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BEATRIX FARRAND
THE VALLEY CLUB OF MONTECITO
P. O. BOX 1140
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

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Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss,
1527 - 28th Street,
Washington, D. C.

My very dearest:

It is just too bad to have had to nag you about Botanic Garden matters, but perhaps all of us get a bit agitated as we grow older and less well. Therefore, the General was in what the Irish people call a regular "taking" when he spoke to me about the possibility of your having forgotten or being unwilling to continue the promised Garden subsidy. When your re-assuring telegram came, the news was at once telephoned to the General, who greeted it with a little cry of pleasure; and as he has had rather a tiresome time with arthritis during the last cold and damp weeks, I think your news gave him real relief and pleasure, so thank you for him and for Anne and all of us. - Now as to Anne, frankly I am a little bothered about her, as she seems to me so unlike herself, and so lacking in initiative which you and I are accustomed to think of with her quick energy. Naturally, with the present gas shortage, the consequent reduction of visiting, she and I have seen each other but seldom this year, but the other day we had a telephone talk, and she sounded to me ~~as~~ quite low spirited and to be a little at sea as to how to word her appeal for the Botanic Garden subscription notes which must go out before long. That astonishing and altogether delightful lady, Mrs. Oakleigh Thorne, says she thinks Anne is not well and is trying to do too much house work, as she is doing all the cooking and much of the work of the bed-making sort, and naturally finds herself far too tired before the end of the day. It does not seem to be a question of shortage of funds, but rather of point of view and unwillingness to even try to get a temporary helper, who might ease some of the bumps. As you and I know, there is a phase of fatigue in which any change is more difficult to face than the mere continuation of what exists.

The Garden promises to be lovely this Spring. The "flowery mede" is already beginning, and golden coreopsis is already fringing the lower end of the meadow. The grey ceanothus on the hills has been in bloom for some weeks, and now the blues are taking up their part of the story in the lower levels. Mrs. Thorne has been the most extraordinary help in the difficult situation at the Garden. Two members of the Planning Committee - Mr. Kellam and Mr. DeForrest are as you well know, not too easily managed, so that last Tuesday when we had a meeting of the committee at the Garden my heart rather sank in advance. As the meeting went on it was difficult to keep one's countenance entirely in order as Mrs. Thorne pretended to lose her temper with Mr. Kellam and reduced him to a jelly of abject agreement, in which he said he would write a report which we might amend as we saw fit and which he hoped his son-in-law would sign so that this troublesome committee can finish its work and be discharged. There is no use in going into the long story of what is needed at the Garden, as you and I must take a little time to review things when we are together in Washington. Not only does the Garden need present funds, but its endowment is inadequate to even the most modest budget - and here by the way don't let me forget to remind our two selves of the question of the prov-

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ision for the Director's salary being continued at the present level.

A few days ago, Mr. Van Rensselaer made an excellent radio broadcast for the Garden, which was both dignified and appealing. The time was given by the Santa Barbara Natural History Museum, and the date was most opportune, as Mr. Van Rensselaer could say how much there was of plant interest at the Botanic Garden, both now and in the coming weeks.

Now as to Dumbarton Oaks: Perhaps some of these days it would interest you to review with Mrs. Clark the list of gardening books, which you thought you might like to add to the Library for the sake of possible garden-minded students. I shall be interested to know how many she has acquired and whether there are others, which you and she might think well of adding to the group. Then too, we must think out the possibilities of the ellipse walls and the herbaceous border walls, as I am sure it will be of more use to Harvard to have you and me working ~~through~~ together on them than to turn over an unfinished scheme to some future group.

Max goes on slowly, and although there are days of discouragement, there is no question but that the general progress has been noticeable since we got here three months ago. He is now able to walk a mile or perhaps a little more in a day, and perhaps do a little writing when he feels in the mood. It seems sensible to stay on here until the 20th of April in order to avoid the Spring blizzards which usually prevail in Chicago any time before the end of May. He will probably go fairly straight through to Reef Point after a few days in Boston for the hospital check-up, and I shall probably see him settled in Bar Harbor before I turn you-ward and to Dumbarton Oaks sometime in May. If you have any definite set plans for days that would make my coming impossible, let me know so that I may dodge them.

On the evening of February 21st, I tried to send you a message by telegram for the date you and I both remember, but the telegraph company refused to take any message that had to do with the memory of a certain date, and so you know in your heart that you and I were both thinking together, even though there were no words.

Yours ever and always.

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