

Alumnae News

324 Wait Avenue, Ithaca, N. Y.
February 6, 1925.

Dear Alumna: Last year, when the Alumnae column in the Twig occasionally was absent because of lack of material, I vowed to myself that if I were away, I should certainly write. Hence this letter.

My address probably explains my occupation this year. When one of my neighbors heard that I was going to study again, he said, "So you are going to school again. The more you study, the worse it gets." I am still meditating on what he meant.

I had heard so much of Cornell from Mary Steele and Carmen Rogers that I was sure I should have to be disappointed, but it is quite as wonderful as they say. The campus is immense, and is beautiful almost beyond belief. It was too big the first few days in September, for I continually got lost. It was at least a week before I could go from the house to the library and to Domecon, (short for the Domestic Economy Cafeteria, where I usually eat), without fear of getting lost. Just now the campus is especially beautiful, for there is a deep snow. People have estimated it from fifteen to twenty inches, and it is still falling. This is the third real snow we have had. It isn't a real one here, they say, unless it is ten inches deep. The ground has been white since right after Christmas, and they tell me it probably will be till the last of April. Right after a snow the big statue of Ezra Cornell looks like a Ku Klucker, after a day or two the snow melts from his head, and he wears a huge Elizabethan ruff. Once the thermometer has gone down to eight below zero, and several times it has been to zero. But it doesn't seem terribly cold until the wind blows. I think Æolus must have left all the winds in Ithaca. I wish some of the more venturesome of you were here to try the skating, tobogganing, and skiing. They sound fascinating, but so far I have watched them from a safe distance.

Graduate work is most absorbing. I'm majoring in Old and Middle English, and minoring in Elizabethan literature. I am quite as enthusiastic about Professor Cooper as Miss Harris is, and about Professor Adams as May Steele or Carmen Rogers. I thought it was pretty hard to be the first person from Meredith to work in English at Columbia, but it is worse to have to follow such people as Mary Steele, Carmen Rogers, French Haynes, and Bertha Carroll. I can't possibly live up to reputations so good as theirs.

I used to tell the Freshmen that it was much harder to teach than to study. I still stick to that opinion except on Mondays, when I have two long papers and Old English Composition every week that comes. Then I have my doubts. It would probably rejoice the Sophomores' hearts to know how I scramble for books on reserve. It is interesting and sometimes a bit disconcerting to put one's own precepts of the year before into practice.

Examinations are just over here. Most of the graduate students do not have them, but there was much excitement among the undergraduates. They have a most forceful expression here for failing, "busting out," they call it. There is a Freshman house next door, which one of my friends chaperones, and I hear them discussing the possibilities with very long faces.

I am living in the Graduate Women's house, not so formal a place as it sounds, for there are only eleven of

us here. We are pretty well scattered in departments, three in English, two in History, two in French, two in Physics, one in Education, and one in Architecture. The house is the center for the Graduate Women's Club, which holds its meetings, and has its teas here. So we have a chance to meet some of the other graduate women, who live off the campus. There are between eighty and a hundred graduate women at Cornell. Two of them have each an A.B., M.A., M.S., and a Ph.D., and are starting this year on

first year medical work. One of these has also eight Persian cats, which of course interests me even more than the letters after her name.

I wish very much that some of you were up here too, and I hope that next year several of you will be. It makes me quite envious to hear Vassar girls exchange experiences about Vassar, Smith girls about Smith, and all the others, and not have a single person with whom I can reminisce about Meredith. With very best wishes,

MARY LYNCH JOHNSON.

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