father will buy me lovely new watch. Cousin Anna gave me a pretty doll. Her name is Allie.*

Good-by,  
HELEN KELLER.

*By the beginning of the next year her idioms are firmer. More adjectives appear, including adjectives of colour. Although she can have no sensuous knowledge of colour, she can use the words, as we use most of our vocabulary, intellectually, with truth, not to impression, but to fact. This letter is to a school-mate at the Perkins Institution.*

TO MISS SARAH TOMLINSON  
Tuscumbia, Ala. Jan. 2nd 1888.

*Dear Sarah*  
*I am happy to write to you this morning. I hope Mr. Anagnos is coming to see me soon. I will go to Boston in June and I will buy father gloves, and James nice collar, and Simpson cuffs. I saw Miss Betty and her scholars. They had a pretty Christmas-tree, and there were many pretty presents on it for little children. I had a mug, and little bird and candy. I had many lovely things for Christmas. Aunt gave me a trunk for Nancy and clothes. I went to party with teacher and mother. We did dance and play and eat nuts and candy and cakes and oranges and I did have fun with little boys and girls. Mrs. Hopkins did send me lovely ring, I do love her and little blind girls.*

*Men and boys do make carpets in mills. Wool grows on sheep. Men do cut sheep's wool off with large shears, and send it to the mill. Men and women do make wool cloth in mills.*

*Cotton grows on large stalks in fields. Men and boys and girls and women do pick cotton. We do make thread and cotton dresses of cotton. Cotton has pretty white and red flowers on it. Teacher did tear her dress. Mildred does cry. I will nurse Nancy. Mother will buy me lovely new aprons and dress to take to Boston. I went to Knoxville with father and aunt. Bessie is weak and little. Mrs. Thompson's chickens killed Leila's chickens. Eva does sleep in my bed. I do love good girls.*

Good-by  
HELEN KELLER.

*The next two letters mention her visit in January to her relatives in Memphis, Tennessee. She was taken to the cotton exchange. When she felt the maps and blackboards she asked, "Do men go to school?" She wrote on the blackboard the names of all the gentlemen present. While at Memphis she went over one of the large Mississippi steamers.*

TO DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE  
Tuscumbia, Alabama, February 15th 1888.

Dear Mr. Hale,

I am happy to write you a letter this morning. Teacher told me about kind gentleman I shall be glad to read pretty story I do read stories in my book about tigers and lions and sheep.

I am coming to Boston in June to see little blind girls and I will come to see you. I went to Memphis to see grandmother and Aunt Nannie. Teacher bought me lovely new dress and cap and aprons. Little Natalie is a very weak and small baby. Father took us to see steamboat. It was on a large river. Boat is like house. Mildred is a good baby. I do love to play with little sister. Nancy was not a good child when I went to Memphis. She did cry loud. I will not write more to-day. I am tired.

Good-by

HELEN KELLER.

TO MR. MICHAEL ANAGNOS

Tuscumbia, Ala., Feb. 24th, 1888.

My dear Mr. Anagnos,—I am glad to write you a letter in Braille. This morning Lucien Thompson sent me a beautiful bouquet of violets and crocuses and jonquils. Sunday Adeline Moses brought me a lovely doll. It came from New York. Her name is Adeline Keller. She can shut her eyes and bend her arms and sit down and stand up straight. She has on a pretty red dress. She is Nancy's sister and I am their mother. Allie is their cousin. Nancy was a bad child when I went to Memphis she cried loud, I whipped her with a stick.

Mildred does feed little chickens with crumbs. I love to play with little sister.

Teacher and I went to Memphis to see aunt Nannie and grandmother. Louise is aunt Nannie's child. Teacher bought me a lovely new dress and gloves and stockings and collars and grandmother made me warm flannels, and aunt Nannie made me aprons. Lady made me a pretty cap. I went to see Robert and Mr. Graves and Mrs. Graves and little Natalie, and Mr. Farris and Mr. Mayo and Mary and everyone. I do love Robert and teacher. She does not want me to write more today. I feel tired.

I found box of candy in Mr. Grave's pocket. Father took us to see steam boat it is like house. Boat was on very large river. Yates plowed yard today to plant grass. Mule pulled plow. Mother will make garden of vegetables. Father will plant melons and peas and beans.

Cousin Bell will come to see us Saturday. Mother will make ice-cream for dinner, we will have ice-cream and cake for dinner. Lucien Thompson is sick. I am sorry for him.

Teacher and I went to walk in the yard, and I learned about how flowers and trees grow. Sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Sheffield is north and Tuscumbia is south. We will go to Boston in June. I will have fun with little blind girls.

Good bye

HELEN KELLER.

"Uncle Morrie" of the next letter is Mr. Morrison Heady, of

*Normandy, Kentucky, who lost his sight and hearing when he was a boy. He is the author of some commendable verses.*

*TO MR. MORRISON HEADY*

*Tuscumbia, Ala., March 1st 1888.*

*My dear uncle Morrie,—I am happy to write you a letter, I do love you, and I will hug and kiss you when I see you.*

*Mr. Anagnos is coming to see me Monday. I do love to run and hop and skip with Robert in bright warm sun. I do know little girl in Lexington Ky. her name is Katherine Hobson.*

*I am going to Boston in June with mother and teacher, I will have fun with little blind girls, and Mr. Hale will send me pretty story. I do read stories in my book about lions and tigers and bears.*

*Mildred will not go to Boston, she does cry. I love to play with little sister, she is weak and small baby. Eva is better.*

*Yates killed ants, ants stung Yates. Yates is digging in garden. Mr. Anagnos did see oranges, they look like golden apples.*

*Robert will come to see me Sunday when sun shines and I will have fun with him. My cousin Frank lives in Louisville. I will come to Memphis again to see Mr. Farris and Mrs. Graves and Mr. Mayo and Mr. Graves. Natalie is a good girl and does not cry, and she will be big and Mrs. Graves is making short dresses for her. Natalie has a little carriage. Mr. Mayo has been to Duck Hill and he brought sweet flowers home.*

*With much love and a kiss*

*HELEN A. KELLER.*

*In this account of the picnic we get an illuminating glimpse of Miss Sullivan's skill in teaching her pupil during play hours. This was a day when the child's vocabulary grew.*

*TO MR. MICHAEL ANAGNOS*

*Tuscumbia, Ala., May 3rd 1888.*

*Dear Mr. Anagnos.—I am glad to write to you this morning, because I love you very much. I was very happy to receive pretty book and nice candy and two letters from you. I will come to see you soon and will ask you many questions about countries and you will love good child.*

*Mother is making me pretty new dresses to wear in Boston and I will look lovely to see little girls and boys and you. Friday teacher and I went to a picnic with little children. We played games and ate dinner under the trees, and we found ferns and wild flowers. I walked in the woods and learned names of many trees. There are poplar and cedar and pine and oak and ash and hickory and maple trees. They make a pleasant shade and the little birds love to swing to and fro and sing sweetly up in the trees. Rabbits hop and squirrels run and ugly snakes do crawl in the woods. Geraniums and roses jasamines and japonicas are cultivated flowers. I help mother and teacher water them every night before supper.*

Cousin Arthur made me a swing in the ash tree. Aunt Ev. has gone to Memphis. Uncle Frank is here. He is picking strawberries for dinner. Nancy is sick again, new teeth do make her ill. Adeline is well and she can go to Cincinnati Monday with me. Aunt Ev. will send me a boy doll, Harry will be Nancy's and Adeline's brother. Wee sister is a good girl. I am tired now and I do want to go down stairs. I send many kisses and hugs with letter.

Your darling child  
HELEN KELLER.

Toward the end of May Mrs. Keller, Helen, and Miss Sullivan started for Boston. On the way they spent a few days in Washington, where they saw Dr. Alexander Graham Bell and called on President Cleveland. On May 26th they arrived in Boston and went to the Perkins Institution; here Helen met the little blind girls with whom she had corresponded the year before.

Early in July she went to Brewster, Massachusetts, and spent the rest of the summer. Here occurred her first encounter with the sea, of which she has since written.

TO MISS MARY C. MOORE  
So. Boston, Mass. Sept. 1888

My dear Miss Moore

Are you very glad to receive a nice letter from your darling little friend? I love you very dearly because you are my friend. My precious little sister is quite well now. She likes to sit in my little rocking-chair and put her kitty to sleep. Would you like to see darling little Mildred? She is a very pretty baby. Her eyes are very big and blue, and her cheeks are soft and round and rosy and her hair is very bright and golden. She is very good and sweet when she does not cry loud. Next summer Mildred will go out in the garden with me and pick the big sweet strawberries and then she will be very happy. I hope she will not eat too many of the delicious fruit for they will make her very ill.

Sometime will you please come to Alabama and visit me? My uncle James is going to buy me a very gentle pony and a pretty cart and I shall be very happy to take you and Harry to ride. I hope Harry will not be afraid of my pony. I think my father will buy me a beautiful little brother some day. I shall be very gentle and patient to my new little brother. When I visit many strange countries my brother and Mildred will stay with grandmother because they will be too small to see a great many people and I think they would cry loud on the great rough ocean.

When Capt. Baker gets well he will take me in his big ship to Africa. Then I shall see lions and tigers and monkeys. I will get a baby lion and a white monkey and a mild bear to bring home. I had a very pleasant time at Brewster. I went in bathing almost every day and Carrie and Frank and little Helen and I had fun. We splashed and jumped and waded in the deep water. I am not afraid to float now. Can Harry float and swim? We came to Boston last Thursday, and Mr. Anagnos was delighted to see me, and he hugged and kissed me. The little girls are coming back to school next Wednesday.

Will you please tell Harry to write me a very long letter soon? When you come to Tuscombua to see me I hope my father will have

*many sweet apples and juicy peaches and fine pears and delicious grapes and large water melons.*

*I hope you think about me and love me because I am a good little child.*

*With much love and two kisses  
From your little friend  
HELEN A. KELLER.*

*In this account of a visit to some friends, Helen's thought is much what one would expect from an ordinary child of eight, except perhaps her naive satisfaction in the boldness of the young gentlemen.*

*TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER  
So. Boston, Mass, Sept. 24th 1888.*

*My dear Mother,  
I think you will be very glad to know all about my visit to West Newton. Teacher and I had a lovely time with many kind friends. West Newton is not far from Boston and we went there in the steam cars very quickly.*

*Mrs. Freeman and Carrie and Ethel and Frank and Helen came to station to meet us in a huge carriage. I was delighted to see my dear little friends and I hugged and kissed them. Then we rode for a long time to see all the beautiful things in West Newton. Many very handsome houses and large soft green lawns around them and trees and bright flowers and fountains. The horse's name was Prince and he was gentle and liked to trot very fast. When we went home we saw eight rabbits and two fat puppies, and a nice little white pony, and two wee kittens and a pretty curly dog named Don. Pony's name was Mollie and I had a nice ride on her back; I was not afraid, I hope my uncle will get me a dear little pony and a little cart very soon.*

*Clifton did not kiss me because he does not like to kiss little girls. He is shy. I am very glad that Frank and Clarence and Robbie and Eddie and Charles and George were not very shy. I played with many little girls and we had fun. I rode on Carrie's tricycle and picked flowers and ate fruit and hopped and skipped and danced and went to ride. Many ladies and gentlemen came to see us. Lucy and Dora and Charles were born in China. I was born in America, and Mr. Anagnos was born in Greece. Mr. Drew says little girls in China cannot talk on their fingers but I think when I go to China I will teach them. Chinese nurse came to see me, her name was Asu. She showed me a tiny atze that very rich ladies in China wear because their feet never grow large. Amah means a nurse. We came home in horse cars because it was Sunday and steam cars do not go often on Sunday. Conductors and engineers do get very tired and go home to rest. I saw little Willie Swan in the car and he gave me a juicy pear. He was six years old. What did I do when I was six years old? Will you please ask my father to come to train to meet teacher and me? I am very sorry that Eva and Bessie are sick. I hope I can have a nice party my birthday, and I do want Carrie and Ethel and Frank and Helen to come to Alabama to visit me. Will Mildred sleep with me when I come home.*

*With much love and thousand kisses.*

*From your dear little daughter.*

HELEN A. KELLER.

*Her visit to Plymouth was in July. This letter, written three months later, shows how well she remembered her first lesson in history.*

TO MR. MORRISON HEADY

*South Boston, Mass. October 1st, 1888.*

*My dear uncle Morrie,—I think you will be very glad to receive a letter from your dear little friend Helen. I am very happy to write to you because I think of you and love you. I read pretty stories in the book you sent me, about Charles and his boat, and Arthur and his dream, and Rosa and the sheep.*

*I have been in a large boat. It was like a ship. Mother and teacher and Mrs. Hopkins and Mr. Anagnos and Mr. Rodocanachi and many other friends went to Plymouth to see many old things. I will tell you a little story about Plymouth.*

*Many years ago there lived in England many good people, but the king and his friends were not kind and gentle and patient with good people, because the king did not like to have the people disobey him. People did not like to go to church with the king; but they did like to build very nice little churches for themselves.*

*The king was very angry with the people and they were sorry and they said, we will go away to a strange country to live and leave very dear home and friends and naughty king. So, they put all their things into big boxes, and said, Good-bye. I am sorry for them because they cried much. When they went to Holland they did not know anyone; and they could not know what the people were talking about because they did not know Dutch. But soon they learned some Dutch words; but they loved their own language and they did not want little boys and girls to forget it and learn to talk funny Dutch. So they said, We must go to a new country far away and build schools and houses and churches and make new cities. So they put all their things in boxes and said, Good-bye to their new friends and sailed away in a large boat to find a new country. Poor people were not happy for their hearts were full of sad thoughts because they did not know much about America. I think little children must have been afraid of a great ocean for it is very strong and it makes a large boat rock and then the little children would fall down and hurt their heads. After they had been many weeks on the deep ocean where they could not see trees or flowers or grass, but just water and the beautiful sky, for ships could not sail quickly then because men did not know about engines and steam. One day a dear little baby-boy was born. His name was Peregrine White. I am very sorry that poor little Peregrine is dead now. Every day the people went upon deck to look out for land. One day there was a great shout on the ship for the people saw the land and they were full of joy because they had reached a new country safely. Little girls and boys jumped and clapped their hands. They were all glad when they stepped upon a huge rock. I did see the rock in Plymouth and a little ship like the Mayflower and the cradle that dear little Peregrine slept in and many old things that came in the Mayflower. Would you like to visit Plymouth some time and see many old things.*

Now I am very tired and I will rest.

With much love and many kisses, from your little friend.

HELEN A. KELLER.

The foreign words in these two letters, the first of which was written during a visit to the kindergarten for the blind, she had been told months before, and had stowed them away in her memory. She assimilated words and practised with them, sometimes using them intelligently, sometimes repeating them in a parrot-like fashion. Even when she did not fully understand words or ideas, she liked to set them down as though she did. It was in this way that she learned to use correctly words of sound and vision which express ideas outside of her experience. "Edith" is Edith Thomas.

TO MR. MICHAEL ANAGNOS

Roxbury, Mass. Oct. 17th, 1888.

Mon cher Monsieur Anagnos,

I am sitting by the window and the beautiful sun is shining on me Teacher and I came to the kindergarten yesterday. There are twenty seven little children here and they are all blind. I am sorry because they cannot see much. Sometime will they have very well eyes? Poor Edith is blind and deaf and dumb. Are you very sad for Edith and me? Soon I shall go home to see my mother and my father and my dear good and sweet little sister. I hope you will come to Alabama to visit me and I will take you to ride in my little cart and I think you will like to see me on my dear little pony's back. I shall wear my lovely cap and my new riding dress. If the sun shines brightly I will take you to see Leila and Eva and Bessie. When I am thirteen years old I am going to travel in many strange and beautiful countries. I shall climb very high mountains in Norway and see much ice and snow. I hope I will not fall and hurt my head I shall visit little Lord Fauntleroy in England and he will be glad to show me his grand and very ancient castle. And we will run with the deer and feed the rabbits and catch the squirrels. I shall not be afraid of Fauntleroy's great dog Dougal. I hope Fauntleroy take me to see a very kind queen. When I go to France I will take French. A little French boy will say, Parlez-vous Francais? and I will say, Oui, Monsieur, vous avez un joli chapeau. Donnez moi un baiser. I hope you will go with me to Athens to see the maid of Athens. She was very lovely lady and I will talk Greek to her. I will say, se agapo and, pos echete and I think she will say, kalos, and then I will say chaere. Will you please come to see me soon and take me to the theater? When you come I will say, Kale emera, and when you go home I will say, Kale nykta. Now I am too tired to write more. Je vous aime. Au revoir

From your darling little friend

HELEN A. KELLER.

TO MISS EVELINA H. KELLER

[So. Boston, Mass. October 29, 1888.]

My dearest Aunt,—I am coming home very soon and I think you and every one will be very glad to see my teacher and me. I am very happy because I have learned much about many things. I am studying French and German and Latin and Greek. Se agapo is Greek, and it means I love thee. J'ai une bonne petite soeur is

*French, and it means I have a good little sister. Nous avons un bon pere et une bonne mere means, we have a good father and a good mother. Puer is boy in Latin, and Mutter is mother in German. I will teach Mildred many languages when I come home.*  
HELEN A. KELLER.

TO MRS. SOPHIA C. HOPKINS  
Tuscumbia, Ala. Dec. 11th, 1888.

*My dear Mrs. Hopkins:—*

*I have just fed my dear little pigeon. My brother Simpson gave it to me last Sunday. I named it Annie, for my teacher. My puppy has had his supper and gone to bed. My rabbits are sleeping, too; and very soon I shall go to bed. Teacher is writing letters to her friends. Mother and father and their friends have gone to see a huge furnace. The furnace is to make iron. The iron ore is found in the ground; but it cannot be used until it has been brought to the furnace and melted, and all the dirt taken out, and just the pure iron left. Then it is all ready to be manufactured into engines, stoves, kettles and many other things.*

*Coal is found in the ground, too. Many years ago, before people came to live on the earth, great trees and tall grasses and huge ferns and all the beautiful flowers cover the earth. When the leaves and the trees fell, the water and the soil covered them; and then more trees grew and fell also, and were buried under water and soil. After they had all been pressed together for many thousands of years, the wood grew very hard, like rock, and then it was all ready for people to burn. Can you see leaves and ferns and bark on the coal? Men go down into the ground and dig out the coal, and steam-cars take it to the large cities, and sell it to people to burn, to make them warm and happy when it is cold out of doors.*

*Are you very lonely and sad now? I hope you will come to see me soon, and stay a long time.*

*With much love from your little friend*  
HELEN A. KELLER.

TO MISS DELLA BENNETT  
Tuscumbia, Ala., Jan. 29, 1889.

*My dear Miss Bennett:—I am delighted to write to you this morning. We have just eaten our breakfast. Mildred is running about downstairs. I have been reading in my book about astronomers. Astronomer comes from the Latin word astra, which means stars; and astronomers are men who study the stars, and tell us about them. When we are sleeping quietly in our beds, they are watching the beautiful sky through the telescope. A telescope is like a very strong eye. The stars are so far away that people cannot tell much about them, without very excellent instruments. Do you like to look out of your window, and see little stars? Teacher says she can see Venus from our window, and it is a large and beautiful star. The stars are called the earth's brothers and sisters.*

*There are a great many instruments besides those which the astronomers use. A knife is an instrument to cut with. I think the bell is an instrument, too. I will tell you what I know about bells.*

Some bells are musical and others are unmusical. Some are very tiny and some are very large. I saw a very large bell at Wellesley. It came from Japan. Bells are used for many purposes. They tell us when breakfast is ready, when to go to school, when it is time for church, and when there is a fire. They tell people when to go to work, and when to go home and rest. The engine-bell tells the passengers that they are coming to a station, and it tells the people to keep out of the way. Sometimes very terrible accidents happen, and many people are burned and drowned and injured. The other day I broke my doll's head off; but that was not a dreadful accident, because dolls do not live and feel, like people. My little pigeons are well, and so is my little bird. I would like to have some clay. Teacher says it is time for me to study now. Good-bye.

With much love, and many kisses,

HELEN A. KELLER.

TO DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE

Tuscumbia, Alabama, February 21st, 1889.

My dear Mr. Hale,

I am very much afraid that you are thinking in your mind that little Helen has forgotten all about you and her dear cousins. But I think you will be delighted to receive this letter because then you will know that I of[ten] think about you and I love you dearly for you are my dear cousin. I have been at home a great many weeks now. It made me feel very sad to leave Boston and I missed all of my friends greatly, but of course I was glad to get back to my lovely home once more. My darling little sister is growing very fast. Sometimes she tries to spell very short words on her small [fingers] but she is too young to remember hard words. When she is older I will teach her many things if she is patient and obedient. My teacher says, if children learn to be patient and gentle while they are little, that when they grow to be young ladies and gentlemen they will not forget to be kind and loving and brave. I hope I shall be courageous always. A little girl in a story was not courageous. She thought she saw little elves with tall pointed [hats] peeping from between the bushes and dancing down the long alleys, and the poor little girl was terrified. Did you have a pleasant Christmas? I had many lovely presents given to me. The other day I had a fine party. All of my dear little friends came to see me. We played games, and ate ice-cream and cake and fruit. Then we had great fun. The sun is shining brightly to-day and I hope we shall go to ride if the roads are dry. In a few days the beautiful spring will be here. I am very glad because I love the warm sunshine and the fragrant flowers. I think Flowers grow to make people happy and good. I have four dolls now. Cedric is my little boy, he is named for Lord Fauntleroy. He has big brown eyes and long golden hair and pretty round cheeks. Ida is my baby. A lady brought her to me from Paris. She can drink milk like a real baby. Lucy is a fine young lady. She has on a dainty lace dress and satin slippers. Poor old Nancy is growing old and very feeble. She is almost an invalid. I have two tame pigeons and a tiny canary bird. Jumbo is very strong and faithful. He will not let anything harm us at night. I go to school every day I am studying reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and language. My Mother and teacher send you and Mrs. Hale their kind greetings and Mildred sends you a kiss.

With much love and kisses, from your

Affectionate cousin  
HELEN A. KELLER.

*During the winter Miss Sullivan and her pupil were working at Helen's home in Tuscumbia, and to good purpose, for by spring Helen had learned to write idiomatic English. After May, 1889, I find almost no inaccuracies, except some evident slips of the pencil. She uses words precisely and makes easy, fluent sentences.*

TO MR. MICHAEL ANAGNOS  
Tuscumbia, Ala., May 18, 1889.

*My Dear Mr. Anagnos:—You cannot imagine how delighted I was to receive a letter from you last evening. I am very sorry that you are going so far away. We shall miss you very, very much. I would love to visit many beautiful cities with you. When I was in Huntsville I saw Dr. Bryson, and he told me that he had been to Rome and Athens and Paris and London. He had climbed the high mountains in Switzerland and visited beautiful churches in Italy and France, and he saw a great many ancient castles. I hope you will please write to me from all the cities you visit. When you go to Holland please give my love to the lovely princess Wilhelmina. She is a dear little girl, and when she is old enough she will be the queen of Holland. If you go to Roumania please ask the good queen Elizabeth about her little invalid brother, and tell her that I am very sorry that her darling little girl died. I should like to send a kiss to Vittorio, the little prince of Naples, but teacher says she is afraid you will not remember so many messages. When I am thirteen years old I shall visit them all myself.*

*I thank you very much for the beautiful story about Lord Fauntleroy, and so does teacher.*

*I am so glad that Eva is coming to stay with me this summer. We will have fine times together. Give Howard my love, and tell him to answer my letter. Thursday we had a picnic. It was very pleasant out in the shady woods, and we all enjoyed the picnic very much.*

*Mildred is out in the yard playing, and mother is picking the delicious strawberries. Father and Uncle Frank are down town. Simpson is coming home soon. Mildred and I had our pictures taken while we were in Huntsville. I will send you one.*

*The roses have been beautiful. Mother has a great many fine roses. The La France and the Lamarque are the most fragrant; but the Marechal Neil, Solfaterre, Jacqueminot, Nipheots, Etoile de Lyon, Papa Gontier, Gabrielle Drevet and the Perle des Jardines are all lovely roses.*

*Please give the little boys and girls my love. I think of them every day and I love them dearly in my heart. When you come home from Europe I hope you will be all well and very happy to get home again. Do not forget to give my love to Miss Calliope Kehayia and Mr. Francis Demetrios Kalopothakes.  
Lovingly, your little friend,  
HELEN ADAMS KELLER.*

*Like a good many of Helen Keller's early letters, this to her*

*French teacher is her re-phrasing of a story. It shows how much the gift of writing is, in the early stages of its development, the gift of mimicry.*

TO MISS FANNIE S. MARRETT  
Tuscumbia, Ala., May 17, 1889.

*My Dear Miss Marrett—I am thinking about a dear little girl, who wept very hard. She wept because her brother teased her very much. I will tell you what he did, and I think you will feel very sorry for the little child. She had a most beautiful doll given her. Oh, it was a lovely and delicate doll! but the little girl's brother, a tall lad, had taken the doll, and set it up in a high tree in the garden, and had run away. The little girl could not reach the doll, and could not help it down, and therefore she cried. The doll cried, too, and stretched out its arms from among the green branches, and looked distressed. Soon the dismal night would come—and was the doll to sit up in the tree all night, and by herself? The little girl could not endure that thought. "I will stay with you," said she to the doll, although she was not at all courageous. Already she began to see quite plainly the little elves in their tall pointed hats, dancing down the dusky alleys, and peeping from between the bushes, and they seemed to come nearer and nearer; and she stretched her hands up towards the tree in which the doll sat and they laughed, and pointed their fingers at her. How terrified was the little girl; but if one has not done anything wrong, these strange little elves cannot harm one. "Have I done anything wrong? Ah, yes!" said the little girl. "I have laughed at the poor duck, with the red rag tied round its leg. It hobbled, and that made me laugh; but it is wrong to laugh at the poor animals!"*

*Is it not a pitiful story? I hope the father punished the naughty little boy. Shall you be very glad to see my teacher next Thursday? She is going home to rest, but she will come back to me next autumn.*

Lovingly, your little friend,  
HELEN ADAMS KELLER.

TO MISS MARY E. RILEY  
Tuscumbia, Ala., May 27, 1889.

*My Dear Miss Riley:—I wish you were here in the warm, sunny south today. Little sister and I would take you out into the garden, and pick the delicious raspberries and a few strawberries for you. How would you like that? The strawberries are nearly all gone. In the evening, when it is cool and pleasant, we would walk in the yard, and catch the grasshoppers and butterflies. We would talk about the birds and flowers and grass and Jumbo and Pearl. If you liked, we would run and jump and hop and dance, and be very happy. I think you would enjoy hearing the mocking-birds sing. One sits on the twig of a tree, just beneath our window, and he fills the air with his glad songs. But I am afraid you cannot come to Tuscumbia; so I will write to you, and send you a sweet kiss and my love. How is Dick? Daisy is happy, but she would be happy ever if she had a little mate. My little children are all well except Nancy, and she is quite feeble. My grandmother and aunt Corinne are here. Grandmother is going to make me two new dresses. Give my love to all the little girls, and tell them that Helen loves them very, very much. Eva sends love to all.*

*With much love and many kisses, from your affectionate little friend,*  
HELEN ADAMS KELLER.

*During the summer Miss Sullivan was away from Helen for three months and a half, the first separation of teacher and pupil. Only once afterward in fifteen years was their constant companionship broken for more than a few days at a time.*

TO MISS ANNE MANSFIELD SULLIVAN  
Tuscumbia, Ala., August 7, 1889.

*Dearest Teacher—I am very glad to write to you this evening, for I have been thinking much about you all day. I am sitting on the piazza, and my little white pigeon is perched on the back of my chair, watching me write. Her little brown mate has flown away with the other birds; but Annie is not sad, for she likes to stay with me. Fauntleroy is asleep upstairs, and Nancy is putting Lucy to bed. Perhaps the mocking bird is singing them to sleep. All the beautiful flowers are in bloom now. The air is sweet with the perfume of jasmines, heliotropes and roses. It is getting warm here now, so father is going to take us to the Quarry on the 20th of August. I think we shall have a beautiful time out in the cool, pleasant woods. I will write and tell you all the pleasant things we do. I am so glad that Lester and Henry are good little infants. Give them many sweet kisses for me.*

*What was the name of the little boy who fell in love with the beautiful star? Eva has been telling me a story about a lovely little girl named Heidi. Will you please send it to me? I shall be delighted to have a typewriter.*

*Little Arthur is growing very fast. He has on short dresses now. Cousin Leila thinks he will walk in a little while. Then I will take his soft chubby hand in mine, and go out in the bright sunshine with him. He will pull the largest roses, and chase the gayest butterflies. I will take very good care of him, and not let him fall and hurt himself. Father and some other gentlemen went hunting yesterday. Father killed thirty-eight birds. We had some of them for supper, and they were very nice. Last Monday Simpson shot a pretty crane. The crane is a large and strong bird. His wings are as long as my arm, and his bill is as long as my foot. He eats little fishes, and other small animals. Father says he can fly nearly all day without stopping.*

*Mildred is the dearest and sweetest little maiden in the world. She is very roguish, too. Sometimes, when mother does not know it, she goes out into the vineyard, and gets her apron full of delicious grapes. I think she would like to put her two soft arms around your neck and hug you.*

*Sunday I went to church. I love to go to church, because I like to see my friends.*

*A gentleman gave me a beautiful card. It was a picture of a mill, near a beautiful brook. There was a boat floating on the water, and the fragrant lilies were growing all around the boat. Not far from the mill there was an old house, with many trees growing close to it. There were eight pigeons on the roof of the house, and a great dog on the step. Pearl is a very proud mother-dog*

now. She has eight puppies, and she thinks there never were such fine puppies as hers.

I read in my books every day. I love them very, very, very much. I do want you to come back to me soon. I miss you so very, very much. I cannot know about many things, when my dear teacher is not here. I send you five thousand kisses, and more love than I can tell. I send Mrs. H. much love and a kiss.  
From your affectionate little pupil,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

In the fall Helen and Miss Sullivan returned to Perkins Institution at South Boston.

TO MISS MILDRED KELLER  
South Boston, Oct. 24, 1889.

My Precious Little Sister:—Good morning. I am going to send you a birthday gift with this letter. I hope it will please you very much, because it makes me happy to send it. The dress is blue like your eyes, and candy is sweet just like your dear little self. I think mother will be glad to make the dress for you, and when you wear it you will look as pretty as a rose. The picture-book will tell you all about many strange and wild animals. You must not be afraid of them. They cannot come out of the picture to harm you.

I go to school every day, and I learn many new things. At eight I study arithmetic. I like that. At nine I go to the gymnasium with the little girls and we have great fun. I wish you could be here to play three little squirrels, and two gentle doves, and to make a pretty nest for a dear little robin. The mocking bird does not live in the cold north. At ten I study about the earth on which we all live. At eleven I talk with teacher and at twelve I study zoology. I do not know what I shall do in the afternoon yet.

Now, my darling little Mildred, good bye. Give father and mother a great deal of love and many hugs and kisses for me. Teacher sends her love too.  
From your loving sister,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

TO MR. WILLIAM WADE  
South Boston, Mass., Nov. 20, 1889.

My Dear Mr. Wade:—I have just received a letter from my mother, telling me that the beautiful mastiff puppy you sent me had arrived in Tuscomb safely. Thank you very much for the nice gift. I am very sorry that I was not at home to welcome her; but my mother and my baby sister will be very kind to her while her mistress is away. I hope she is not lonely and unhappy. I think puppies can feel very home-sick, as well as little girls. I should like to call her Lioness, for your dog. May I? I hope she will be very faithful,—and brave, too.

I am studying in Boston, with my dear teacher. I learn a great many new and wonderful things. I study about the earth, and the animals, and I like arithmetic exceedingly. I learn many new words, too. EXCEEDINGLY is one that I learned yesterday. When I see Lioness I will tell her many things which will surprise her greatly. I think she will laugh when I tell her she is a

vertebrate, a mammal, a quadruped; and I shall be very sorry to tell her that she belongs to the order Carnivora. I study French, too. When I talk French to Lioness I will call her *mon beau chien*. Please tell Lion that I will take good care of Lioness. I shall be happy to have a letter from you when you like to write to me.

From your loving little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

P.S. I am studying at the Institution for the Blind.

H. A. K.

This letter is indorsed in Whittier's hand, "Helen A. Keller—deaf dumb and blind—aged nine years." "Browns" is a lapse of the pencil for "brown eyes."

TO JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER  
Inst. for the Blind, So. Boston, Mass.,  
Nov. 27, 1889.

Dear Poet,  
I think you will be surprised to receive a letter from a little girl whom you do not know, but I thought you would be glad to hear that your beautiful poems make me very happy. Yesterday I read "In School Days" and "My Playmate," and I enjoyed them greatly. I was very sorry that the poor little girl with the browns and the "tangled golden curls" died. It is very pleasant to live here in our beautiful world. I cannot see the lovely things with my eyes, but my mind can see them all, and so I am joyful all the day long.

When I walk out in my garden I cannot see the beautiful flowers but I know that they are all around me; for is not the air sweet with their fragrance? I know too that the tiny lily-bells are whispering pretty secrets to their companions else they would not look so happy. I love you very dearly, because you have taught me so many lovely things about flowers, and birds, and people. Now I must say, good-bye. I hope [you] will enjoy the Thanksgiving very much.

From your loving little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.  
To Mr. John Greenleaf Whittier.

Whittier's reply, to which there is a reference in the following letter, has been lost.

TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER  
South Boston, Mass., Dec. 3, 1889.

My Dear Mother:—Your little daughter is very happy to write to you this beautiful morning. It is cold and rainy here to-day. Yesterday the Countess of Meath came again to see me. She gave me a beautiful bunch of violets. Her little girls are named Violet and May. The Earl said he should be delighted to visit Tuscumbia the next time he comes to America. Lady Meath said she would like to see your flowers, and hear the mocking-birds sing. When I visit England they want me to come to see them, and stay a few weeks. They will take me to see the Queen.

*I had a lovely letter from the poet Whittier. He loves me. Mr. Wade wants teacher and me to come and see him next spring. May we go? He said you must feed Lioness from your hand, because she will be more gentle if she does not eat with other dogs.*

*Mr. Wilson came to call on us one Thursday. I was delighted to receive the flowers from home. They came while we were eating breakfast, and my friends enjoyed them with me. We had a very nice dinner on Thanksgiving day,—turkey and plum-pudding. Last week I visited a beautiful art store. I saw a great many statues, and the gentleman gave me an angel.*

*Sunday I went to church on board a great warship. After the services were over the soldier-sailors showed us around. There were four hundred and sixty sailors. They were very kind to me. One carried me in his arms so that my feet would not touch the water. They wore blue uniforms and queer little caps. There was a terrible fire Thursday. Many stores were burned, and four men were killed. I am very sorry for them. Tell father, please, to write to me. How is dear little sister? Give her many kisses for me. Now I must close. With much love, from your darling child,  
HELEN A. KELLER.*

TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER

So. Boston, Mass., Dec. 24, 1889

*My dear Mother,*

*Yesterday I sent you a little Christmas box. I am very sorry that I could not send it before so that you would receive it tomorrow, but I could not finish the watch-case any sooner. I made all of the gifts myself, excepting father's handkerchief. I wish I could have made father a gift too, but I did not have sufficient time. I hope you will like your watch-case, for it made me very happy to make it for you. You must keep your lovely new montre in it. If it is too warm in Tuscumbia for little sister to wear her pretty mittens, she can keep them because her sister made them for her. I imagine she will have fun with the little toy man. Tell her to shake him, and then he will blow his trumpet. I thank my dear kind father for sending me some money, to buy gifts for my friends. I love to make everybody happy. I should like to be at home on Christmas day. We would be very happy together. I think of my beautiful home every day. Please do not forget to send me some pretty presents to hang on my tree. I am going to have a Christmas tree, in the parlor and teacher will hang all of my gifts upon it. It will be a funny tree. All of the girls have gone home to spend Christmas. Teacher and I are the only babies left for Mrs. Hopkins to care for. Teacher has been sick in bed for many days. Her throat was very sore and the doctor thought she would have to go away to the hospital, but she is better now. I have not been sick at all. The little girls are well too. Friday I am going to spend the day with my little friends Carrie, Ethel, Frank and Helen Freeman. We will have great fun I am sure.*

*Mr. and Miss Endicott came to see me, and I went to ride in the carriage. They are going to give me a lovely present, but I cannot guess what it will be. Sammy has a dear new brother. He is very soft and delicate yet. Mr. Anagnos is in Athens now. He is delighted because I am here. Now I must say, good-bye. I hope I have written my letter nicely, but it is very difficult to write on this paper and teacher is not here to give me better. Give*

many kisses to little sister and much love to all. Lovingly  
HELEN.

TO DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE  
South Boston, Jan. 8, 1890.

My dear Mr. Hale:

The beautiful shells came last night. I thank you very much for them. I shall always keep them, and it will make me very happy to think that you found them, on that far away island, from which Columbus sailed to discover our dear country. When I am eleven years old it will be four hundred years since he started with the three small ships to cross the great strange ocean. He was very brave. The little girls were delighted to see the lovely shells. I told them all I knew about them. Are you very glad that you could make so many happy? I am. I should be very happy to come and teach you the Braille sometime, if you have time to learn, but I am afraid you are too busy. A few days ago I received a little box of English violets from Lady Meath. The flowers were wilted, but the kind thought which came with them was as sweet and as fresh as newly pulled violets.

With loving greeting to the little cousins, and Mrs. Hale and a sweet kiss for yourself,  
From your little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

This, the first of Helen's letters to Dr. Holmes, written soon after a visit to him, he published in "Over the Teacups."  
[Atlantic Monthly, May, 1890]

TO DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES  
South Boston, Mass., March 1, 1890.

Dear, Kind Poet:—I have thought of you many times since that bright Sunday when I bade you good-bye; and I am going to write you a letter, because I love you. I am sorry that you have no little children to play with you sometimes; but I think you are very happy with your books, and your many, many friends. On Washington's birthday a great many people came here to see the blind children; and I read for them from your poems, and showed them some beautiful shells, which came from a little island near Palos.

I am reading a very sad story, called "Little Jakey." Jakey was the sweetest little fellow you can imagine, but he was poor and blind. I used to think—when I was small, and before I could read—that everybody was always happy, and at first it made me very sad to know about pain and great sorrow; but now I know that we could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world.

I am studying about insects in zoology, and I have learned many things about butterflies. They do not make honey for us, like the bees, but many of them are as beautiful as the flowers they light upon, and they always delight the hearts of little children. They live a gay life, flitting from flower to flower, sipping the drops of honeydew, without a thought for the morrow. They are just like little boys and girls when they forget books and studies, and run away to the woods and the fields, to gather wild flowers, or wade in the ponds for fragrant lilies, happy in the

*bright sunshine.*

*If my little sister comes to Boston next June, will you let me bring her to see you? She is a lovely baby, and I am sure you will love her.*

*Now I must tell my gentle poet good-bye, for I have a letter to write home before I go to bed.*

*From your loving little friend,*

*HELEN A. KELLER.*

*TO MISS SARAH FULLER [Miss Fuller gave Helen Keller her first lesson in articulation. See Chapter IV, Speech.]  
South Boston, Mass., April 3, 1890.*

*My dear Miss Fuller,*

*My heart is full of joy this beautiful morning, because I have learned to speak many new words, and I can make a few sentences. Last evening I went out in the yard and spoke to the moon. I said, "O! moon come to me!" Do you think the lovely moon was glad that I could speak to her? How glad my mother will be. I can hardly wait for June to come I am so eager to speak to her and to my precious little sister. Mildred could not understand me when I spelled with my fingers, but now she will sit in my lap and I will tell her many things to please her, and we shall be so happy together. Are you very, very happy because you can make so many people happy? I think you are very kind and patient, and I love you very dearly. My teacher told me Tuesday that you wanted to know how I came to wish to talk with my mouth. I will tell you all about it, for I remember my thoughts perfectly. When I was a very little child I used to sit in my mother's lap all the time, because I was very timid, and did not like to be left by myself. And I would keep my little hand on her face all the while, because it amused me to feel her face and lips move when she talked with people. I did not know then what she was doing, for I was quite ignorant of all things. Then when I was older I learned to play with my nurse and the little negro children and I noticed that they kept moving their lips just like my mother, so I moved mine too, but sometimes it made me angry and I would hold my playmates' mouths very hard. I did not know then that it was very naughty to do so. After a long time my dear teacher came to me, and taught me to communicate with my fingers and I was satisfied and happy. But when I came to school in Boston I met some deaf people who talked with their mouths like all other people, and one day a lady who had been to Norway came to see me, and told me of a blind and deaf girl [Ragnhild Kaata] she had seen in that far away land who had been taught to speak and understand others when they spoke to her. This good and happy news delighted me exceedingly, for then I was sure that I should learn also. I tried to make sounds like my little playmates, but teacher told me that the voice was very delicate and sensitive and that it would injure it to make incorrect sounds, and promised to take me to see a kind and wise lady who would teach me rightly. That lady was yourself. Now I am as happy as the little birds, because I can speak and perhaps I shall sing too. All of my friends will be so surprised and glad.*

*Your loving little pupil,*

*HELEN A. KELLER.*

*When the Perkins Institution closed for the summer, Helen and Miss Sullivan went to Tuscomb. This was the first home-going*

after she had learned to "talk with her mouth."

TO REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS  
Tuscumbia, Alabama, July 14, 1890.

My dear Mr. Brooks, I am very glad to write to you this beautiful day because you are my kind friend and I love you, and because I wish to know many things. I have been at home three weeks, and Oh, how happy I have been with dear mother and father and precious little sister. I was very, very sad to part with all of my friends in Boston, but I was so eager to see my baby sister I could hardly wait for the train to take me home. But I tried very hard to be patient for teacher's sake. Mildred has grown much taller and stronger than she was when I went to Boston, and she is the sweetest and dearest little child in the world. My parents were delighted to hear me speak, and I was overjoyed to give them such a happy surprise. I think it is so pleasant to make everybody happy. Why does the dear Father in heaven think it best for us to have very great sorrow sometimes? I am always happy and so was Little Lord Fauntleroy, but dear Little Jakey's life was full of sadness. God did not put the light in Jakey's eyes and he was blind, and his father was not gentle and loving. Do you think poor Jakey loved his Father in heaven more because his other father was unkind to him? How did God tell people that his home was in heaven? When people do very wrong and hurt animals and treat children unkindly God is grieved, but what will he do to them to teach them to be pitiful and loving? I think he will tell them how dearly He loves them and that He wants them to be good and happy, and they will not wish to grieve their father who loves them so much, and they will want to please him in everything they do, so they will love each other and do good to everyone, and be kind to animals.

Please tell me something that you know about God. It makes me happy to know much about my loving Father, who is good and wise. I hope you will write to your little friend when you have time. I should like very much to see you to-day Is the sun very hot in Boston now? this afternoon if it is cool enough I shall take Mildred for a ride on my donkey. Mr. Wade sent Neddy to me, and he is the prettiest donkey you can imagine. My great dog Lioness goes with us when we ride to protect us. Simpson, that is my brother, brought me some beautiful pond lilies yesterday—he is a very brother to me.

Teacher sends you her kind remembrances, and father and mother also send their regards.  
From your loving little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

DR. BROOKS'S REPLY  
London, August 3, 1890.

My Dear Helen—I was very glad indeed to get your letter. It has followed me across the ocean and found me in this magnificent great city which I should like to tell you all about if I could take time for it and make my letter long enough. Some time when you come and see me in my study in Boston I shall be glad to talk to you about it all if you care to hear.

But now I want to tell you how glad I am that you are so happy and enjoying your home so very much. I can almost think I see you

*with your father and mother and little sister, with all the brightness of the beautiful country about you, and it makes me very glad to know how glad you are.*

*I am glad also to know, from the questions which you ask me, what you are thinking about. I do not see how we can help thinking about God when He is so good to us all the time. Let me tell you how it seems to me that we come to know about our heavenly Father. It is from the power of love which is in our own hearts. Love is at the soul of everything. Whatever has not the power of loving must have a very dreary life indeed. We like to think that the sunshine and the winds and the trees are able to love in some way of their own, for it would make us know that they were happy if we knew that they could love. And so God who is the greatest and happiest of all beings is the most loving too. All the love that is in our hearts comes from him, as all the light which is in the flowers comes from the sun. And the more we love the more near we are to God and His Love.*

*I told you that I was very happy because of your happiness. Indeed I am. So are your Father and your Mother and your Teacher and all your friends. But do you not think that God is happy too because you are happy? I am sure He is. And He is happier than any of us because He is greater than any of us, and also because He not merely SEES your happiness as we do, but He also MADE it. He gives it to you as the sun gives light and color to the rose. And we are always most glad of what we not merely see our friends enjoy, but of what we give them to enjoy. Are we not?*

*But God does not only want us to be HAPPY; He wants us to be good. He wants that most of all. He knows that we can be really happy only when we are good. A great deal of the trouble that is in the world is medicine which is very bad to take, but which it is good to take because it makes us better. We see how good people may be in great trouble when we think of Jesus who was the greatest sufferer that ever lived and yet was the best Being and so, I am sure, the happiest Being that the world has ever seen.*

*I love to tell you about God. But He will tell you Himself by the love which He will put into your heart if you ask Him. And Jesus, who is His Son, but is nearer to Him than all of us His other Children, came into the world on purpose to tell us all about our Father's Love. If you read His words, you will see how full His heart is of the love of God. "We KNOW that He loves us," He says. And so He loved men Himself and though they were very cruel to Him and at last killed Him, He was willing to die for them because He loved them so. And, Helen, He loves men still, and He loves us, and He tells us that we may love Him.*

*And so love is everything. And if anybody asks you, or if you ask yourself what God is, answer, "God is Love." That is the beautiful answer which the Bible gives.*

*All this is what you are to think of and to understand more and more as you grow older. Think of it now, and let it make every blessing brighter because your dear Father sends it to you.*

*You will come back to Boston I hope soon after I do. I shall be there by the middle of September. I shall want you to tell me all about everything, and not forget the Donkey.*

*I send my kind remembrance to your father and mother, and to your teacher. I wish I could see your little sister.*

*Good Bye, dear Helen. Do write to me soon again, directing your letter to Boston.*

*Your affectionate friend*

*PHILLIPS BROOKS.*

*DR. HOLMES'S REPLY*

*To a letter which has been lost.*

*Beverly Farms, Mass., August 1, 1890.*

*My Dear Little Friend Helen:*

*I received your welcome letter several days ago, but I have so much writing to do that I am apt to make my letters wait a good while before they get answered.*

*It gratifies me very much to find that you remember me so kindly. Your letter is charming, and I am greatly pleased with it. I rejoice to know that you are well and happy. I am very much delighted to hear of your new acquisition—that you "talk with your mouth" as well as with your fingers. What a curious thing SPEECH is! The tongue is so serviceable a member (taking all sorts of shapes, just as is wanted),—the teeth, the lips, the roof of the mouth, all ready to help, and so heap up the sound of the voice into the solid bits which we call consonants, and make room for the curiously shaped breathings which we call vowels! You have studied all this, I don't doubt, since you have practised vocal speaking.*

*I am surprised at the mastery of language which your letter shows. It almost makes me think the world would get along as well without seeing and hearing as with them. Perhaps people would be better in a great many ways, for they could not fight as they do now. Just think of an army of blind people, with guns and cannon! Think of the poor drummers! Of what use would they and their drumsticks be? You are spared the pain of many sights and sounds, which you are only too happy in escaping. Then think how much kindness you are sure of as long as you live. Everybody will feel an interest in dear little Helen; everybody will want to do something for her; and, if she becomes an ancient, gray-haired woman, she is still sure of being thoughtfully cared for.*

*Your parents and friends must take great satisfaction in your progress. It does great credit, not only to you, but to your instructors, who have so broken down the walls that seemed to shut you in that now your outlook seems more bright and cheerful than that of many seeing and hearing children.*

*Good-bye, dear little Helen! With every kind wish from your friend,*

*OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.*

*This letter was written to some gentlemen in Gardiner, Maine, who named a lumber vessel after her.*

*TO MESSRS. BRADSTREET*

*Tuscumbia, Ala., July 14, 1890.*

*My Dear, Kind Friends:—I thank you very, very much for naming*

*your beautiful new ship for me. It makes me very happy to know that I have kind and loving friends in the far-away State of Maine. I did not imagine, when I studied about the forests of Maine, that a strong and beautiful ship would go sailing all over the world, carrying wood from those rich forests, to build pleasant homes and schools and churches in distant countries. I hope the great ocean will love the new Helen, and let her sail over its blue waves peacefully. Please tell the brave sailors, who have charge of the HELEN KELLER, that little Helen who stays at home will often think of them with loving thoughts. I hope I shall see you and my beautiful namesake some time.*

*With much love, from your little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.  
To the Messrs. Bradstreet.*

*Helen and Miss Sullivan returned to the Perkins Institution early in November.*

*TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER  
South Boston, Nov. 10, 1890.*

*My Dearest Mother:—My heart has been full of thoughts of you and my beautiful home ever since we parted so sadly on Wednesday night. How I wish I could see you this lovely morning, and tell you all that has happened since I left home! And my darling little sister, how I wish I could give her a hundred kisses! And my dear father, how he would like to hear about our journey! But I cannot see you and talk to you, so I will write and tell you all that I can think of.*

*We did not reach Boston until Saturday morning. I am sorry to say that our train was delayed in several places, which made us late in reaching New York. When we got to Jersey City at six o'clock Friday evening we were obliged to cross the Harlem River in a ferry-boat. We found the boat and the transfer carriage with much less difficulty than teacher expected. When we arrived at the station they told us that the train did not leave for Boston until eleven o'clock, but that we could take the sleeper at nine, which we did. We went to bed and slept until morning. When we awoke we were in Boston. I was delighted to get there, though I was much disappointed because we did not arrive on Mr. Anagnos' birthday. We surprised our dear friends, however, for they did not expect us Saturday; but when the bell rung Miss Marrett guessed who was at the door, and Mrs. Hopkins jumped up from the breakfast table and ran to the door to meet us; she was indeed much astonished to see us. After we had had some breakfast we went up to see Mr. Anagnos. I was overjoyed to see my dearest and kindest friend once more. He gave me a beautiful watch. I have it pinned to my dress. I tell everybody the time when they ask me. I have only seen Mr. Anagnos twice. I have many questions to ask him about the countries he has been travelling in. But I suppose he is very busy now.*

*The hills in Virginia were very lovely. Jack Frost had dressed them in gold and crimson. The view was most charmingly picturesque. Pennsylvania is a very beautiful State. The grass was as green as though it was springtime, and the golden ears of corn gathered together in heaps in the great fields looked very pretty. In Harrisburg we saw a donkey like Neddy. How I wish I could see my own donkey and my dear Lioness! Do they miss their*

mistress very much? Tell Mildred she must be kind to them for my sake.

Our room is pleasant and comfortable.

My typewriter was much injured coming. The case was broken and the keys are nearly all out. Teacher is going to see if it can be fixed.

There are many new books in the library. What a nice time I shall have reading them! I have already read Sara Crewe. It is a very pretty story, and I will tell it to you some time. Now, sweet mother, your little girl must say good-bye.

With much love to father, Mildred, you and all the dear friends,  
lovingly your little daughter,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

TO JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER  
South Boston, Dec. 17, 1890.

Dear Kind Poet,

This is your birthday; that was the first thought which came into my mind when I awoke this morning; and it made me glad to think I could write you a letter and tell you how much your little friends love their sweet poet and his birthday. This evening they are going to entertain their friends with readings from your poems and music. I hope the swift winged messengers of love will be here to carry some of the sweet melody to you, in your little study by the Merrimac. At first I was very sorry when I found that the sun had hidden his shining face behind dull clouds, but afterwards I thought why he did it, and then I was happy. The sun knows that you like to see the world covered with beautiful white snow and so he kept back all his brightness, and let the little crystals form in the sky. When they are ready, they will softly fall and tenderly cover every object. Then the sun will appear in all his radiance and fill the world with light. If I were with you to-day I would give you eighty-three kisses, one for each year you have lived. Eighty-three years seems very long to me. Does it seem long to you? I wonder how many years there will be in eternity. I am afraid I cannot think about so much time. I received the letter which you wrote to me last summer, and I thank you for it. I am staying in Boston now at the Institution for the Blind, but I have not commenced my studies yet, because my dearest friend, Mr. Anagnos wants me to rest and play a great deal.

Teacher is well and sends her kind remembrance to you. The happy Christmas time is almost here! I can hardly wait for the fun to begin! I hope your Christmas Day will be a very happy one and that the New Year will be full of brightness and joy for you and every one.

From your little friend  
HELEN A. KELLER.

WHITTIER'S REPLY

My Dear Young Friend—I was very glad to have such a pleasant letter on my birthday. I had two or three hundred others and thine was one of the most welcome of all. I must tell thee about how the day passed at Oak Knoll. Of course the sun did not shine,

but we had great open wood fires in the rooms, which were all very sweet with roses and other flowers, which were sent to me from distant friends; and fruits of all kinds from California and other places. Some relatives and dear old friends were with me through the day. I do not wonder thee thinks eighty three years a long time, but to me it seems but a very little while since I was a boy no older than thee, playing on the old farm at Haverhill. I thank thee for all thy good wishes, and wish thee as many. I am glad thee is at the Institution; it is an excellent place. Give my best regards to Miss Sullivan, and with a great deal of love I am

Thy old friend,  
JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Tommy Stringer, who appears in several of the following letters, became blind and deaf when he was four years old. His mother was dead and his father was too poor to take care of him. For a while he was kept in the general hospital at Allegheny. From here he was to be sent to an almshouse, for at that time there was no other place for him in Pennsylvania. Helen heard of him through Mr. J. G. Brown of Pittsburgh, who wrote her that he had failed to secure a tutor for Tommy. She wanted him brought to Boston, and when she was told that money would be needed to get him a teacher, she answered, "We will raise it." She began to solicit contributions from her friends, and saved her pennies.

Dr. Alexander Graham Bell advised Tommy's friends to send him to Boston, and the trustees of the Perkins Institution agreed to admit him to the kindergarten for the blind.

Meanwhile opportunity came to Helen to make a considerable contribution to Tommy's education. The winter before, her dog Lioness had been killed, and friends set to work to raise money to buy Helen another dog. Helen asked that the contributions, which people were sending from all over America and England, be devoted to Tommy's education. Turned to this new use, the fund grew fast, and Tommy was provided for. He was admitted to the kindergarten on the sixth of April.

Miss Keller wrote lately, "I shall never forget the pennies sent by many a poor child who could ill spare them, 'for little Tommy,' or the swift sympathy with which people from far and near, whom I had never seen, responded to the dumb cry of a little captive soul for aid."

TO MR. GEORGE R. KREHL  
Institution for the Blind,  
South Boston, Mass., March 20, 1891.

My Dear Friend, Mr. Krehl:—I have just heard, through Mr. Wade, of your kind offer to buy me a gentle dog, and I want to thank you for the kind thought. It makes me very happy indeed to know that I have such dear friends in other lands. It makes me think that all people are good and loving. I have read that the English and Americans are cousins; but I am sure it would be much truer to say that we are brothers and sisters. My friends have told me about your great and magnificent city, and I have read a great deal that wise Englishmen have written. I have begun to read "Enoch Arden," and I know several of the great poet's poems by heart. I am eager to cross the ocean, for I want to see my English friends and their good and wise queen. Once the Earl of

Meath came to see me, and he told me that the queen was much beloved by her people, because of her gentleness and wisdom. Some day you will be surprised to see a little strange girl coming into your office; but when you know it is the little girl who loves dogs and all other animals, you will laugh, and I hope you will give her a kiss, just as Mr. Wade does. He has another dog for me, and he thinks she will be as brave and faithful as my beautiful Lioness. And now I want to tell you what the dog lovers in America are going to do. They are going to send me some money for a poor little deaf and dumb and blind child. His name is Tommy, and he is five years old. His parents are too poor to pay to have the little fellow sent to school; so, instead of giving me a dog, the gentlemen are going to help make Tommy's life as bright and joyous as mine. Is it not a beautiful plan? Education will bring light and music into Tommy's soul, and then he cannot help being happy.

From your loving little friend,

HELEN A. KELLER.

TO DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

[South Boston, Mass., April, 1891.]

Dear Dr. Holmes:—Your beautiful words about spring have been making music in my heart, these bright April days. I love every word of "Spring" and "Spring Has Come." I think you will be glad to hear that these poems have taught me to enjoy and love the beautiful springtime, even though I cannot see the fair, frail blossoms which proclaim its approach, or hear the joyous warbling of the home-coming birds. But when I read "Spring Has Come," lo! I am not blind any longer, for I see with your eyes and hear with your ears. Sweet Mother Nature can have no secrets from me when my poet is near. I have chosen this paper because I want the spray of violets in the corner to tell you of my grateful love. I want you to see baby Tom, the little blind and deaf and dumb child who has just come to our pretty garden. He is poor and helpless and lonely now, but before another April education will have brought light and gladness into Tommy's life. If you do come, you will want to ask the kind people of Boston to help brighten Tommy's whole life. Your loving friend,  
HELEN KELLER.

TO SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS

Perkins Institution for the Blind,  
South Boston, Mass., April 30, 1891.

My Dear Mr. Millais:—Your little American sister is going to write you a letter, because she wants you to know how pleased she was to hear you were interested in our poor little Tommy, and had sent some money to help educate him. It is very beautiful to think that people far away in England feel sorry for a little helpless child in America. I used to think, when I read in my books about your great city, that when I visited it the people would be strangers to me, but now I feel differently. It seems to me that all people who have loving, pitying hearts, are not strangers to each other. I can hardly wait patiently for the time to come when I shall see my dear English friends, and their beautiful island home. My favourite poet has written some lines about England which I love very much. I think you will like them too, so I will try to write them for you.

"Hugged in the clinging billow's clasp,

*From seaweed fringe to mountain heather,  
The British oak with rooted grasp  
Her slender handful holds together,  
With cliffs of white and bowers of green,  
And ocean narrowing to caress her,  
And hills and threaded streams between,  
Our little mother isle, God bless her!"*

*You will be glad to hear that Tommy has a kind lady to teach him, and that he is a pretty, active little fellow. He loves to climb much better than to spell, but that is because he does not know yet what a wonderful thing language is. He cannot imagine how very, very happy he will be when he can tell us his thoughts, and we can tell him how we have loved him so long.*

*Tomorrow April will hide her tears and blushes beneath the flowers of lovely May. I wonder if the May-days in England are as beautiful as they are here.*

*Now I must say good-bye. Please think of me always as your loving little sister,  
HELEN KELLER.*

*TO REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS  
So. Boston, May 1, 1891.*

*My Dear Mr. Brooks:*

*Helen sends you a loving greeting this bright May-day. My teacher has just told me that you have been made a bishop, and that your friends everywhere are rejoicing because one whom they love has been greatly honored. I do not understand very well what a bishop's work is, but I am sure it must be good and helpful, and I am glad that my dear friend is brave, and wise, and loving enough to do it. It is very beautiful to think that you can tell so many people of the heavenly Father's tender love for all His children even when they are not gentle and noble as He wishes them to be. I hope the glad news which you will tell them will make their hearts beat fast with joy and love. I hope too, that Bishop Brooks' whole life will be as rich in happiness as the month of May is full of blossoms and singing birds.*

*From your loving little friend,  
HELEN KELLER.*

*Before a teacher was found for Tommy and while he was still in the care of Helen and Miss Sullivan, a reception was held for him at the kindergarten. At Helen's request Bishop Brooks made an address. Helen wrote letters to the newspapers which brought many generous replies. All of these she answered herself, and she made public acknowledgment in letters to the newspapers. This letter is to the editor of the Boston Herald, enclosing a complete list of the subscribers. The contributions amounted to more than sixteen hundred dollars.*

*TO MR. JOHN H. HOLMES  
South Boston, May 13, 1891.*

*Editor of the Boston Herald:*

*My Dear Mr. Holmes:—Will you kindly print in the Herald, the enclosed list? I think the readers of your paper will be glad to know that so much has been done for dear little Tommy, and that they will all wish to share in the pleasure of helping him. He is very happy indeed at the kindergarten, and is learning something*

every day. He has found out that doors have locks, and that little sticks and bits of paper can be got into the key-hole quite easily; but he does not seem very eager to get them out after they are in. He loves to climb the bed-posts and unscrew the steam valves much better than to spell, but that is because he does not understand that words would help him to make new and interesting discoveries. I hope that good people will continue to work for Tommy until his fund is completed, and education has brought light and music into his little life.

From your little friend,  
HELEN KELLER.

TO DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

South Boston, May 27, 1891.

Dear, Gentle Poet:—I fear that you will think Helen a very troublesome little girl if she writes to you too often; but how is she to help sending you loving and grateful messages, when you do so much to make her glad? I cannot begin to tell you how delighted I was when Mr. Anagnos told me that you had sent him some money to help educate "Baby Tom." Then I knew that you had not forgotten the dear little child, for the gift brought with it the thought of tender sympathy. I am very sorry to say that Tommy has not learned any words yet. He is the same restless little creature he was when you saw him. But it is pleasant to think that he is happy and playful in his bright new home, and by and by that strange, wonderful thing teacher calls MIND, will begin to spread its beautiful wings and fly away in search of knowledge-land. Words are the mind's wings, are they not?

I have been to Andover since I saw you, and I was greatly interested in all that my friends told me about Phillips Academy, because I knew you had been there, and I felt it was a place dear to you. I tried to imagine my gentle poet when he was a school-boy, and I wondered if it was in Andover he learned the songs of the birds and the secrets of the shy little woodland children. I am sure his heart was always full of music, and in God's beautiful world he must have heard love's sweet replying. When I came home teacher read to me "The School-boy," for it is not in our print.

Did you know that the blind children are going to have their commencement exercises in Tremont Temple, next Tuesday afternoon? I enclose a ticket, hoping that you will come. We shall all be proud and happy to welcome our poet friend. I shall recite about the beautiful cities of sunny Italy. I hope our kind friend Dr. Ellis will come too, and take Tom in his arms.

With much love and a kiss, from your little friend,  
HELEN A. KELLER.

TO REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS

South Boston, June 8, 1891.

My dear Mr. Brooks,

I send you my picture as I promised, and I hope when you look at it this summer your thoughts will fly southward to your happy little friend. I used to wish that I could see pictures with my hands as I do statues, but now I do not often think about it because my dear Father has filled my mind with beautiful pictures, even of things I cannot see. If the light were not in your eyes, dear Mr. Brooks, you would understand better how happy your little Helen was when her teacher explained to her that the

best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen nor even touched, but just felt in the heart. Every day I find out something which makes me glad. Yesterday I thought for the first time what a beautiful thing motion was, and it seemed to me that everything was trying to get near to God, does it seem that way to you? It is Sunday morning, and while I sit here in the library writing this letter you are teaching hundreds of people some of the grand and beautiful things about their heavenly Father. Are you not very, very happy? and when you are a Bishop you will preach to more people and more and more will be made glad. Teacher sends her kind remembrances, and I send you with my picture my dear love.

From your little friend

HELEN KELLER.

When the Perkins Institution closed in June, Helen and her teacher went south to Tusculum, where they remained until December. There is a hiatus of several months in the letters, caused by the depressing effect on Helen and Miss Sullivan of the "Frost King" episode. At the time this trouble seemed very grave and brought them much unhappiness. An analysis of the case has been made elsewhere, and Miss Keller has written her account of it.

TO MR. ALBERT H. MUNSELL

Brewster, Mar. 10, 1892.

My dear Mr. Munsell,

Surely I need not tell you that your letter was very welcome. I enjoyed every word of it and wished that it was longer. I laughed when you spoke of old Neptune's wild moods. He has, in truth, behaved very strangely ever since we came to Brewster. It is evident that something has displeased his Majesty but I cannot imagine what it can be. His expression has been so turbulent that I have feared to give him your kind message. Who knows! Perhaps the Old Sea God as he lay asleep upon the shore, heard the soft music of growing things—the stir of life in the earth's bosom, and his stormy heart was angry, because he knew that his and Winter's reign was almost at an end. So together the unhappy monarch[s] fought most despairingly, thinking that gentle Spring would turn and fly at the very sight of the havoc caused by their forces. But lo! the lovely maiden only smiles more sweetly, and breathes upon the icy battlements of her enemies, and in a moment they vanish, and the glad Earth gives her a royal welcome. But I must put away these idle fancies until we meet again. Please give your dear mother my love. Teacher wishes me to say that she liked the photograph very much and she will see about having some when we return. Now, dear friend, Please accept these few words because of the love that is linked with them.

Lovingly yours

HELEN KELLER.

This letter was reproduced in facsimile in *St. Nicholas*, June, 1892. It is undated, but must have been written two or three months before it was published.

To *St. Nicholas*

Dear *St. Nicholas*:

It gives me very great pleasure to send you my autograph because I want the boys and girls who read *St. Nicholas* to know how blind children write. I suppose some of them wonder how we keep the lines so straight so I will try to tell them how it is done. We

have a grooved board which we put between the pages when we wish to write. The parallel grooves correspond to lines and when we have pressed the paper into them by means of the blunt end of the pencil it is very easy to keep the words even. The small letters are all made in the grooves, while the long ones extend above and below them. We guide the pencil with the right hand, and feel carefully with the forefinger of the left hand to see that we shape and space the letters correctly. It is very difficult at first to form them plainly, but if we keep on trying it gradually becomes easier, and after a great deal of practice we can write legible letters to our friends. Then we are very, very happy. Sometime they may visit a school for the blind. If they do, I am sure they will wish to see the pupils write.

Very sincerely your little friend

HELEN KELLER.

In May, 1892, Helen gave a tea in aid of the kindergarten for the blind. It was quite her own idea, and was given in the house of Mrs. Mahlon D. Spaulding, sister of Mr. John P. Spaulding, one of Helen's kindest and most liberal friends. The tea brought more than two thousand dollars for the blind children.

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

South Boston, May 9, 1892.

My dear Miss Carrie:—I was much pleased to receive your kind letter. Need I tell you that I was more than delighted to hear that you are really interested in the "tea"? Of course we must not give it up. Very soon I am going far away, to my own dear home, in the sunny south, and it would always make me happy to think that the last thing which my dear friends in Boston did for my pleasure was to help make the lives of many little sightless children good and happy. I know that kind people cannot help feeling a tender sympathy for the little ones, who cannot see the beautiful light, or any of the wonderful things which give them pleasure; and it seems to me that all loving sympathy must express itself in acts of kindness; and when the friends of little helpless blind children understand that we are working for their happiness, they will come and make our "tea" a success, and I am sure I shall be the happiest little girl in all the world. Please let Bishop Brooks know our plans, so that he may arrange to be with us. I am glad Miss Eleanor is interested. Please give her my love. I will see you to-morrow and then we can make the rest of our plans. Please give your dear aunt teacher's and my love and tell her that we enjoyed our little visit very much indeed.

Lovingly yours,

HELEN KELLER.

TO MR. JOHN P. SPAULDING

South Boston, May 11th, 1892.

My dear Mr. Spaulding:—I am afraid you will think your little friend, Helen, very troublesome when you read this letter; but I am sure you will not blame me when I tell you that I am very anxious about something. You remember teacher and I told you Sunday that I wanted to have a little tea in aid of the kindergarten. We thought everything was arranged: but we found Monday that Mrs. Elliott would not be willing to let us invite more than fifty people, because Mrs. Howe's house is quite small. I am sure that a great many people would like to come to the tea, and help me do something to brighten the lives of little blind children; but some of my friends say that I shall have to give up

*the idea of having a tea unless we can find another house. Teacher said yesterday, that perhaps Mrs. Spaulding would be willing to let us have her beautiful house, and [I] thought I would ask you about it. Do you think Mrs. Spaulding would help me, if I wrote to her? I shall be so disappointed if my little plans fail, because I have wanted for a long time to do something for the poor little ones who are waiting to enter the kindergarten. Please let me know what you think about the house, and try to forgive me for troubling you so much.*

*Lovingly your little friend,*  
HELEN KELLER.

TO MR. EDWARD H. CLEMENT

*South Boston, May 18th, 1892.*

*My dear Mr. Clement:—I am going to write to you this beautiful morning because my heart is brimful of happiness and I want you and all my dear friends in the Transcript office to rejoice with me. The preparations for my tea are nearly completed, and I am looking forward joyfully to the event. I know I shall not fail. Kind people will not disappoint me, when they know that I plead for helpless little children who live in darkness and ignorance. They will come to my tea and buy light,—the beautiful light of knowledge and love for many little ones who are blind and friendless. I remember perfectly when my dear teacher came to me. Then I was like the little blind children who are waiting to enter the kindergarten. There was no light in my soul. This wonderful world with all its sunlight and beauty was hidden from me, and I had never dreamed of its loveliness. But teacher came to me and taught my little fingers to use the beautiful key that has unlocked the door of my dark prison and set my spirit free.*

*It is my earnest wish to share my happiness with others, and I ask the kind people of Boston to help me make the lives of little blind children brighter and happier.*

*Lovingly your little friend,*  
HELEN KELLER.

*At the end of June Miss Sullivan and Helen went home to Tuscumbia.*

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

*Tuscumbia, Alabama, July 9th 1892.*

*My dear Carrie—You are to look upon it as a most positive proof of my love that I write to you to-day. For a whole week it has been "cold and dark and dreary" in Tuscumbia, and I must confess the continuous rain and dismalness of the weather fills me with gloomy thoughts and makes the writing of letters, or any pleasant employment, seem quite impossible. Nevertheless, I must tell you that we are alive,—that we reached home safely, and that we speak of you daily, and enjoy your interesting letters very much. I had a beautiful visit at Hulton. Everything was fresh and spring-like, and we stayed out of doors all day. We even ate our breakfast out on the piazza. Sometimes we sat in the hammock, and teacher read to me. I rode horseback nearly every evening and once I rode five miles at a fast gallop. O, it was great fun! Do you like to ride? I have a very pretty little cart now, and if it ever stops raining teacher and I are going to drive every evening. And I have another beautiful Mastiff—the largest one I ever saw—and he will go along to protect us. His name is Eumer. A queer name, is it not? I think it is Saxon. We expect to go to*

the mountains next week. My little brother, Phillips, is not well, and we think the clear mountain air will benefit him. Mildred is a sweet little sister and I am sure you would love her. I thank you very much for your photograph. I like to have my friends' pictures even though I cannot see them. I was greatly amused at the idea of your writing the square hand. I do not write on a Braille tablet, as you suppose, but on a grooved board like the piece which I enclose. You could not read Braille; for it is written in dots, not at all like ordinary letters. Please give my love to Miss Derby and tell her that I hope she gave my sweetest love to Baby Ruth. What was the book you sent me for my birthday? I received several, and I do not know which was from you. I had one gift which especially pleased me. It was a lovely cape crocheted, for me, by an old gentleman, seventy-five years of age. And every stitch, he writes, represents a kind wish for my health and happiness. Tell your little cousins I think they had better get upon the fence with me until after the election; for there are so many parties and candidates that I doubt if such youthful politicians would make a wise selection. Please give my love to Rosy when you write, and believe me,  
Your loving friend

HELEN KELLER.

P.S. How do you like this type-written letter?

H. K.

TO MRS. GROVER CLEVELAND

My dear Mrs. Cleveland,

I am going to write you a little letter this beautiful morning because I love you and dear little Ruth very much indeed, and also because I wish to thank you for the loving message which you sent me through Miss Derby. I am glad, very glad that such a kind, beautiful lady loves me. I have loved you for a long time, but I did not think you had ever heard of me until your sweet message came. Please kiss your dear little baby for me, and tell her I have a little brother nearly sixteen months old. His name is Phillips Brooks. I named him myself after my dear friend Phillips Brooks. I send you with this letter a pretty book which my teacher thinks will interest you, and my picture. Please accept them with the love and good wishes of your friend,  
HELEN KELLER.

Tuscumbia, Alabama.

November fourth. [1892.]

Hitherto the letters have been given in full; from this point on passages are omitted and the omissions are indicated.

TO MR. JOHN HITZ

Tuscumbia, Alabama, Dec. 19, 1892.

My Dear Mr. Hitz,

I hardly know how to begin a letter to you, it has been such a long time since your kind letter reached me, and there is so much that I would like to write if I could. You must have wondered why your letter has not had an answer, and perhaps you have thought Teacher and me very naughty indeed. If so, you will be very sorry when I tell you something. Teacher's eyes have been hurting her so that she could not write to any one, and I have been trying to fulfil a promise which I made last summer. Before I left Boston, I was asked to write a sketch of my life for the Youth's Companion. I had intended to write the sketch during my vacation: but I was not well, and I did not feel able to write even to my

friends. But when the bright, pleasant autumn days came, and I felt strong again I began to think about the sketch. It was some time before I could plan it to suit me. You see, it is not very pleasant to write all about one's self. At last, however, I got something bit by bit that Teacher thought would do, and I set about putting the scraps together, which was not an easy task: for, although I worked some on it every day, I did not finish it until a week ago Saturday. I sent the sketch to the Companion as soon as it was finished; but I do not know that they will accept it. Since then, I have not been well, and I have been obliged to keep very quiet, and rest; but to-day I am better, and to-morrow I shall be well again, I hope.

The reports which you have read in the paper about me are not true at all. We received the Silent Worker which you sent, and I wrote right away to the editor to tell him that it was a mistake. Sometimes I am not well; but I am not a "wreck," and there is nothing "distressing" about my condition.

I enjoyed your dear letter so much! I am always delighted when anyone writes me a beautiful thought which I can treasure in my memory forever. It is because my books are full of the riches of which Mr. Ruskin speaks that I love them so dearly. I did not realize until I began to write the sketch for the Companion, what precious companions books have been to me, and how blessed even my life has been: and now I am happier than ever because I do realize the happiness that has come to me. I hope you will write to me as often as you can. Teacher and I are always delighted to hear from you. I want to write to Mr. Bell and send him my picture. I suppose he has been too busy to write to his little friend. I often think of the pleasant time we had all together in Boston last spring.

Now I am going to tell you a secret. I think we, Teacher, and my father and little sister, and myself, will visit Washington next March!!! Then I shall see you, and dear Mr. Bell, and Elsie and Daisy again! Would not it be lovely if Mrs. Pratt could meet us there? I think I will write to her and tell her the secret too....

Lovingly your little friend,

HELEN KELLER.

P.S. Teacher says you want to know what kind of a pet I would like to have. I love all living things,—I suppose everyone does; but of course I cannot have a menagerie. I have a beautiful pony, and a large dog. And I would like a little dog to hold in my lap, or a big pussy (there are no fine cats in Tuscumbia) or a parrot. I would like to feel a parrot talk, it would be so much fun! but I would be pleased with, and love any little creature you send me.

H. K.

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

Tuscumbia, Alabama, February 18, 1893.

...You have often been in my thoughts during these sad days, while my heart has been grieving over the loss of my beloved friend [Phillips Brooks died January 23, 1893], and I have wished many times that I was in Boston with those who knew and loved him as I did... he was so much of a friend to me! so tender and loving always! I do try not to mourn his death too sadly. I do try to think that he is still near, very near; but sometimes the

thought that he is not here, that I shall not see him when I go to Boston,—that he is gone,—rushes over my soul like a great wave of sorrow. But at other times, when I am happier, I do feel his beautiful presence, and his loving hand leading me in pleasant ways. Do you remember the happy hour we spent with him last June when he held my hand, as he always did, and talked to us about his friend Tennyson, and our own dear poet Dr. Holmes, and I tried to teach him the manual alphabet, and he laughed so gaily over his mistakes, and afterward I told him about my tea, and he promised to come? I can hear him now, saying in his cheerful, decided way, in reply to my wish that my tea might be a success, "Of course it will, Helen. Put your whole heart in the good work, my child, and it cannot fail." I am glad the people are going to raise a monument to his memory....

In March Helen and Miss Sullivan went North, and spent the next few months traveling and visiting friends.

In reading this letter about Niagara one should remember that Miss Keller knows distance and shape, and that the size of Niagara is within her experience after she has explored it, crossed the bridge and gone down in the elevator. Especially important are such details as her feeling the rush of the water by putting her hand on the window. Dr. Bell gave her a down pillow, which she held against her to increase the vibrations.

TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER

South Boston, April 13, 1893.

...Teacher, Mrs. Pratt and I very unexpectedly decided to take a journey with dear Dr. Bell Mr. Westervelt, a gentleman whom father met in Washington, has a school for the deaf in Rochester. We went there first....

Mr. Westervelt gave us a reception one afternoon. A great many people came. Some of them asked odd questions. A lady seemed surprised that I loved flowers when I could not see their beautiful colors, and when I assured her I did love them, she said, "no doubt you feel the colors with your fingers." But of course, it is not alone for their bright colors that we love the flowers.... A gentleman asked me what BEAUTY meant to my mind. I must confess I was puzzled at first. But after a minute I answered that beauty was a form of goodness—and he went away.

When the reception was over we went back to the hotel and teacher slept quite unconscious of the surprise which was in store for her. Mr. Bell and I planned it together, and Mr. Bell made all the arrangements before we told teacher anything about it. This was the surprise—I was to have the pleasure of taking my dear teacher to see Niagara Falls!...

The hotel was so near the river that I could feel it rushing past by putting my hand on the window. The next morning the sun rose bright and warm, and we got up quickly for our hearts were full of pleasant expectation.... You can never imagine how I felt when I stood in the presence of Niagara until you have the same mysterious sensations yourself. I could hardly realize that it was water that I felt rushing and plunging with impetuous fury at my feet. It seemed as if it were some living thing rushing on to some terrible fate. I wish I could describe the cataract as it is, its beauty and awful grandeur, and the fearful and irresistible plunge of its waters over the brow of the precipice.

One feels helpless and overwhelmed in the presence of such a vast force. I had the same feeling once before when I first stood by the great ocean and felt its waves beating against the shore. I suppose you feel so, too, when you gaze up to the stars in the stillness of the night, do you not?... We went down a hundred and twenty feet in an elevator that we might see the violent eddies and whirlpools in the deep gorge below the Falls. Within two miles of the Falls is a wonderful suspension bridge. It is thrown across the gorge at a height of two hundred and fifty-eight feet above the water and is supported on each bank by towers of solid rock, which are eight hundred feet apart. When we crossed over to the Canadian side, I cried, "God save the Queen!" Teacher said I was a little traitor. But I do not think so. I was only doing as the Canadians do, while I was in their country, and besides I honor England's good queen.

You will be pleased, dear Mother, to hear that a kind lady whose name is Miss Hooker is endeavoring to improve my speech. Oh, I do so hope and pray that I shall speak well some day!...

Mr. Munsell spent last Sunday evening with us. How you would have enjoyed hearing him tell about Venice! His beautiful word-pictures made us feel as if we were sitting in the shadow of San Marco, dreaming, or sailing upon the moonlit canal.... I hope when I visit Venice, as I surely shall some day, that Mr. Munsell will go with me. That is my castle in the air. You see, none of my friends describe things to me so vividly and so beautifully as he does....

Her visit to the World's Fair she described in a letter to Mr. John P. Spaulding, which was published in *St. Nicholas*, and is much like the following letter. In a prefatory note which Miss Sullivan wrote for *St. Nicholas*, she says that people frequently said to her, "Helen sees more with her fingers than we do with our eyes." The President of the Exposition gave her this letter:

TO THE CHIEFS OF THE DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF BUILDINGS AND EXHIBITS

GENTLEMEN—The bearer, Miss Helen Keller, accompanied by Miss Sullivan, is desirous of making a complete inspection of the Exposition in all Departments. She is blind and deaf, but is able to converse, and is introduced to me as one having a wonderful ability to understand the objects she visits, and as being possessed of a high order of intelligence and of culture beyond her years. Please favour her with every facility to examine the exhibits in the several Departments, and extend to her such other courtesies as may be possible.

Thanking you in advance for the same, I am, with respect,  
Very truly yours,  
(signed) H. N. HIGINBOTHAM,  
President.

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY  
Hulton, Penn., August 17, 1893.

...Every one at the Fair was very kind to me... Nearly all of the exhibitors seemed perfectly willing to let me touch the most delicate things, and they were very nice about explaining everything to me. A French gentleman, whose name I cannot

remember, showed me the great French bronzes. I believe they gave me more pleasure than anything else at the Fair: they were so lifelike and wonderful to my touch. Dr. Bell went with us himself to the electrical building, and showed us some of the historical telephones. I saw the one through which Emperor Dom Pedro listened to the words, "To be, or not to be," at the Centennial. Dr. Gillett of Illinois took us to the Liberal Arts and Woman's buildings. In the former I visited Tiffany's exhibit, and held the beautiful Tiffany diamond, which is valued at one hundred thousand dollars, and touched many other rare and costly things. I sat in King Ludwig's armchair and felt like a queen when Dr. Gillett remarked that I had many loyal subjects. At the Woman's building we met the Princess Maria Schaovskoy of Russia, and a beautiful Syrian lady. I liked them both very much. I went to the Japanese department with Prof. Morse who is a well-known lecturer. I never realized what a wonderful people the Japanese are until I saw their most interesting exhibit. Japan must indeed be a paradise for children to judge from the great number of playthings which are manufactured there. The queer-looking Japanese musical instruments, and their beautiful works of art were interesting. The Japanese books are very odd. There are forty-seven letters in their alphabets. Prof. Morse knows a great deal about Japan, and is very kind and wise. He invited me to visit his museum in Salem the next time I go to Boston. But I think I enjoyed the sails on the tranquil lagoon, and the lovely scenes, as my friends described them to me, more than anything else at the Fair. Once, while we were out on the water, the sun went down over the rim of the earth, and threw a soft, rosy light over the White City, making it look more than ever like Dreamland....

Of course, we visited the Midway Plaisance. It was a bewildering and fascinating place. I went into the streets of Cairo, and rode on the camel. That was fine fun. We also rode in the Ferris wheel, and on the ice-railway, and had a sail in the Whale-back....

In the spring of 1893 a club was started in Tuscumbia, of which Mrs. Keller was president, to establish a public library. Miss Keller says:

"I wrote to my friends about the work and enlisted their sympathy. Several hundred books, including many fine ones, were sent to me in a short time, as well as money and encouragement. This generous assistance encouraged the ladies, and they have gone on collecting and buying books ever since, until now they have a very respectable public library in the town."

TO MRS. CHARLES E. INCHES  
Hulton, Penn., Oct. 21, 1893.

...We spent September at home in Tuscumbia... and were all very happy together.... Our quiet mountain home was especially attractive and restful after the excitement and fatigue of our visit to the World's Fair. We enjoyed the beauty and solitude of the hills more than ever.

And now we are in Hulton, Penn. again where I am going to study this winter with a tutor assisted by my dear teacher. I study Arithmetic, Latin and literature. I enjoy my lessons very much. It is so pleasant to learn about new things. Every day I find how little I know, but I do not feel discouraged since God has given

me an eternity in which to learn more. In literature I am studying Longfellow's poetry. I know a great deal of it by heart, for I loved it long before I knew a metaphor from a synecdoche. I used to say I did not like arithmetic very well, but now I have changed my mind. I see what a good and useful study it is, though I must confess my mind wanders from it sometimes! for, nice and useful as arithmetic is, it is not as interesting as a beautiful poem or a lovely story. But bless me, how time does fly. I have only a few moments left in which to answer your questions about the "Helen Keller" Public Library.

1. I think there are about 3,000 people in Tuscumbia, Ala., and perhaps half of them are colored people. 2. At present there is no library of any sort in the town. That is why I thought about starting one. My mother and several of my lady friends said they would help me, and they formed a club, the object of which is to work for the establishment of a free public library in Tuscumbia. They have now about 100 books and about \$55 in money, and a kind gentleman has given us land on which to erect a library building. But in the meantime the club has rented a little room in a central part of the town, and the books which we already have are free to all. 3. Only a few of my kind friends in Boston know anything about the library. I did not like to trouble them while I was trying to get money for poor little Tommy, for of course it was more important that he should be educated than that my people should have books to read. 4. I do not know what books we have, but I think it is a miscellaneous (I think that is the word) collection....

P.S. My teacher thinks it would be more businesslike to say that a list of the contributors toward the building fund will be kept and published in my father's paper, the "North Alabamian."  
H. K.

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

Hulton, Penn., December 28, 1893.

...Please thank dear Miss Derby for me for the pretty shield which she sent me. It is a very interesting souvenir of Columbus, and of the Fair White City; but I cannot imagine what discoveries I have made,—I mean new discoveries. We are all discoverers in one sense, being born quite ignorant of all things; but I hardly think that is what she meant. Tell her she must explain why I am a discoverer....

TO DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE

Hulton, Pennsylvania, January 14, 1894

My dear Cousin: I had thought to write to you long before this in answer to your kind letter which I was so glad to receive, and to thank you for the beautiful little book which you sent me; but I have been very busy since the beginning of the New Year. The publication of my little story in the Youth's Companion has brought me a large number of letters,—last week I received sixty-one!—and besides replying to some of these letters, I have many lessons to learn, among them Arithmetic and Latin; and, you know, Caesar is Caesar still, imperious and tyrannical, and if a little girl would understand so great a man, and the wars and conquests of which he tells in his beautiful Latin language, she must study much and think much, and study and thought require time.

*I shall prize the little book always, not only for its own value; but because of its associations with you. It is a delight to think of you as the giver of one of your books into which, I am sure, you have wrought your own thoughts and feelings, and I thank you very much for remembering me in such a very beautiful way....*

*In February Helen and Miss Sullivan returned to Tuscombua. They spent the rest of the spring reading and studying. In the summer they attended the meeting at Chautauqua of the American Association for the Promotion of the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf, where Miss Sullivan read a paper on Helen Keller's education.*

*In the fall Helen and Miss Sullivan entered the Wright-Humason School in New York, which makes a special of lip-reading and voice-culture. The "singing lessons" were to strengthen her voice. She had taken a few piano lessons at the Perkins Institution. The experiment was interesting, but of course came to little.*

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

The Wright-Humason School.

42 West 76th St.

New York. Oct. 23, 1894.

*...The school is very pleasant, and bless you! it is quite fashionable.... I study Arithmetic, English Literature and United States History as I did last winter. I also keep a diary. I enjoy my singing lessons with Dr. Humason more than I can say. I expect to take piano lessons sometime....*

*Last Saturday our kind teachers planned a delightful trip to Bedloe's Island to see Bartholdi's great statue of Liberty enlightening the world.... The ancient cannon, which look seaward, wear a very menacing expression; but I doubt if there is any unkindness in their rusty old hearts.*

*Liberty is a gigantic figure of a woman in Greek draperies, holding in her right hand a torch.... A spiral stairway leads from the base of this pedestal to the torch. We climbed up to the head which will hold forty persons, and viewed the scene on which Liberty gazes day and night, and O, how wonderful it was! We did not wonder that the great French artist thought the place worthy to be the home of his grand ideal. The glorious bay lay calm and beautiful in the October sunshine, and the ships came and went like idle dreams; those seaward going slowly disappeared like clouds that change from gold to gray; those homeward coming sped more quickly like birds that seek their mother's nest....*

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

The Wright-Humason School.

New York, March 15, 1895.

*...I think I have improved a little in lip-reading, though I still find it very difficult to read rapid speech; but I am sure I shall succeed some day if I only persevere. Dr. Humason is still trying to improve my speech. Oh, Carrie, how I should like to speak like other people! I should be willing to work night and day if it could only be accomplished. Think what a joy it would be to all of my friends to hear me speak naturally!! I wonder why it is so difficult and perplexing for a deaf child to learn to speak when it is so easy for other people; but I am sure I shall*

*...speak perfectly some time if I am only patient....*

*Although I have been so busy, I have found time to read a good deal.... I have lately read "Wilhelm Tell" by Schiller, and "The Lost Vestal."... Now I am reading "Nathan the Wise" by Lessing and "King Arthur" by Miss Mulock.*

*...You know our kind teachers take us to see everything which they think will interest us, and we learn a great deal in that delightful way. On George Washington's birthday we all went to the Dog Show, and although there was a great crowd in the Madison Square Garden, and despite the bewilderment caused by the variety of sounds made by the dog-orchestra, which was very confusing to those who could hear them, we enjoyed the afternoon very much. Among the dogs which received the most attention were the bulldogs. They permitted themselves startling liberties when any one caressed them, crowding themselves almost into one's arms and helping themselves without ceremony to kisses, apparently unconscious of the impropriety of their conduct. Dear me, what unbeautiful little beasts they are! But they are so good natured and friendly, one cannot help liking them.*

*Dr. Humason, Teacher, and I left the others at the Dog Show and went to a reception given by the "Metropolitan Club."... It is sometimes called the "Millionaires' Club." The building is magnificent, being built of white marble; the rooms are large and splendidly furnished; but I must confess, so much splendor is rather oppressive to me; and I didn't envy the millionaires in the least all the happiness their gorgeous surroundings are supposed to bring them....*

*TO MRS. KATE ADAMS KELLER  
New York, March 31, 1895.*

*...Teacher and I spent the afternoon at Mr. Hutton's, and had a most delightful time!... We met Mr. Clemens and Mr. Howells there! I had known about them for a long time; but I had never thought that I should see them, and talk to them; and I can scarcely realize now that this great pleasure has been mine! But, much as I wonder that I, only a little girl of fourteen, should come in contact with so many distinguished people, I do realize that I am a very happy child, and very grateful for the many beautiful privileges I have enjoyed. The two distinguished authors were very gentle and kind, and I could not tell which of them I loved best. Mr. Clemens told us many entertaining stories, and made us laugh till we cried. I only wish you could have seen and heard him! He told us that he would go to Europe in a few days to bring his wife and his daughter, Jeanne, back to America, because Jeanne, who is studying in Paris, has learned so much in three years and a half that if he did not bring her home, she would soon know more than he did. I think Mark Twain is a very appropriate nom de plume for Mr. Clemens because it has a funny and quaint sound, and goes well with his amusing writings, and its nautical significance suggests the deep and beautiful things that he has written. I think he is very handsome indeed.... Teacher said she thought he looked something like Paradeuski. (If that is the way to spell the name.) Mr. Howells told me a little about Venice, which is one of his favorite cities, and spoke very tenderly of his dear little girl, Winnifred, who is now with God. He has another daughter, named Mildred, who knows Carrie. I might have seen Mrs. Wiggin, the sweet author of "Birds' Christmas Carol," but she had a dangerous cough and could not come. I was*

*much disappointed not to see her, but I hope I shall have that pleasure some other time. Mr. Hutton gave me a lovely little glass, shaped like a thistle, which belonged to his dear mother, as a souvenir of my delightful visit. We also met Mr. Rogers... who kindly left his carriage to bring us home.*

*When the Wright-Humason School closed for the summer, Miss Sullivan and Helen went South.*

*TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON*

*Tuscumbia, Alabama, July 29, 1895.*

*...I am spending my vacation very quietly and pleasantly at my beautiful, sunny home, with my loving parents, my darling little sister and my small brother, Phillips My precious teacher is with me too, and so of course I am happy I read a little, walk a little, write a little and play with the children a great deal, and the days slip by delightfully!...*

*My friends are so pleased with the improvement which I made in speech and lip-reading last year, that it has been decided best for me to continue my studies in New York another year I am delighted at the prospect, of spending another year in your great city I used to think that I should never feel "at home" in New York, but since I have made the acquaintance of so many people, and can look back to such a bright and successful winter there, I find myself looking forward to next year, and anticipating still brighter and better times in the Metropolis*

*Please give my kindest love to Mr Hutton, and Mrs Riggs and Mr Warner too, although I have never had the pleasure of knowing him personally As I listen Venicewards, I hear Mr Hutton's pen dancing over the pages of his new book It is a pleasant sound because it is full of promise How much I shall enjoy reading it!*

*Please pardon me, my dear Mrs Hutton, for sending you a typewritten letter across the ocean I have tried several times to write with a pencil on my little writing machine since I came home; but I have found it very difficult to do so on account of the heat The moisture of my hand soils and blurs the paper so dreadfully, that I am compelled to use my typewriter altogether And it is not my "Remington" either, but a naughty little thing that gets out of order on the slightest provocation, and cannot be induced to make a period...*

*TO MRS. WILLIAM THAW*

*New York, October 16, 1895.*

*Here we are once more in the great metropolis! We left Hulton Friday night and arrived here Saturday morning. Our friends were greatly surprised to see us, as they had not expected us before the last of this month. I rested Saturday afternoon, for I was very tired, and Sunday I visited with my schoolmates, and now that I feel quite rested, I am going to write to you; for I know you will want to hear that we reached New York safely. We had to change cars at Philadelphia; but we did not mind it much. After we had had our breakfast, Teacher asked one of the train-men in the station if the New York train was made up. He said no, it would not be called for about fifteen minutes; so we sat down to wait; but in a moment the man came back and asked Teacher if we would like to go to the train at once. She said we would, and he took us way out on the track and put us on board our train. Thus we avoided the rush and had a nice quiet visit before the train*

started. Was that not very kind? So it always is. Some one is ever ready to scatter little acts of kindness along our pathway, making it smooth and pleasant...

We had a quiet but very pleasant time in Hulton. Mr. Wade is just as dear and good as ever! He has lately had several books printed in England for me, "Old Mortality," "The Castle of Otranto" and "King of No-land."...

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

New York, December 29, 1895.

...Teacher and I have been very gay of late. We have seen our kind friends, Mrs. Dodge, Mr. and Mrs. Hutton, Mrs. Riggs and her husband, and met many distinguished people, among whom were Miss Ellen Terry, Sir Henry Irving and Mr. Stockton! Weren't we very fortunate? Miss Terry was lovely. She kissed Teacher and said, "I do not know whether I am glad to see you or not; for I feel so ashamed of myself when I think of how much you have done for the little girl." We also met Mr. and Mrs. Terry, Miss Terry's brother and his wife. I thought her beauty angelic, and oh, what a clear, beautiful voice she had! We saw Miss Terry again with Sir Henry in "King Charles the First," a week ago last Friday, and after the play they kindly let me feel of them and get an idea of how they looked. How noble and kingly the King was, especially in his misfortunes! And how pretty and faithful the poor Queen was! The play seemed so real, we almost forgot where we were, and believed we were watching the genuine scenes as they were acted so long ago. The last act affected us most deeply, and we all wept, wondering how the executioner could have the heart to tear the King from his loving wife's arms.

I have just finished reading "Ivanhoe." It was very exciting; but I must say I did not enjoy it very much. Sweet Rebecca, with her strong, brave spirit, and her pure, generous nature, was the only character which thoroughly won my admiration. Now I am reading "Stories from Scottish History," and they are very thrilling and absorbing!...

The next two letters were written just after the death of Mr. John P. Spaulding.

TO MRS. GEORGE H. BRADFORD

New York, February 4, 1896.

What can I say which will make you understand how much Teacher and I appreciate your thoughtful kindness in sending us those little souvenirs of the dear room where we first met the best and kindest of friends? Indeed, you can never know all the comfort you have given us. We have put the dear picture on the mantel-piece in our room where we can see it every day, and I often go and touch it, and somehow I cannot help feeling that our beloved friend is very near to me.... It was very hard to take up our school work again, as if nothing had happened; but I am sure it is well that we have duties which must be done, and which take our minds away for a time at least from our sorrow....

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

New York, March 2nd, 1896.

...We miss dear King John sadly. It was so hard to lose him, he was the best and kindest of friends, and I do not know what we shall do without him....

We went to a poultry-show... and the man there kindly permitted

us to feel of the birds. They were so tame, they stood perfectly still when I handled them. I saw great big turkeys, geese, guineas, ducks and many others.

Almost two weeks ago we called at Mr. Hutton's and had a delightful time. We always do! We met Mr. Warner, the writer, Mr. Mabie, the editor of the Outlook and other pleasant people. I am sure you would like to know Mr. and Mrs. Hutton, they are so kind and interesting. I can never tell you how much pleasure they have given us.

Mr. Warner and Mr. Burroughs, the great lover of nature, came to see us a few days after, and we had a delightful talk with them. They were both very, very dear! Mr. Burroughs told me about his home near the Hudson, and what a happy place it must be! I hope we shall visit it some day. Teacher has read me his lively stories about his boyhood, and I enjoyed them greatly. Have you read the beautiful poem, "Waiting"? I know it, and it makes me feel so happy, it has such sweet thoughts. Mr. Warner showed me a scarf-pin with a beetle on it which was made in Egypt fifteen hundred years before Christ, and told me that the beetle meant immortality to the Egyptians because it wrapped itself up and went to sleep and came out again in a new form, thus renewing itself.

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

New York, April 25, 1896.

...My studies are the same as they were when I saw you, except that I have taken up French with a French teacher who comes three times a week. I read her lips almost exclusively, (she does not know the manual alphabet) and we get on quite well. I have read "Le Medecin Malgre Lui," a very good French comedy by Moliere, with pleasure; and they say I speak French pretty well now, and German also. Anyway, French and German people understand what I am trying to say, and that is very encouraging. In voice-training I have still the same old difficulties to contend against; and the fulfilment of my wish to speak well seems O, so far away! Sometimes I feel sure that I catch a faint glimpse of the goal I am striving for, but in another minute a bend in the road hides it from my view, and I am again left wandering in the dark! But I try hard not to be discouraged. Surely we shall all find at last the ideals we are seeking....

TO MR. JOHN HITZ

Brewster, Mass. July 15, 1896.

...As to the book, I am sure I shall enjoy it very much when I am admitted, by the magic of Teacher's dear fingers, into the companionship of the two sisters who went to the Immortal Fountain.

As I sit by the window writing to you, it is so lovely to have the soft, cool breezes fan my cheek and to feel that the hard work of last year is over! Teacher seems to feel benefitted by the change too; for she is already beginning to look like her dear old self. We only need you, dear Mr. Hitz, to complete our happiness. Teacher and Mrs. Hopkins both say you must come as soon as you can! We will try to make you comfortable.

Teacher and I spent nine days at Philadelphia. Have you ever been at Dr. Crouter's Institution? Mr. Howes has probably given you a full account of our doings. We were busy all the time; we

attended the meetings and talked with hundreds of people, among whom were dear Dr. Bell, Mr. Banerji of Calcutta, Monsieur Magnat of Paris with whom I conversed in French exclusively, and many other distinguished persons. We had looked forward to seeing you there, and so we were greatly disappointed that you did not come. We think of you so, so often! and our hearts go out to you in tenderest sympathy; and you know better than this poor letter can tell you how happy we always are to have you with us! I made a "speech" on July eighth, telling the members of the Association what an unspeakable blessing speech has been to me, and urging them to give every little deaf child an opportunity to learn to speak. Every one said I spoke very well and intelligibly. After my little "speech," we attended a reception at which over six hundred people were present. I must confess I do not like such large receptions; the people crowd so, and we have to do so much talking; and yet it is at receptions like the one in Philadelphia that we often meet friends whom we learn to love afterwards. We left the city last Thursday night, and arrived in Brewster Friday afternoon. We missed the Cape Cod train Friday morning, and so we came down to Provincetown in the steamer Longfellow. I am glad we did so; for it was lovely and cool on the water, and Boston Harbor is always interesting.

We spent about three weeks in Boston, after leaving New York, and I need not tell you we had a most delightful time. We visited our good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlin, at Wrentham, out in the country, where they have a lovely home. Their house stands near a charming lake where we went boating and canoeing, which was great fun. We also went in bathing several times. Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlin celebrated the 17th of June by giving a picnic to their literary friends. There were about forty persons present, all of whom were writers and publishers. Our friend, Mr. Alden, the editor of Harper's was there, and of course we enjoyed his society very much....

TO CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

Brewster, Mass., September 3, 1896.

...I have been meaning to write to you all summer; there were many things I wanted to tell you, and I thought perhaps you would like to hear about our vacation by the seaside, and our plans for next year; but the happy, idle days slipped away so quickly, and there were so many pleasant things to do every moment, that I never found time to clothe my thought in words, and send them to you. I wonder what becomes of lost opportunities. Perhaps our guardian angel gathers them up as we drop them, and will give them back to us in the beautiful sometime when we have grown wiser, and learned how to use them rightly. But, however this may be, I cannot now write the letter which has lain in my thought for you so long. My heart is too full of sadness to dwell upon the happiness the summer has brought me. My father is dead. He died last Saturday at my home in Tuscumbia, and I was not there. My own dear loving father! Oh, dear friend, how shall I ever bear it!...

On the first of October Miss Keller entered the Cambridge School for Young Ladies, of which Mr. Arthur Gilman is Principal. The "examinations" mentioned in this letter were merely tests given in the school, but as they were old Harvard papers, it is evident that in some subjects Miss Keller was already fairly well prepared for Radcliffe.

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
37 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, Mass.  
October 8, 1896.

...I got up early this morning, so that I could write you a few lines. I know you want to hear how I like my school. I do wish you could come and see for yourself what a beautiful school it is! There are about a hundred girls, and they are all so bright and happy; it is a joy to be with them.

You will be glad to hear that I passed my examinations successfully. I have been examined in English, German, French, and Greek and Roman history. They were the entrance examinations for Harvard College; so I feel pleased to think I could pass them. This year is going to be a very busy one for Teacher and myself. I am studying Arithmetic, English Literature, English History, German, Latin, and advanced geography; there is a great deal of preparatory reading required, and, as few of the books are in raised print, poor Teacher has to spell them all out to me; and that means hard work.

You must tell Mr. Howells when you see him, that we are living in his house....

TO MRS. WILLIAM THAW  
37 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, Mass.,  
December 2, 1896.

...It takes me a long time to prepare my lessons, because I have to have every word of them spelled out in my hand. Not one of the textbooks which I am obliged to use is in raised print; so of course my work is harder than it would be if I could read my lessons over by myself. But it is harder for Teacher than it is for me because the strain on her poor eyes is so great, and I cannot help worrying about them. Sometimes it really seems as if the task which we have set ourselves were more than we can accomplish; but at other times I enjoy my work more than I can say.

It is such a delight to be with the other girls, and do everything that they do. I study Latin, German, Arithmetic and English History, all of which I enjoy except Arithmetic. I am afraid I have not a mathematical mind; for my figures always manage to get into the wrong places!...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
Cambridge, Mass., May 3, 1897.

...You know I am trying very hard to get through with the reading for the examinations in June, and this, in addition to my regular schoolwork keeps me awfully busy. But Johnson, and "The Plague" and everything else must wait a few minutes this afternoon, while I say, thank you, my dear Mrs. Hutton....

...What a splendid time we had at the "Players' Club." I always thought clubs were dull, smoky places, where men talked politics, and told endless stories, all about themselves and their wonderful exploits: but now I see, I must have been quite wrong....

TO MR. JOHN HITZ  
Wrentham, Mass. July 9, 1897.

...Teacher and I are going to spend the summer at Wrentham, Mass. with our friends, the Chamberlins. I think you remember Mr. Chamberlin, the "Listener" in the Boston Transcript. They are

dear, kind people....

But I know you want to hear about my examinations. I know that you will be glad to hear that I passed all of them successfully. The subjects I offered were elementary and advanced German, French, Latin, English, and Greek and Roman History. It seems almost too good to be true, does it not? All the time I was preparing for the great ordeal, I could not suppress an inward fear and trembling lest I should fail, and now it is an unspeakable relief to know that I have passed the examinations with credit. But what I consider my crown of success is the happiness and pleasure that my victory has brought dear Teacher. Indeed, I feel that the success is hers more than mine; for she is my constant inspiration....

At the end of September Miss Sullivan and Miss Keller returned to the Cambridge School, where they remained until early in December. Then the interference of Mr. Gilman resulted in Mrs. Keller's withdrawing Miss Helen and her sister, Miss Mildred, from the school. Miss Sullivan and her pupil went to Wrentham, where they worked under Mr. Merton S. Keith, an enthusiastic and skilful teacher.

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
Wrentham, February 20, 1898.

...I resumed my studies soon after your departure, and in a very little while we were working as merrily as if the dreadful experience of a month ago had been but a dream. I cannot tell you how much I enjoy the country. It is so fresh, and peaceful and free! I do think I could work all day long without feeling tired if they would let me. There are so many pleasant things to do—not always very easy things,—much of my work in Algebra and Geometry is hard: but I love it all, especially Greek. Just think, I shall soon finish my grammar! Then comes the "Iliad." What an inexpressible joy it will be to read about Achilles, and Ulysses, and Andromache and Athene, and the rest of my old friends in their own glorious language! I think Greek is the loveliest language that I know anything about. If it is true that the violin is the most perfect of musical instruments, then Greek is the violin of human thought.

We have had some splendid tobogganing this month. Every morning, before lesson-time, we all go out to the steep hill on the northern shore of the lake near the house, and coast for an hour or so. Some one balances the toboggan on the very crest of the hill, while we get on, and when we are ready, off we dash down the side of the hill in a headlong rush, and, leaping a projection, plunge into a snow-drift and go swimming far across the pond at a tremendous rate!...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
[Wrentham] April 12, 1898.

...I am glad Mr. Keith is so well pleased with my progress. It is true that Algebra and Geometry are growing easier all the time, especially algebra; and I have just received books in raised print which will greatly facilitate my work....

I find I get on faster, and do better work with Mr. Keith than I did in the classes at the Cambridge School, and I think it was well that I gave up that kind of work. At any rate, I have not been idle since I left school; I have accomplished more, and been

*happier than I could have been there....*

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON

*[Wrentham] May 29, 1898.*

*...My work goes on bravely. Each day is filled to the brim with hard study; for I am anxious to accomplish as much as possible before I put away my books for the summer vacation. You will be pleased to hear that I did three problems in Geometry yesterday without assistance. Mr. Keith and Teacher were quite enthusiastic over the achievement, and I must confess, I felt somewhat elated myself. Now I feel as if I should succeed in doing something in mathematics, although I cannot see why it is so very important to know that the lines drawn from the extremities of the base of an isosceles triangle to the middle points of the opposite sides are equal! The knowledge doesn't make life any sweeter or happier, does it? On the other hand, when we learn a new word, it is the key to untold treasures....*

TO CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

*Wrentham, Mass., June 7, 1898.*

*I am afraid you will conclude that I am not very anxious for a tandem after all, since I have let nearly a week pass without answering your letter in regard to the kind of wheel I should like. But really, I have been so constantly occupied with my studies since we returned from New York, that I have not had time even to think of the fun it would be to have a bicycle! You see, I am anxious to accomplish as much as possible before the long summer vacation begins. I am glad, though, that it is nearly time to put away my books; for the sunshine and flowers, and the lovely lake in front of our house are doing their best to tempt me away from my Greek and Mathematics, especially from the latter! I am sure the daisies and buttercups have as little use for the science of Geometry as I, in spite of the fact that they so beautifully illustrate its principles.*

*But bless me, I mustn't forget the tandem! The truth is, I know very little about bicycles. I have only ridden a "sociable," which is very different from the ordinary tandem. The "sociable" is safer, perhaps, than the tandem; but it is very heavy and awkward, and has a way of taking up the greater part of the road. Besides, I have been told that "sociables" cost more than other kinds of bicycles. My teacher and other friends think I could ride a Columbia tandem in the country with perfect safety. They also think your suggestion about a fixed handlebar a good one. I ride with a divided skirt, and so does my teacher; but it would be easier for her to mount a man's wheel than for me; so, if it could be arranged to have the ladies' seat behind, I think it would be better....*

TO MISS CAROLINE DERBY

*Wrentham, September 11, 1898.*

*...I am out of doors all the time, rowing, swimming, riding and doing a multitude of other pleasant things. This morning I rode over twelve miles on my tandem! I rode on a rough road, and fell off three or four times, and am now awfully lame! But the weather and the scenery were so beautiful, and it was such fun to go scooting over the smoother part of the road, I didn't mind the mishaps in the least.*

*I have really learned to swim and dive—after a fashion! I can swim a little under water, and do almost anything I like, without fear of getting drowned! Isn't that fine? It is almost no effort*

for me to row around the lake, no matter how heavy the load may be. So you can well imagine how strong and brown I am....

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
October 23, 1898.

This is the first opportunity I have had to write to you since we came here last Monday. We have been in such a whirl ever since we decided to come to Boston; it seemed as if we should never get settled. Poor Teacher has had her hands full, attending to movers, and express-men, and all sorts of people. I wish it were not such a bother to move, especially as we have to do it so often!...

...Mr. Keith comes here at half past three every day except Saturday. He says he prefers to come here for the present. I am reading the "Iliad," and the "Aeneid" and Cicero, besides doing a lot in Geometry and Algebra. The "Iliad" is beautiful with all the truth, and grace and simplicity of a wonderfully childlike people while the "Aeneid" is more stately and reserved. It is like a beautiful maiden, who always lived in a palace, surrounded by a magnificent court; while the "Iliad" is like a splendid youth, who has had the earth for his playground.

The weather has been awfully dismal all the week; but to-day is beautiful, and our room floor is flooded with sunlight. By and by we shall take a little walk in the Public Gardens. I wish the Wrentham woods were round the corner! But alas! they are not, and I shall have to content myself with a stroll in the Gardens. Somehow, after the great fields and pastures and lofty pine-groves of the country, they seem shut-in and conventional. Even the trees seem citified and self-conscious. Indeed, I doubt if they are on speaking terms with their country cousins! Do you know, I cannot help feeling sorry for these trees with all their fashionable airs? They are like the people whom they see every day, who prefer the crowded, noisy city to the quiet and freedom of the country. They do not even suspect how circumscribed their lives are. They look down pityingly on the country-folk, who have never had an opportunity "to see the great world." Oh my! if they only realized their limitations, they would flee for their lives to the woods and fields. But what nonsense is this! You will think I'm pining away for my beloved Wrentham, which is true in one sense and not in another. I do miss Red Farm and the dear ones there dreadfully; but I am not unhappy. I have Teacher and my books, and I have the certainty that something sweet and good will come to me in this great city, where human beings struggle so bravely all their lives to wring happiness from cruel circumstances. Anyway, I am glad to have my share in life, whether it be bright or sad....

TO MRS. WILLIAM THAW  
Boston, December 6th, 1898.

My teacher and I had a good laugh over the girls' frolic. How funny they must have looked in their "rough-rider" costumes, mounted upon their fiery steeds! "Slim" would describe them, if they were anything like the saw-horses I have seen. What jolly times they must have at—! I cannot help wishing sometimes that I could have some of the fun that other girls have. How quickly I should lock up all these mighty warriors, and hoary sages, and impossible heroes, who are now almost my only companions; and dance and sing and frolic like other girls! But I must not waste

*my time wishing idle wishes; and after all my ancient friends are very wise and interesting, and I usually enjoy their society very much indeed. It is only once in a great while that I feel discontented, and allow myself to wish for things I cannot hope for in this life. But, as you know, my heart is usually brimful of happiness. The thought that my dear Heavenly Father is always near, giving me abundantly of all those things, which truly enrich life and make it sweet and beautiful, makes every deprivation seem of little moment compared with the countless blessings I enjoy.*

*TO MRS. WILLIAM THAW  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
December 19th, 1898.*

*...I realize now what a selfish, greedy girl I was to ask that my cup of happiness should be filled to overflowing, without stopping to think how many other people's cups were quite empty. I feel heartily ashamed of my thoughtlessness. One of the childish illusions, which it has been hardest for me to get rid of, is that we have only to make our wishes known in order to have them granted. But I am slowly learning that there is not happiness enough in the world for everyone to have all that he wants; and it grieves me to think that I should have forgotten, even for a moment, that I already have more than my share, and that like poor little Oliver Twist I should have asked for "more."...*

*TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
12 Newberry Street, Boston.  
December 22, 1898*

*...I suppose Mr. Keith writes you the work-a-day news. If so, you know that I have finished all the geometry, and nearly all the Algebra required for the Harvard examinations, and after Christmas I shall begin a very careful review of both subjects. You will be glad to hear that I enjoy Mathematics now. Why, I can do long, complicated quadratic equations in my head quite easily, and it is great fun! I think Mr. Keith is a wonderful teacher, and I feel very grateful to him for having made me see the beauty of Mathematics. Next to my own dear teacher, he has done more than any one else to enrich and broaden my mind.*

*TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
January 17, 1899.*

*...Have you seen Kipling's "Dreaming True," or "Kitchener's School?" It is a very strong poem and set me dreaming too. Of course you have read about the "Gordon Memorial College," which the English people are to erect at Khartoum. While I was thinking over the blessings that would come to the people of Egypt through this college, and eventually to England herself, there came into my heart the strong desire that my own dear country should in a similar way convert the terrible loss of her brave sons on the "Maine" into a like blessing to the people of Cuba. Would a college at Havana not be the noblest and most enduring monument that could be raised to the brave men of the "Maine," as well as a source of infinite good to all concerned? Imagine entering the Havana harbor, and having the pier, where the "Maine" was anchored on that dreadful night, when she was so mysteriously destroyed, pointed out to you, and being told that the great, beautiful building overlooking the spot was the "Maine Memorial College," erected by the American people, and having for its*

object the education both of Cubans and Spaniards! What a glorious triumph such a monument would be of the best and highest instincts of a Christian nation! In it there would be no suggestion of hatred or revenge, nor a trace of the old-time belief that might makes right. On the other hand, it would be a pledge to the world that we intend to stand by our declaration of war, and give Cuba to the Cubans, as soon as we have fitted them to assume the duties and responsibilities of a self-governing people....

TO MR. JOHN HITZ  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
February 3, 1899.

...I had an exceedingly interesting experience last Monday. A kind friend took me over in the morning to the Boston Art Museum. She had previously obtained permission from General Loring, Supt. of the Museum, for me to touch the statues, especially those which represented my old friends in the "Iliad" and "Aeneid." Was that not lovely? While I was there, General Loring himself came in, and showed me some of the most beautiful statues, among which were the Venus of Medici, the Minerva of the Parthenon, Diana, in her hunting costume, with her hand on the quiver and a doe by her side, and the unfortunate Laocoon and his two little sons, struggling in the fearful coils of two huge serpents, and stretching their arms to the skies with heart-rending cries. I also saw Apollo Belvidere. He had just slain the Python and was standing by a great pillar of rock, extending his graceful hand in triumph over the terrible snake. Oh, he was simply beautiful! Venus entranced me. She looked as if she had just risen from the foam of the sea, and her loveliness was like a strain of heavenly music. I also saw poor Niobe with her youngest child clinging close to her while she implored the cruel goddess not to kill her last darling. I almost cried, it was all so real and tragic. General Loring kindly showed me a copy of one of the wonderful bronze doors of the Baptistery of Florence, and I felt of the graceful pillars, resting on the backs of fierce lions. So you see, I had a foretaste of the pleasure which I hope some day to have of visiting Florence. My friend said, she would sometime show me the copies of the marbles brought away by Lord Elgin from the Parthenon. But somehow, I should prefer to see the originals in the place where Genius meant them to remain, not only as a hymn of praise to the gods, but also as a monument of the glory of Greece. It really seems wrong to snatch such sacred things away from the sanctuary of the Past where they belong....

TO MR. WILLIAM WADE  
Boston, February 19th, 1899.

Why, bless you, I thought I wrote to you the day after the "Eclogues" arrived, and told you how glad I was to have them! Perhaps you never got that letter. At any rate, I thank you, dear friend, for taking such a world of trouble for me. You will be glad to hear that the books from England are coming now. I already have the seventh and eighth books of the "Aeneid" and one book of the "Iliad," all of which is most fortunate, as I have come almost to the end of my embossed text-books.

It gives me great pleasure to hear how much is being done for the deaf-blind. The more I learn of them, the more kindness I find. Why, only a little while ago people thought it quite impossible to teach the deaf-blind anything; but no sooner was it proved possible than hundreds of kind, sympathetic hearts were fired

*with the desire to help them, and now we see how many of those poor, unfortunate persons are being taught to see the beauty and reality of life. Love always finds its way to an imprisoned soul, and leads it out into the world of freedom and intelligence!*

*As to the two-handed alphabet, I think it is much easier for those who have sight than the manual alphabet; for most of the letters look like the large capitals in books; but I think when it comes to teaching a deaf-blind person to spell, the manual alphabet is much more convenient, and less conspicuous....*

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
March 5, 1899.

*...I am now sure that I shall be ready for my examinations in June. There is but one cloud in my sky at present; but that is one which casts a dark shadow over my life, and makes me very anxious at times. My teacher's eyes are no better: indeed, I think they grow more troublesome, though she is very brave and patient, and will not give up. But it is most distressing to me to feel that she is sacrificing her sight for me. I feel as if I ought to give up the idea of going to college altogether: for not all the knowledge in the world could make me happy, if obtained at such a cost. I do wish, Mrs. Hutton, you would try to persuade Teacher to take a rest, and have her eyes treated. She will not listen to me.*

*I have just had some pictures taken, and if they are good, I would like to send one to Mr. Rogers, if you think he would like to have it. I would like so much to show him in some way how deeply I appreciate all that he is doing for me, and I cannot think of anything better to do.*

*Every one here is talking about the Sargent pictures. It is a wonderful exhibition of portraits, they say. How I wish I had eyes to see them! How I should delight in their beauty and color! However, I am glad that I am not debarred from all pleasure in the pictures. I have at least the satisfaction of seeing them through the eyes of my friends, which is a real pleasure. I am so thankful that I can rejoice in the beauties, which my friends gather and put into my hands!*

*We are all so glad and thankful that Mr. Kipling did not die! I have his "Jungle-Book" in raised print, and what a splendid, refreshing book it is! I cannot help feeling as if I knew its gifted author. What a real, manly, lovable nature his must be!...*

TO DR. DAVID H. GREER  
12 Newbury Street, Boston,  
May 8, 1899.

*...Each day brings me all that I can possibly accomplish, and each night brings me rest, and the sweet thought that I am a little nearer to my goal than ever before. My Greek progresses finely. I have finished the ninth book of the "Iliad" and am just beginning the "Odyssey." I am also reading the "Aeneid" and the "Eclogues." Some of my friends tell me that I am very foolish to give so much time to Greek and Latin; but I am sure they would not think so, if they realized what a wonderful world of experience and thought Homer and Virgil have opened up to me. I think I shall enjoy the "Odyssey" most of all. The "Iliad" tells of almost nothing but war, and one sometimes wearies of the clash*

of spears and the din of battle; but the "Odyssey" tells of nobler courage—the courage of a soul sore tried, but steadfast to the end. I often wonder, as I read these splendid poems why, at the same time that Homer's songs of war fired the Greeks with valor, his songs of manly virtue did not have a stronger influence upon the spiritual life of the people. Perhaps the reason is, that thoughts truly great are like seeds cast into the human mind, and either lie there unnoticed, or are tossed about and played with, like toys, until, grown wise through suffering and experience, a race discovers and cultivates them. Then the world has advanced one step in its heavenward march.

I am working very hard just now. I intend to take my examinations in June, and there is a great deal to be done, before I shall feel ready to meet the ordeal....

You will be glad to hear that my mother, and little sister and brother are coming north to spend this summer with me. We shall all live together in a small cottage on one of the lakes at Wrentham, while my dear teacher takes a much needed rest. She has not had a vacation for twelve years, think of it, and all that time she has been the sunshine of my life. Now her eyes are troubling her a great deal, and we all think she ought to be relieved, for a while, of every care and responsibility. But we shall not be quite separated; we shall see each other every day, I hope. And, when July comes, you can think of me as rowing my dear ones around the lovely lake in the little boat you gave me, the happiest girl in the world!...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
[Boston] May 28th 1899.

...We have had a hard day. Mr. Keith was here for three hours this afternoon, pouring a torrent of Latin and Greek into my poor bewildered brain. I really believe he knows more Latin and Greek Grammar than Cicero or Homer ever dreamed of! Cicero is splendid, but his orations are very difficult to translate. I feel ashamed sometimes, when I make that eloquent man say what sounds absurd or insipid; but how is a school-girl to interpret such genius? Why, I should have to be a Cicero to talk like a Cicero!...

Linnie Haguewood is a deaf-blind girl, one of the many whom Mr. William Wade has helped. She is being educated by Miss Dora Donald who, at the beginning of her work with her pupil, was supplied by Mr. Hitz, Superintendent of the Volta Bureau, with copies of all documents relating to Miss Sullivan's work with Miss Keller.

TO MR. WILLIAM WADE  
Wrentham, Mass., June 5, 1899.

...Linnie Haguewood's letter, which you sent me some weeks ago, interested me very much. It seemed to show spontaneity and great sweetness of character. I was a good deal amused by what she said about history. I am sorry she does not enjoy it; but I too feel sometimes how dark, and mysterious and even fearful the history of old peoples, old religions and old forms of government really is.

Well, I must confess, I do not like the sign-language, and I do not think it would be of much use to the deaf-blind. I find it very difficult to follow the rapid motions made by the deaf-mutes, and besides, signs seem a great hindrance to them in

acquiring the power of using language easily and freely. Why, I find it hard to understand them sometimes when they spell on their fingers. On the whole, if they cannot be taught articulation, the manual alphabet seems the best and most convenient means of communication. At any rate, I am sure the deaf-blind cannot learn to use signs with any degree of facility.

The other day, I met a deaf Norwegian gentleman, who knows Ragnhild Kaata and her teacher very well, and we had a very interesting conversation about her. He said she was very industrious and happy. She spins, and does a great deal of fancy work, and reads, and leads a pleasant, useful life. Just think, she cannot use the manual alphabet! She reads the lips well, and if she cannot understand a phrase, her friends write it in her hand, and in this way she converses with strangers. I cannot make out anything written in my hand, so you see, Ragnhild has got ahead of me in some things. I do hope I shall see her sometime...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
Wrentham, July 29, 1899.

...I passed in all the subjects I offered, and with credit in advanced Latin.... But I must confess, I had a hard time on the second day of my examinations. They would not allow Teacher to read any of the papers to me; so the papers were copied for me in braille. This arrangement worked very well in the languages, but not nearly so well in the Mathematics. Consequently, I did not do so well as I should have done, if Teacher had been allowed to read the Algebra and Geometry to me. But you must not think I blame any one. Of course they did not realize how difficult and perplexing they were making the examinations for me. How could they—they can see and hear, and I suppose they could not understand matters from my point of view....

Thus far my summer has been sweeter than anything I can remember. My mother, and sister and little brother have been here five weeks, and our happiness knows no bounds. Not only do we enjoy being together; but we also find our little home most delightful. I do wish you could see the view of the beautiful lake from our piazza, the islands looking like little emerald peaks in the golden sunlight, and the canoes flitting here and there, like autumn leaves in the gentle breeze, and breathe in the peculiarly delicious fragrance of the woods, which comes like a murmur from an unknown clime. I cannot help wondering if it is the same fragrance that greeted the Norsemen long ago, when, according to tradition, they visited our shores—an odorous echo of many centuries of silent growth and decay in flower and tree....

TO MRS. SAMUEL RICHARD FULLER  
Wrentham, October 20, 1899.

...I suppose it is time for me to tell you something about our plans for the winter. You know it has long been my ambition to go to Radcliffe, and receive a degree, as many other girls have done; but Dean Irwin of Radcliffe, has persuaded me to take a special course for the present. She said I had already shown the world that I could do the college work, by passing all my examinations successfully, in spite of many obstacles. She showed me how very foolish it would be for me to pursue a four years' course of study at Radcliffe, simply to be like other girls, when I might better be cultivating whatever ability I had for writing. She said she did not consider a degree of any real value, but thought it was much more desirable to do something original than

*to waste one's energies only for a degree. Her arguments seemed so wise and practical, that I could not but yield. I found it hard, very hard, to give up the idea of going to college; it had been in my mind ever since I was a little girl; but there is no use doing a foolish thing, because one has wanted to do it a long time, is there?*

*But, while we were discussing plans for the winter, a suggestion which Dr. Hale had made long ago flashed across Teacher's mind—that I might take courses somewhat like those offered at Radcliffe, under the instruction of the professors in these courses. Miss Irwin seemed to have no objection to this proposal, and kindly offered to see the professors and find out if they would give me lessons. If they will be so good as to teach me and if we have money enough to do as we have planned, my studies this year will be English, English Literature of the Elizabethan period, Latin and German....*

*TO MR. JOHN HITZ  
138 Brattle St., Cambridge,  
Nov. 11, 1899.*

*...As to the braille question, I cannot tell how deeply it distresses me to hear that my statement with regard to the examinations has been doubted. Ignorance seems to be at the bottom of all these contradictions. Why, you yourself seem to think that I taught you American braille, when you do not know a single letter in the system! I could not help laughing when you said you had been writing to me in American braille—and there you were writing your letter in English braille!*

*The facts about the braille examinations are as follows:*

*How I passed my Entrance Examinations for Radcliffe College.*

*On the 29th and 30th of June, 1899, I took my examinations for Radcliffe College. The first day I had elementary Greek and advanced Latin, and the second day Geometry, Algebra and advanced Greek.*

*The college authorities would not permit Miss Sullivan to read the examination papers to me; so Mr. Eugene C. Vining, one of the instructors at the Perkins Institution for the Blind, was employed to copy the papers for me in braille. Mr. Vining was a perfect stranger to me, and could not communicate with me except by writing in braille. The Proctor also was a stranger, and did not attempt to communicate with me in any way; and, as they were both unfamiliar with my speech, they could not readily understand what I said to them.*

*However, the braille worked well enough in the languages; but when it came to Geometry and Algebra, it was different. I was sorely perplexed, and felt quite discouraged, and wasted much precious time, especially in Algebra. It is true that I am perfectly familiar with all literary braille—English, American, and New York Point; but the method of writing the various signs used in Geometry and Algebra in the three systems is very different, and two days before the examinations I knew only the English method. I had used it all through my school work, and never any other system.*

*In Geometry, my chief difficulty was, that I had always been*

accustomed to reading the propositions in Line Print, or having them spelled into my hand; and somehow, although the propositions were right before me, yet the braille confused me, and I could not fix in my mind clearly what I was reading. But, when I took up Algebra, I had a harder time still—I was terribly handicapped by my imperfect knowledge of the notation. The signs, which I had learned the day before, and which I thought I knew perfectly, confused me. Consequently my work was painfully slow, and I was obliged to read the examples over and over before I could form a clear idea what I was required to do. Indeed, I am not sure now that I read all the signs correctly, especially as I was much distressed, and found it very hard to keep my wits about me....

Now there is one more fact, which I wish to state very plainly, in regard to what Mr. Gilman wrote to you. I never received any direct instruction in the Gilman School. Miss Sullivan always sat beside me, and told me what the teachers said. I did teach Miss Hall, my teacher in Physics, how to write the American braille, but she never gave me any instruction by means of it, unless a few problems written for practice, which made me waste much precious time deciphering them, can be called instruction. Dear Frau Grote learned the manual alphabet, and used to teach me herself; but this was in private lessons, which were paid for by my friends. In the German class Miss Sullivan interpreted to me as well as she could what the teacher said.

Perhaps, if you would send a copy of this to the head of the Cambridge School, it might enlighten his mind on a few subjects, on which he seems to be in total darkness just now....

TO MISS MILDRED KELLER

138 Brattle Street, Cambridge,  
November 26, 1899.

...At last we are settled for the winter, and our work is going smoothly. Mr. Keith comes every afternoon at four o'clock, and gives me a "friendly lift" over the rough stretches of road, over which every student must go. I am studying English history, English literature, French and Latin, and by and by I shall take up German and English composition—let us groan! You know, I detest grammar as much as you do; but I suppose I must go through it if I am to write, just as we had to get ducked in the lake hundreds of times before we could swim! In French Teacher is reading "Columba" to me. It is a delightful novel, full of piquant expressions and thrilling adventures, (don't dare to blame me for using big words, since you do the same!) and, if you ever read it, I think you will enjoy it immensely. You are studying English history, aren't you. O but it's exceedingly interesting! I'm making quite a thorough study of the Elizabethan period—of the Reformation, and the Acts of Supremacy and Conformity, and the maritime discoveries, and all the big things, which the "deuce" seems to have invented to plague innocent youngsters like yourself!...

Now we have a swell winter outfit—coats, hats, gowns, flannels and all. We've just had four lovely dresses made by a French dressmaker. I have two, of which one has a black silk skirt, with a black lace net over it, and a waist of white poplin, with turquoise velvet and chiffon, and cream lace over a satin yoke. The other is woollen, and of a very pretty green. The waist is trimmed with pink and green brocaded velvet, and white lace, I think, and has double reefers on the front, tucked and trimmed

with velvet, and also a row of tiny white buttons. Teacher too has a silk dress. The skirt is black, while the waist is mostly yellow, trimmed with delicate lavender chiffon, and black velvet bows and lace. Her other dress is purple, trimmed with purple velvet, and the waist has a collar of cream lace. So you may imagine that we look quite like peacocks, only we've no trains....

A week ago yesterday there was [a] great football game between Harvard and Yale, and there was tremendous excitement here. We could hear the yells of the boys and the cheers of the lookers-on as plainly in our room as if we had been on the field. Colonel Roosevelt was there, on Harvard's side; but bless you, he wore a white sweater, and no crimson that we know of! There were about twenty-five thousand people at the game, and, when we went out, the noise was so terrific, we nearly jumped out of our skins, thinking it was the din of war, and not of a football game that we heard. But, in spite of all their wild efforts, neither side was scored, and we all laughed and said, "Oh, well now the pot can't call the kettle black!"...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
559 Madison Avenue, New York,  
January 2, 1900.

...We have been here a week now, and are going to stay with Miss Rhoades until Saturday. We are enjoying every moment of our visit, every one is so good to us. We have seen many of our old friends, and made some new ones. We dined with the Rogers last Friday, and oh, they were so kind to us! The thought of their gentle courtesy and genuine kindness brings a warm glow of joy and gratitude to my heart. I have seen Dr. Greer too. He has such a kind heart! I love him more than ever. We went to St. Bartholomew's Sunday, and I have not felt so much at home in a church since dear Bishop Brooks died. Dr. Greer read so slowly, that my teacher could tell me every word. His people must have wondered at his unusual deliberation. After the service he asked Mr. Warren, the organist to play for me. I stood in the middle of the church, where the vibrations from the great organ were strongest, and I felt the mighty waves of sound beat against me, as the great billows beat against a little ship at sea.

TO MR. JOHN HITZ  
138 Brattle Street, Cambridge,  
Feb. 3, 1900.

...My studies are more interesting than ever. In Latin, I am reading Horace's odes. Although I find them difficult to translate, yet I think they are the loveliest pieces of Latin poetry I have read or shall ever read. In French we have finished "Colomba," and I am reading "Horace" by Corneille and La Fontaine's fables, both of which are in braille. I have not gone far in either; but I know I shall enjoy the fables, they are so delightfully written, and give such good lessons in a simple and yet attractive way. I do not think I have told you that my dear teacher is reading "The Faery Queen" to me. I am afraid I find fault with the poem as much as I enjoy it. I do not care much for the allegories, indeed I often find them tiresome, and I cannot help thinking that Spenser's world of knights, paynims, fairies, dragons and all sorts of strange creatures is a somewhat grotesque and amusing world; but the poem itself is lovely and as musical as a running brook.

*I am now the proud owner of about fifteen new books, which we ordered from Louisville. Among them are "Henry Esmond," "Bacon's Essays" and extracts from "English Literature." Perhaps next week I shall have some more books, "The Tempest," "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and possibly some selections from Green's history of England. Am I not very fortunate?*

*I am afraid this letter savors too much of books—but really they make up my whole life these days, and I scarcely see or hear of anything else! I do believe I sleep on books every night! You know a student's life is of necessity somewhat circumscribed and narrow and crowds out almost everything that is not in books....*

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ACADEMIC BOARD OF RADCLIFFE COLLEGE  
138 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Mass.,  
May 5, 1900.

Dear Sir:

*As an aid to me in determining my plans for study the coming year, I apply to you for information as to the possibility of my taking the regular courses in Radcliffe College.*

*Since receiving my certificate of admission to Radcliffe last July, I have been studying with a private tutor, Horace, Aeschylus, French, German, Rhetoric, English History, English Literature and Criticism, and English composition.*

*In college I should wish to continue most, if not all of these subjects. The conditions under which I work require the presence of Miss Sullivan, who has been my teacher and companion for thirteen years, as an interpreter of oral speech and as a reader of examination papers. In college she, or possibly in some subjects some one else, would of necessity be with me in the lecture-room and at recitations. I should do all my written work on a typewriter, and if a Professor could not understand my speech, I could write out my answers to his questions and hand them to him after the recitation.*

*Is it possible for the College to accommodate itself to these unprecedented conditions, so as to enable me to pursue my studies at Radcliffe? I realize that the obstacles in the way of my receiving a college education are very great—to others they may seem insurmountable; but, dear Sir, a true soldier does not acknowledge defeat before the battle.*

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON  
38 Brattle Street, Cambridge,  
June 9, 1900.

*...I have not yet heard from the Academic Board in reply to my letter; but I sincerely hope they will answer favorably. My friends think it very strange that they should hesitate so long, especially when I have not asked them to simplify my work in the least, but only to modify it so as to meet the existing circumstances. Cornell has offered to make arrangements suited to the conditions under which I work, if I should decide to go to that college, and the University of Chicago has made a similar offer, but I am afraid if I went to any other college, it would be thought that I did not pass my examinations for Radcliffe satisfactorily....*

*In the fall Miss Keller entered Radcliffe College.*

TO MR. JOHN HITZ

14 Coolidge Ave., Cambridge,  
Nov. 26, 1900.

...-has already communicated with you in regard to her and my plan of establishing an institution for deaf and blind children. At first I was most enthusiastic in its support, and I never dreamed that any grave objections could be raised except indeed by those who are hostile to Teacher, but now, after thinking most SERIOUSLY and consulting my friends, I have decided that-'s plan is by no means feasible. In my eagerness to make it possible for deaf and blind children to have the same advantages that I have had, I quite forgot that there might be many obstacles in the way of my accomplishing anything like what-proposed.

My friends thought we might have one or two pupils in our own home, thereby securing to me the advantage of being helpful to others without any of the disadvantages of a large school. They were very kind; but I could not help feeling that they spoke more from a business than a humanitarian point of view. I am sure they did not quite understand how passionately I desire that all who are afflicted like myself shall receive their rightful inheritance of thought, knowledge and love. Still I could not shut my eyes to the force and weight of their arguments, and I saw plainly that I must abandon-'s scheme as impracticable. They also said that I ought to appoint an advisory committee to control my affairs while I am at Radcliffe. I considered this suggestion carefully, then I told Mr. Rhoades that I should be proud and glad to have wise friends to whom I could always turn for advice in all important matters. For this committee I chose six, my mother, Teacher, because she is like a mother to me, Mrs. Hutton, Mr. Rhoades, Dr. Greer and Mr. Rogers, because it is they who have supported me all these years and made it possible for me to enter college. Mrs. Hutton had already written to mother, asking her to telegraph if she was willing for me to have other advisers besides herself and Teacher. This morning we received word that mother had given her consent to this arrangement. Now it remains for me to write to Dr. Greer and Mr. Rogers....

We had a long talk with Dr. Bell. Finally he proposed a plan which delighted us all beyond words. He said that it was a gigantic blunder to attempt to found a school for deaf and blind children, because then they would lose the most precious opportunities of entering into the fuller, richer, freer life of seeing and hearing children. I had had misgivings on this point; but I could not see how we were to help it. However Mr. Bell suggested that-and all her friends who are interested in her scheme should organize an association for the promotion of the education of the deaf and blind, Teacher and myself being included of course. Under his plan they were to appoint Teacher to train others to instruct deaf and blind children in their own homes, just as she had taught me. Funds were to be raised for the teachers' lodgings and also for their salaries. At the same time Dr. Bell added that I could rest content and fight my way through Radcliffe in competition with seeing and hearing girls, while the great desire of my heart was being fulfilled. We clapped our hands and shouted;-went away beaming with pleasure, and Teacher and I felt more light of heart than we had for sometime. Of course we can do nothing just now; but the painful anxiety about my college work and the future welfare of the deaf and blind has been lifted from our minds. Do tell me what you think about Dr. Bell's suggestion. It seems most practical and wise to me; but I must know all that there is to be known about it before

*I speak or act in the matter....*

*TO MR. JOHN D. WRIGHT*

*Cambridge, December 9, 1900.*

*Do you think me a villain and—I can't think of a word bad enough to express your opinion of me, unless indeed horse-thief will answer the purpose. Tell me truly, do you think me as bad as that? I hope not; for I have thought many letters to you which never got on paper, and I am delighted to get your good letter, yes, I really was, and I intended to answer it immediately, but the days slip by unnoticed when one is busy, and I have been VERY busy this fall. You must believe that. Radcliffe girls are always up to their ears in work. If you doubt it, you'd better come and see for yourself.*

*Yes, I am taking the regular college course for a degree. When I am a B.A., I suppose you will not dare call me a villain! I am studying English—Sophomore English, if you please, (though I can't see that it is different from just plain English) German, French and History. I'm enjoying my work even more than I expected to, which is another way of saying that I'm glad I came. It is hard, very hard at times; but it hasn't swamped me yet. No, I am not studying Mathematics, or Greek or Latin either. The courses at Radcliffe are elective, only certain courses in English are prescribed. I passed off my English and advanced French before I entered college, and I choose the courses I like best. I don't however intend to give up Latin and Greek entirely. Perhaps I shall take up these studies later; but I've said goodbye to Mathematics forever, and I assure you, I was delighted to see the last of those horrid goblins! I hope to obtain my degree in four years; but I'm not very particular about that. There's no great hurry, and I want to get as much as possible out of my studies. Many of my friends would be well pleased if I would take two or even one course a year, but I rather object to spending the rest of my life in college....*

*TO MR. WILLIAM WADE*

*14 Coolidge Avenue, Cambridge,  
December 9, 1900.*

*...Since you are so much interested in the deaf and blind, I will begin by telling you of several cases I have come across lately. Last October I heard of an unusually bright little girl in Texas. Her name is Ruby Rice, and she is thirteen years old, I think. She has never been taught; but they say she can sew and likes to help others in this sort of work. Her sense of smell is wonderful. Why, when she enters a store, she will go straight to the showcases, and she can also distinguish her own things. Her parents are very anxious indeed to find a teacher for her. They have also written to Mr. Hitz about her.*

*I also know a child at the Institution for the Deaf in Mississippi. Her name is Maud Scott, and she is six years old. Miss Watkins, the lady who has charge of her wrote me a most interesting letter. She said that Maud was born deaf and lost her sight when she was only three months old, and that when she went to the Institution a few weeks ago, she was quite helpless. She could not even walk and had very little use of her hands. When they tried to teach her to string beads, her little hands fell to her side. Evidently her sense of touch has not been developed, and as yet she can walk only when she holds some one's hand; but she seems to be an exceedingly bright child. Miss Watkins adds*

that she is very pretty. I have written to her that when Maud learns to read, I shall have many stories to send her. The dear, sweet little girl, it makes my heart ache to think how utterly she is cut off from all that is good and desirable in life. But Miss Watkins seems to be just the kind of teacher she needs.

I was in New York not long ago and I saw Miss Rhoades, who told me that she had seen Katie McGirr. She said the poor young girl talked and acted exactly like a little child. Katie played with Miss Rhoades's rings and took them away, saying with a merry laugh, "You shall not have them again!" She could only understand Miss Rhoades when she talked about the simplest things. The latter wished to send her some books; but she could not find anything simple enough for her! She said Katie was very sweet indeed, but sadly in need of proper instruction. I was much surprised to hear all this; for I judged from your letters that Katie was a very precocious girl....

A few days ago I met Tommy Stringer in the railroad station at Wrentham. He is a great, strong boy now, and he will soon need a man to take care of him; he is really too big for a lady to manage. He goes to the public school, I hear, and his progress is astonishing, they say; but it doesn't show as yet in his conversation, which is limited to "Yes" and "No."...

TO MR. CHARLES T. COPELAND

December 20, 1900.

My dear Mr. Copeland;

I venture to write to you because I am afraid that if I do not explain why I have stopped writing themes, you will think I have become discouraged, or perhaps that to escape criticism I have beat a cowardly retreat from your class. Please do not think either of these very unpleasant thoughts. I am not discouraged, nor am I afraid. I am confident that I could go on writing themes like those I have written, and I suppose I should get through the course with fairly good marks; but this sort of literary patch-work has lost all interest for me. I have never been satisfied with my work; but I never knew what my difficulty was until you pointed it out to me. When I came to your class last October, I was trying with all my might to be like everybody else, to forget as entirely as possible my limitations and peculiar environment. Now, however, I see the folly of attempting to hitch one's wagon to a star with harness that does not belong to it.

I have always accepted other peoples experiences and observations as a matter of course. It never occurred to me that it might be worth while to make my own observations and describe the experiences peculiarly my own. Henceforth I am resolved to be myself, to live my own life and write my own thoughts when I have any. When I have written something that seems to be fresh and spontaneous and worthy of your criticisms, I will bring it to you, if I may, and if you think it good, I shall be happy; but if your verdict is unfavorable, I shall try again and yet again until I have succeeded in pleasing you...

TO MRS. LAURENCE HUTTON

14 Coolidge Avenue, Cambridge,

December 27, 1900.

...So you read about our class luncheon in the papers? How in the world do the papers find out everything, I wonder. I am sure no

reporter was present. I had a splendid time; the toasts and speeches were great fun. I only spoke a few words, as I did not know I was expected to speak until a few minutes before I was called upon. I think I wrote you that I had been elected Vice-President of the Freshman Class of Radcliffe.

Did I tell you in my last letter that I had a new dress, a real party dress with low neck and short sleeves and quite a train? It is pale blue, trimmed with chiffon of the same color. I have worn it only once, but then I felt that Solomon in all his glory was not to be compared with me! Anyway, he certainly never had a dress like mine!...

A gentleman in Philadelphia has just written to my teacher about a deaf and blind child in Paris, whose parents are Poles. The mother is a physician and a brilliant woman, he says. This little boy could speak two or three languages before he lost his hearing through sickness, and he is now only about five years old. Poor little fellow, I wish I could do something for him; but he is so young, my teacher thinks it would be too bad to separate him from his mother. I have had a letter from Mrs. Thaw with regard to the possibility of doing something for these children. Dr. Bell thinks the present census will show that there are more than a thousand in the United States alone [The number of deaf-blind young enough to be benefited by education is not so large as this; but the education of this class of defectives has been neglected.]; and Mrs. Thaw thinks if all my friends were to unite their efforts, "it would be an easy matter to establish at the beginning of this new century a new line upon which mercy might travel," and the rescue of these unfortunate children could be accomplished....

TO MR. WILLIAM WADE

Cambridge, February 2, 1901.

...By the way, have you any specimens of English braille especially printed for those who have lost their sight late in life or have fingers hardened by long toil, so that their touch is less sensitive than that of other blind people? I read an account of such a system in one of my English magazines, and I am anxious to know more about it. If it is as efficient as they say, I see no reason why English braille should not be adopted by the blind of all countries. Why, it is the print that can be most readily adapted to many different languages. Even Greek can be embossed in it, as you know. Then, too, it will be rendered still more efficient by the "interpointing system," which will save an immense amount of space and paper. There is nothing more absurd, I think, than to have five or six different prints for the blind....

This letter was written in response to a tentative offer from the editor of *The Great Round World* to have the magazine published in raised type for the blind, if enough were willing to subscribe. It is evident that the blind should have a good magazine, not a special magazine for the blind, but one of our best monthlies, printed in embossed letters. The blind alone could not support it, but it would not take very much money to make up the additional expense.

To THE GREAT ROUND WORLD

Cambridge, Feb. 16, 1901.

The Great Round World,  
New York City.

*Gentlemen: I have only to-day found time to reply to your interesting letter. A little bird had already sung the good news in my ear; but it was doubly pleasant to have it straight from you.*

*It would be splendid to have The Great Round World printed in "language that can be felt." I doubt if any one who enjoys the wondrous privilege of seeing can have any conception of the boon such a publication as you contemplate would be to the sightless. To be able to read for one's self what is being willed, thought and done in the world—the world in whose joys and sorrows, failures and successes one feels the keenest interest—that would indeed be a happiness too deep for words. I trust that the effort of The Great Round World to bring light to those who sit in darkness will receive the encouragement and support it so richly deserves.*

*I doubt, however, if the number of subscribers to an embossed edition of The Great Round World would ever be large; for I am told that the blind as a class are poor. But why should not the friends of the blind assist The Great Round World, if necessary? Surely there are hearts and hands ever ready to make it possible for generous intentions to be wrought into noble deeds.*

*Wishing you godspeed in an undertaking that is very dear to my heart, I am, etc.*

*TO MISS NINA RHOADES*

*Cambridge, Sept. 25, 1901.*

*...We remained in Halifax until about the middle of August.... Day after day the Harbor, the warships, and the park kept us busy thinking and feeling and enjoying.... When the Indiana visited Halifax, we were invited to go on board, and she sent her own launch for us. I touched the immense cannon, read with my fingers several of the names of the Spanish ships that were captured at Santiago, and felt the places where she had been pierced with shells. The Indiana was the largest and finest ship in the Harbor, and we felt very proud of her.*

*After we left Halifax, we visited Dr. Bell at Cape Breton. He has a charming, romantic house on a mountain called Beinn Bhreagh, which overlooks the Bras d'Or Lake....*

*Dr. Bell told me many interesting things about his work. He had just constructed a boat that could be propelled by a kite with the wind in its favor, and one day he tried experiments to see if he could steer the kite against the wind. I was there and really helped him fly the kites. On one of them I noticed that the strings were of wire, and having had some experience in bead work, I said I thought they would break. Dr. Bell said "No!" with great confidence, and the kite was sent up. It began to pull and tug, and lo, the wires broke, and off went the great red dragon, and poor Dr. Bell stood looking forlornly after it. After that he asked me if the strings were all right and changed them at once when I answered in the negative. Altogether we had great fun....*

*TO DR. EDWARD EVERETT HALE [Read by Dr. Hale at the celebration of the centenary of Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, at Tremont Temple, Boston, Nov. 11, 1901.]*

*Cambridge, Nov. 10, 1901.*

*My teacher and I expect to be present at the meeting tomorrow in*

commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of Dr. Howe's birth; but I very much doubt if we shall have an opportunity to speak with you; so I am writing now to tell you how delighted I am that you are to speak at the meeting, because I feel that you, better than any one I know will express the heartfelt gratitude of those who owe their education, their opportunities, their happiness to him who opened the eyes of the blind and gave the dumb lip language.

Sitting here in my study, surrounded by my books, enjoying the sweet and intimate companionship of the great and the wise, I am trying to realize what my life might have been, if Dr. Howe had failed in the great task God gave him to perform. If he had not taken upon himself the responsibility of Laura Bridgman's education and led her out of the pit of Acheron back to her human inheritance, should I be a sophomore at Radcliffe College to-day—who can say? But it is idle to speculate about what might have been in connection with Dr. Howe's great achievement.

I think only those who have escaped that death-in-life existence, from which Laura Bridgman was rescued, can realize how isolated, how shrouded in darkness, how cramped by its own impotence is a soul without thought or faith or hope. Words are powerless to describe the desolation of that prison-house, or the joy of the soul that is delivered out of its captivity. When we compare the needs and helplessness of the blind before Dr. Howe began his work, with their present usefulness and independence, we realize that great things have been done in our midst. What if physical conditions have built up high walls about us? Thanks to our friend and helper, our world lies upward; the length and breadth and sweep of the heavens are ours!

It is pleasant to think that Dr. Howe's noble deeds will receive their due tribute of affection and gratitude, in the city, which was the scene of his great labors and splendid victories for humanity.

With kind greetings, in which my teacher joins me, I am  
Affectionately your friend,  
HELEN KELLER.

TO THE HON. GEORGE FRISBIE HOAR  
Cambridge, Mass., November 25, 1901.

My Dear Senator Hoar:—

I am glad you liked my letter about Dr. Howe. It was written out of my heart, and perhaps that is why it met a sympathetic response in other hearts. I will ask Dr. Hale to lend me the letter, so that I can make a copy of it for you.

You see, I use a typewriter—it is my right hand man, so to speak. Without it I do not see how I could go to college. I write all my themes and examinations on it, even Greek. Indeed, it has only one drawback, and that probably is regarded as an advantage by the professors; it is that one's mistakes may be detected at a glance; for there is no chance to hide them in illegible writing.

I know you will be amused when I tell you that I am deeply interested in politics. I like to have the papers read to me, and I try to understand the great questions of the day; but I am afraid my knowledge is very unstable; for I change my opinions with every new book I read. I used to think that when I studied

*Civil Government and Economics, all my difficult  
perplexities would blossom into beautiful certainty.  
I find that there are more tares than wheat in  
fields of knowledge....*