

Sunday, Feb. 9, 1941

Dear Mother and Daddy,

Didn't you get my letter last week? I wrote a week ago Saturday. What's the matter with these mails? There used to be overnight service when I was writing to Mary Lou last year. I try to write Sun. night so it goes out Mon. morning. Last time I waited for my Physics grade.

Tonight I had a very nice time. He took me out to dinner, if you please, a show, and more food after that. All of which helps my expenses. I try to get along without Sun. supper but I usually get awfully hungry and give in and eat. But it counts up. I'm pretty glad to see the middle of February come around because I had to charge my gym shorts - \$2:00 - they're regulation and can't be had for any lower but I'm getting along without the white shirt that we're supposed to have. I also have to rent golf sticks for \$.75 and buy my second Psychology book for \$2.78. So my next month's allowance is all shot already and I wanted to save about \$2.00 every month. And I just shot my last stockings.

I'm not worried about my work anymore but I do wonder about Virginia's future. She's flunking nearly everything - even what she's repeating - at mid-term. And she doesn't seem to realize what's going on. She's such a scatter-brain. She writes a letter home every night to her parents - 12-14 page affairs - wastes the early evening hours doing it and then settles down to study about 10:45 until 2:30. That time is spent staring at her books too tired to concentrate and getting all steamed up because she can't "get it." She forgets to go to classes, she sails half-a-beach part of a building before she realize she has a class there. Every time I've gone into her room lately she's been writing a letter. She starts doing a mammoth washing at 10:30 when she's supposed to be in her room & then gets mad if they catch her. She's a devout catholic and believes all their teachings implicitly. She thinks that if she can't learn anything she can say her prayers and it will all of a sudden com to her. So she spends her study time worrying because it doesn't come to her and then goes to bed and prays and expects to wake up knowing a whole Chem. Course. Before a big test she'll waste time combing her hair, etc. Then all of a sudden come to that she has a test and start cramming desperately ten minutes before she has to leave. Then before going off she'll come in and groan "oh, kids, pray for me" Every time she does it. Well, I believe in the power of prayer but enough is enough. The lord won't give us anything we don't work for. He gave us the way and means of doing things and its sacrilegious to sit around and expect him to just hand your life down on a golden platter and its also sacrilegious not to see what he's given you. Every time I start one of these "Dear Lord, please do it" prayers I can hear him say just as tho' he were talking to me, "Do it yourself, my child. I'll help you but its your life and we want to see what you can do with it. I'll give you the strength and stamina and will-power but you've got to use them."

The trouble with Virginia is that she's an only child and she makes that excuse for all her faults. She rationalizes her way out of every situation in which she suspects she might be wrong. She can't think for herself. Her parents baby her. She writes home every little emotion she's felt all day long and fills ten or 14 pages on how worried she is and what a struggle she's having and

how hard it is and how desperately hard she's working – and she isn't. I've never yet seen her spend an hour in good hard concentration but she thinks she's working and when we point out that maybe if she didn't write so many letter or at least saved them until late when she was tired & studied earlier when she was fresh, it'd be easier to concentrate. But she takes refuge in rationalizing or says "But I don't write letters!!" When we've kept actual count. So she thinks she can pray her way out of everything. And the pay-off came a while ago when her folks want to buy her a fur coat. "because she loves clothes so." If she flunks out of college, she'll still get her fur coat "because she loves clothes so." And if she somehow doesn't she'll get it as a reward.

I guess I must sound pretty sour about this. Its 11:30 and I'm tired. She's a good kid and I like her but she still drives me crazy sometimes. Thank heaven I don't have to study with her. Dorothy is my room mate and she's a good worker. I try not to let Richter bother me but she is so dense that she just wears us all out. We three share the same feeling.

Eve Curie is coming Wednesday. I can hardly wait to hear her. She will speak on "(?) and the Woman" and it will partly, of course, concern her mother's life. I will try to take some good notes and write you all about it.

So for this year I've had 118 inches printed in the Student. And what is even better – a senior girl I've been working for, said to me last week, "I've been hearing some pretty fine things about you. They tell me you're a very willing worker and that counts an awful lot around here." So the word is getting around and that means a lot. Right now I have two good future stories lined up. One is on the history of on of the oldest buildings on the campus. Its now the YM&YW headquarters and a dorm for about 50 men.

What thrills me about going-away-to-college is the wide scope of experiences. I have ideas I'm developing and I'm going to make them work. It does something to me, that feeling that I can think up ideas that are good and can put them down on paper and see them printed for people to read. Its hard work but it (?) is wonderful.

I'm getting a little bit homesick I'd sure love to get home for spring vacation but I support its out of the question. Its expensive and I dread the long trip back and forth but I miss you an awful lot and would like to see you. Is there any change of your driving down? That's around March 19. Or during your vacation?

Its late so I must stop. Will you send me some beef bouillon cubes in my next bag? I've decided that instead of eating "stuff" I'm going to dissolve on of those in hot water every night. Good idea?

And Mother – could you talk to Mrs. [Willcosses?] and ask her what to do about my hair and face? My complexion is terrible! No pimples but just cloudy and dirty. And my hair - a lot of dandruff really bad – split ends – very oily. It bothers me.

Good night now – Got any more special delivery stamps?

All my love,

Virginia xxxxxx