

1860

Middleton Hospital
Oct. 9th No. 4. Tuesday night

My dear Jane (Cousin)

AL 2907
Thanks for your letter, I had not looked for one while you were in the whirl of the Glasgow week. Miss Levin told me of you from day to day. I missed most of the printed reports, so that when you come home any private news of your doings will be very interesting. There is a great deal to tell you anew my plans & present doings. I must try & put it into some regular form & order. In the first place, I am now on night duty, this is the 1st night, & I am a medical ward with a good many helpless patients. It is somewhat distracting to writing or reading to the watchful nurse strongly upon one. I am surrounded by the fire, with screens round & gas light within, but of course I must listen & go round the ward pretty often & several ~~are~~ patients cannot sleep & yet I do not like to try to amuse them at the risk of disturbing those who could sleep. I have had some difficulty in persuading Mrs. Farrow to let me take this part, but I am sure I shall learn a great deal from it. The fact of having the sole care teaches one so much. When the nurses are present they will not let me do anything at all difficult. I have been to bed & asleep for some hours this afternoon to prep. for it, I mean to keep perfectly vigorous, if possible.

Perhaps you know from my letter to Emily that I intended to see Mr. De Morgan, the Treasurer to the college, & request to be allowed to pay the fees for surgical practice and for one or two other things that I thought could be entered upon at once. I did not like taking gratis what the students have to buy, especially as in the surgery I really do get more to do than they do. Mr. De Morgan met me last Monday & we went into the question. I had chosen to consult him rather than Mr. Marshall, Dean & has equal power, as I knew the latter would keep me & Mr. De Morgan might be brought round by personal influence. The result was not quite as satisfactory as I could have wished, but there is a fair proportion of favorable ~~results~~ things to tell you. He would not allow me to pay any fees, as that would be recognizing me partially as a student but I may make a donation to the hospital & stay through the winter learning all I can as an amateur. I may also continue in the surgery as long as I like & attend the house doctors in their rounds, & go to operations & have the run of the house at present. The Board has also given me the temporary use of a very pleasant room in which I can read & prep my things. This is a great comfort & will save no end of time. Mr. De Morgan said that the apothecary could take me as a pupil, if he were to do so, as this was not necessarily included in the

college course though most students were glad to study dispensing with him. I thought this would suit me very well, as it would take the place of the nursing work as an excuse for coming into the hospital constantly. I mean to spend more time in regular medical reading as soon as the 3 months morning is over, & shall then only attend the sister occasionally when they have any specially interesting or difficult case. As soon as Mr. De Morgan left, I saw Mr. Platt the apothecary, & found him very willing to take me, so I have settled to go to him for 3 or 4 hours daily for 6 months, beginning in a fortnight's time. He recommends me to get a Latin Pharmacopoeia & study it well while at work with him. It is something to have this footing in even one department, though Mr. De Morgan was very discouraging about the ultimate chance of getting into the college. He said it was impossible, but would not assign any grounds for such an opinion except that a lady's presence at lectures would distract the other students' attention. All that he said against it was as frivolous as this is, & on the whole I did not feel hopeful about ever bringing him round, he was too much inclined to treat the subject with amused contempt. He thinks all the London colleges will refuse to admit me, & that I might as well go to America at once. I shall use every effort however to get the

Education in England and in the regular way though
I believe much may be done irregularly. Mr. De M.
said that I could learn quite as much chemistry
by reading & attending public lectures, such as those
at the Royal Institution, as I should from the
college course. As chemistry is one of the 1st year's
subjects I thought of beginning some reading upon it
at once, and I have asked Miss Ellen Drewry to
be a fellow student. Her brain would help mine
very much, and if she could afford the time it would
be very pleasant. She is coming to see me & talk it over
some day soon. I shall do the dissecting work in my
~~own~~ ^{own} way, to spare Louie's nerves & myself the trouble
of carrying the pieces to & from - I am glad you think
Gerald improved. I never did see that he was particularly
backward. Some children are very quick but the average
is not very much before him I think. Louie & James are
still at St. A. St. busy with their new house. Getting
furniture is a rather longer business than one w^o think.
We shall not go to Manchester Sept till the end of the month.
Letters have been received from Kate & Susan. They had
reached Madras & were enjoying a week's stay there
before going on to Calcutta. They wrote in excellent
spirits & had had a very pleasant & quiet voyage.
Do not write till you are more rested. I am afraid
the Sunderland visit will not strengthen you. Love
Louie & Emily. Ever yours E. Cavette