I am in despair my dear Theodora! it rains, rains rains, all the time! & today we have been counting upon, as the day on which we were to have our last sail—for Johnny leaves tomorrow for Boston, on his way to Lenox on his way to New York, on his way to Europe! & it rains harder than it ever has. Well, its fortunate that I'm of a contented disposition, I think I am, & disappointments do not make me utterly wretched, but really, is not it too bad? Did you think you were never to hear from me again? I began to think you never would. I have enjoyed a great deal since I have been here, in spite of the horrid weather we have had all the time. Cousin Edward, fortunately knowing my indifference to rain, took me a lovely drive the other day in an open wagon, no umbrella, & a delicious Scotch mist. Kate had a cold & could not go so we took Carrie Hunter as ballast, it was a double seated thing—now I suppose you will go & write her a note telling her that's why we asked her. Had a delightful drive round the new road to Batman's. When did I write you last, & what did I tell you? I can't remember. Did I tell you that Cousin Edward had given me a most elegant dinner party? & also that we had been there to lunch. He certainly does know how to entertain, At both entertainments a profusion of exquisite flowers—a bouquet at every plate—(besides a magnificent one in the middle of the table at the dinner). I hope Mamma has kept my letters for I have written all about every thing & you will like to read them when you come, they will help me, you know, when I "begin at the beginning"—when are you coming? not till I get home I hope. I don't exactly know when that will be—but soon I think. My Aunt Lizetta is with us, you know, & I never could lose the whole of her visit. And now about your dress, which I dare say you have made by this time, mine has a deep ruffle round the bottom not very full 12 in wide, & on that a narrow ruffl[e put on with a cord, not very full—not an eighth wide—then at the top of the wide ruffle is one gathered in the middle, about as wide as the bottom one. The over skirt has a fold of velvet, a fold of silk, & a roll of velvet—mourning folds, you know, the waist small basque in front & partition cut up the middle, this shape—these blots down are supposed to be plaits—all trimmed round with folds, folds also going round the neck & down the front, either side the buttons, as I usually have my dresses trimmed—malta lace also & on the sleeves which are coat, rounded & open nearly to the elbow—lace & folds going up the opening & finishing in a black velvet bow behind also, "both before & behind"—how do you like it.
You can have yours made so if you like & we’ll be twins—
or would you rather be twin with Bessie Winthrop? She
has a black silk street dress made perfectly plain skirt
with three rows of black velvet—cross way velvet—little
over half a finger wide—not quite the same width apart
upper skirt one row of velvet & frimp—it is very pretty &
very little work, but velvet costs & so does fings.
The Hunter girls have very pretty cashmere dresses, a
narrow ruffle round the bottom, about an eighth wide, &
then eight folds about one inch 2 1/2 wide every other
one cut the other crosswise, do you understand? so
they’re made differently, you know, finished by a french
roll. I forget whether the upper skirt has a ruffle or
fold—then Bessie has a silk petticoat which I like very
much, two (?) rather wide ruffles each with a heading &
put on with a french fold—both ruffles the same width &
about an eighth apart, I should say, perhaps not so
far, & that’s enough about dresses—horrid things!——
This eve’g we are to dine at the Masons, Kate, Johnny
& I, then Johnny & I are to go to the Newmans’ to a
little party given in my honor—Miss Lydin’s love & says
the (?) beautifully. I have seen it, & it’s a horrid
looking thing, nothing but stamped cambric. Kate is so
much better Sarah, goes out sailing, rowing, & every where
—even in the day time, is no longer an owl. She is now
going through a dreadful ordeal at the dentist’s goes about
every other day—poor child—has also been vaccinated, so
is lame of an arm & all her teeth, & has a cold. She
however is well & seemingly in good spirits—sends love &
says she is going to write.

The wedding went off splendidly on the 19th. Willie
looked handsome & Sarah did too, almost, they both were in
the best of spirits, & jolly & natural as possible. I was
asked to the (?) also, it was in the house—wore my blue
silk & tea rose-bud & well, I won’t tell you what Coz
Edward said, but you know he is a man of excellent taste.
He & Willie & Johnny all sail on the 15 of Nov. Now Kate
will miss them all this winter, Sarah King away, Sarah
Gibbs too & every one. Dr. & Mrs. Birckhead sail tomorrow
the 28th. Capt. Matthews I see frequently, teas with us
about every other evening.

Monday. Oct. 31. I have left you for some time have I
not, Theodora? I am now writing at Kate’s desk in the back
parlor, a beauty, given her by Cousin Edward. It is one
of those with "figure holes," shelves etc. & a "what-not"
top, quite an elegant affair. Imagine my astonishment
the first time I saw it open, & behold your Father gazing
upon me! here he is now, stuck up right in the middle—
"monarch of all he surveys" for there is no other to dispute the ground with him—the inside of the desk that is, a little photograph of dear Mr. Birckhead presides over the outside—just over your Father's head. I must go back to where I left off, & I don't exactly know where that is. I have just now received a call from a very agreeable Mr. Reilly, Army officer. Kate is out driving with am of her beaux, so you see she must be better, for it is broad day light & bright sunshine between twelve & one. This afternoon I was to take a walk with Miss Lydine but she has "backed out" which is fortunate for I should have been obliged to as my new boots which I bought just before coming here are so large that one of them has rubbed up & down so on my heel that it has worn a place as long as a cent nearly all off, & consequently it is quite painful for me to walk, so we are going sailing with the L. C. instead, Kate, Ellen, & I--wish you were here to go to, don't you? This evening I go to a party at the Hunters. I must tell you about Sat. it was such a day! the day Johnny left. In the morning about ten we went for our last sail in the "Bessie"—Ellen, Kate & I, Johnny & Willie. It was perfect, just rough enough, home soon after twelve—then about one Johnny came again to say a last farewell, then Mrs. Birckhead & I took a long walk till dinner time at three, then Capt. M. came for us to sail a quarter past four, Kate Hunter, Kate & I—splendid! It was so rough that we "shipped seas" continually. I got soaking wet—my shoulders were wet to the skin, notwithstanding a water-proof dress & wrap, my hair wringing wet. (Another interruption in the shape of Mrs. Thorndike & Miss Wheaton) I don't think I ever enjoyed a sail so much! in the same way, I mean, it was so exciting, home just in time to change our clothes & go to drive with Cousin Edward at 6 OClock, a moon-light drive, Kate & Ellen on the back seat, Cousin E. & I in the front. It was very cold & the moon was behind the clouds nearly all the time, only once did it peep out & look at us for one half minute, but it was just perfect, we were in just the right place to see it, by the beach, & the light in the water was so beautiful we went round the new road to Bateman's & back then to the beach—home about half past eight regaled ourselves on the drumsticks of a chicken & hot wine & water & went directly to bed—don't you think it was a day indeed!?

Today Cousin Edward has gone to Boston with Willie to meet Johnny there, the two brothers go on to Lenox & Cousin E. comes back tomorrow—he leaves next week—all to meet in N. Y. from where they sail—expect to be home next May. Had a nice letter from Mary the other day. It came to the Masons, & created quite a sensation for they all thought it was a gentleman's writing, & wondered what gentleman friend I had in Cincinnati. Bessie wished to see the
signature which I showed her—"ever yours M. R. J." which certainly did not amek her any wiser. I however enlightened her, as she seemed quite worried. She & Mr. Winthrop go next Sat. to the Winthrops in Brookline for a little visit—the (?) for the middle of next week—dear me, if I had a house here I'd never go. Saw the moon rise just over the water last eve'g—it was perfect. I miss Sarah King & Sarah Gibbs very much—(another interruption, Mrs. Vernon & Mrs. Horner, Jack's mother I presume). You see I am the only one at home & Mrs. B, unfortunately for me, told the servant to let any one in as she wished me to see Buck Winthrop, if he came & give him a message from her, & inquire about Willie, as he saw him in New York. I have not seen him for years. I am not likely to now, as he does not seem to make his appearance. I hope Kate has not eloped! Write soon. I shall have a great deal of "filling in" to do when I see you.

Grace

Mr. Gibbs is in N. Y. with his wife & mother—he was here the other day but never came near us! just home from sailing lovely—L. C. takes (?) to the office. I am writing by firelight.