

April 4th 1876

Memphis

My dearest boys. Avery's of 26th to his daddy & of April
1st to his mammy come yesterday, & lightened my heart of its
anxiety, I had been ten days since Avery wrote, & Revere did
not mention him so I fancied he was sick. Do not my dears,
as the weather grows warm, exercise to much, you cannot stand
it as in cold weather. Your mental work also is increased,
Avery had better leave off his gymnastics when he drills,
I think the drill is enough with the additional mentality.
Has Revere ever exercised at the gymnasium? How much of your
speech have you written? Do not delay, write & re-write is
the motto for excellence. Your aunt Anna expects to start before
very long. Alice's baby is a pretty little delicate sentimental,
blue-eyed thing, she is a more tolerant of it, than she was of the
first, a little more fond, ~~but~~ not a fond mother, but an
attentive one. Your aunt is devoted to them, it is cruel to take
her from them. Your cousin Stella thinks Emma Avery is
engaged to Mr. Stratton, the little black-eyed fellow that
used to clerk for Newton Ford & Co. Don't mention it however.
Shall we send you any more picture papers? do you have
time? with your studies & drilling, & speeches, when is the
time? Does my dear Revere's ear pain him? Lee was 15
last 26th of December. But you see is our baby yet. One &
a while he assumes manly airs. He wanted me to feel his
head the other day. I took the magnifying glass & criti-
cally examined his upper lip, & detected a few faint
signs of future virility. The other day he said to me with

the utmost seriousness, "Mothur it is time we were
considering what profession our boys will follow"
mark the "we" + the "wee". He had just read your
& Pierce's letters, ~~which~~ ^{which} had set him to raminating ^{to} your
future abacations. He is a very ambitious little fellow, ambi-
tious to shine, & he will shine some day. To night we have
company, to tea & stay all night, Wallace & Emmsen Cotte-
-eag. & we will chicken salad, & a nice fruit cake, I wish
my two big boys had a chunk of the cake, & a plate of
the salad. What would you think if your mammy
should jump into the lecturing business? Would
you shrink from the frowns of old Mrs Gwoudy?

Take care of your health my own dear boys, remember
the triumphs you toil for now are of the smallest
moment compared to the preservation of your health
- your work at school is only to prepare you for
the real work of life, & the pillar of preparation for
life's work is a strong body.

Good by, my dear ones,

Your Mammy

As the weather grows warmer take baths more fre-
-quently, but at best hours, not with a full stomach
or when cold & chilled,