

March 31st 1864—

Norwich University, Norwich VT.

Dear Mother,

I describe for you the gaieties of our classic hades -- When I arrived here I was overcome with sleep, having tasted but little of it for several nights. I looked forward to sleep with pleasure but didn't get it -- the night of my advent was marked by the event of the season, my landlord Smith gave a grand entertainment at which figured the elite from Norwich, Hanover and Lyme. I refused at first to join the gay and festive, but a deputation of damsels charged my door, broke through all smiling, blushing and giggling, and I instantly surrendered. As wagon load after wagon load arrived filled with the beauty of Vermont and New Hampshire, my firmness gave way entirely and I left for the grand saloon, and there mingled freely. At least four of the girls were very pretty. 2 of them asked me to come and see them -- and I asked myself to go see the other two -- the rest I didn't notice -- though one asked me to ride 7 miles to see her, hinting that she had 4 more sisters and all of the same sort. Presently courtesies and courtly amusements begin -- consisting principally in taking a girl by both hands, and pulling her as hard as you can through the house from the front door to the back and then chassee back again -- And then supper, oysters, ice cream, pound cake and pop corn -- the pop corn is chucked all over the house and the girls and boys reclining softly on staircase eat it 'cum grano salis' as it pops about. After supper I hold a levee in my room. I get all all the pretty girls in here, having just enough beaux to keep them, and then fly from flower to flower, flirting to my heart's content. And now flirting gets fast and furious, the young folks are decidedly merry, handkerchiefs are stolen by one sex from the other, cadets' pockets are filled with saucers and the brass buttons are eliminated or merely amputated and pocketed. One damsel talks French with me she is a minister's daughter, another talks Spanish with me and gets decidedly the best of me, as I can only say "Si Signorita and No Signorita". She is a doctor's daughter. One young lady is very highly educated and very well dressed and behaved. I talk with her most of the evening and inquire who she is -- she is the tin man's daughter. Then I think "Glory and Honor" to New England where the children of the poorest and the humblest are as free to partake of the blessings of education as those who in other sections are able to pay for it, and yet so often neglect to obtain it -- What a contrast in the South.

But I have no time to write more now as I must prepare my lecture for this afternoon --

So Good bye,
Your aff. Son
Albert H. Gallatin