

Decr 15th 1818

I really did not expect, my dear Ben, that you would have been almost two months absent without bestowing one letter on me. I have written to you several times and last evening destroyed an unfinished ^{letter} that had lain some time ^{in my desk} ~~there~~ waiting for the promised one from you, which more than a fortnight ago was to have been sent by the next mail. Our brothers write so constantly that my letters are unnecessary but one does not like to be so entirely overlooked and as no one suffers greater deprivation than I do from your absence I think you might at least devote a few spare moments to my gratification. Pemberton tells that you are delighted with Lexington but as he has returned a more force than ever of home I hope you will do so too. Your friends Williams & I Baillie come to see us sometimes, they have neither of them heard from you yet - tho the latter talks of writing a twenty page letter some of these days to rouse you from your forgetfulness of distant friends. He says since your departure the club has dissolved, that of course you were the most dissipated or the cause of it, since it no longer exists in your absence.

Ellen Kays has been in Baltimore almost three weeks, she goes down for her in a few days, she said before she left home that she should write to you from there, but I suspect she will not find time, as she makes but little use of her pen, and is so intoricated with the attentions of her friends & school fellows that it will be difficult to withdraw from their society during her stay. I recd Maria Gists letter to her last week.

This evening Ellen Lyle is to be married her sister preceded her about a month. The latter continues to reside with her father - Mr L has taken good care of her property - placing it in such a strong box, so sealed & fitted in parchment that nothing short of her will can reach it, and poor Bickett must draw on her for his daily bread. I do not know how Hartman will manage, but too much prudence looks so like suspicion, that a man must feel very mean who is not trusted to look into his wife's coffers -

There is a very impertinent piece in the Port Folio of this month which has made a good deal of noise, addressed to H - - and so pointed that with all Hartman's phlegm I think he must be moved to wrath about it -

Richards poor little Bucky had another very dangerous attack last week, but her health had been so good previous to it, that I do not think it has affected her constitution as much as was feared and she is now quite well again. Fanny has moved into the house next to John Swift. Reuben has applied for the office of Marshal but he has been so often disappointed that I shall never feel very sanguine of his success until he is in possession. Geo. writes that he will be home in Feb'y. he is pleased, and has as much business as he could expect, tho' he does not say that he makes money. All the family are well, and we get along as comfortably as cold weather and your absence will permit. but many an anxious hour is laid to your charge. so very distant - and still ~~going~~ going on we know not where, or to what difficulties - and you have always been accustomed to the conveniences & the comforts of home -

but I will say nothing on this subject - I hope the things will bring you back with her first blossoms. in the mean time, do not think total silence the way to reconcile me to your absence -

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25



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via Washington
city —

