

182

remains

March 24th 1819

My Dear Ben

We were quite regaled yesterday by the receipt of your charming letter, and your friend John Kiddle came in the evening to boast of his, what can be more grateful to the heart than news from a friend in a far country? I reciprocated this feeling to excess, and return thanks to God for the blessing, that attend you in health & cheerfulness. You are certainly an excellent traveller, and accommodate yourself with much facility to the manners of the people you sojourn among, that I have no doubt you buy fame every where - courtesy is the jewel of life, in every clime, & perhaps none prize it more than the rough independent people of the west - they who acknowledge no superior, love to have their pride flattered by the consideration of their more polished friends, and I suspect they do not often meet with citizens so well bred, if we may judge by the anecdotes our Kentucky acquaintances sometimes relate. Vincennes must be a dull place to stay so long in. Yet the beauties & richness of the country will compensate you for other deprivations, and it is so interesting to explore those distant regions, and still to recognise the same laws & language, and government, that is so dear to us at home - I hope you will succeed in your business, and not be too long detained. The Illinois & Wabash claim, of which I have all my life heard so much, seemed like a romance. I never expected to see any thing but maps & pamphlets of the subject, or that it would cost us your society, for so long a time - but since it has proved so far I catch a little of the mania, and prize wives for its success, at any rate hope you will not permit it to engross years of toil on an uncertain event, & that after satisfying your curiosity with every thing worth visiting you will bend your course home ward.

You are very lenient to some guest, people here are more severe in their censures on his conduct. It is probable that he was assailed by temptations, and he was unprepared to resist them. his engagement with Miss P. was hastily concluded after a very short acquaintance, and his attachment would have been of a nature soon to consume itself. the forsaken damsel looks very pensive, but she is pretty & interesting. I may consider her self fortunate in being left with her friends. hardships such as settlers in a new country must encounter, requires at least the steady affection of a kind companion, to make

tolerable, and by the bye among the crosses and perplexities of such a situation there should be a solid foundation to ensure domestic comfort - a man would be very apt to feel cross towards those who gave him so much additional anxiety, and as Jonah found the loss of his picture so fatal to his love, what a desperate dilemma he would have been in with a wife who made so slight an impression. Mr & Mrs Fisher embarked from Pittsburgh the beginning of this month.

Our brother's wife writes to you so frequently that I suppose you are pretty well informed of every thing passing here, and few things occur in our domestic circle, we have generally enjoyed a very good health, last week we were disturbed by an indisposition of Rosa Kay's from which however she has almost recovered. she had an attack very similar to Maria's, but the vigorous remedies applied by Dr Chapman have been successful, & I hope in a day or two she will be able to resume her studies without further detriment either in health or appearance. she has not suffered in the least from the disease, tho' something from its remedies. all the rest of the children are well. you will scarcely know little Sarah again she is so grown, and as she is very accomplished in the tricks of her age, you will consider her wonderful, as the rest of her Uncles do. Miriam last week got another prize at school for improvement in French. they are all pursuing with great attention their studies, Miriam is very anxious for the arrival of your letter, they all send a great deal of love to you.

Our friend Mrs Meredith has added another daughter to her ample family. I saw her a few days ago, and received a message of affectionate remembrance for you. Your alarm respecting Nancy W. & Julia is premature nothing has transpired in their case yet. but the Dr has succeeded in winning a rich prize, in the smiles of Ann Ridgway. they have been the amusement of Tea parties for some time - exclusive attentions in public, was the trial this lady deemed necessary, and the poor Dr so often a candidate before to the fair expectants of health, was a mark for the witty & the sarcastic. but his doubts are at an end. they are engaged. visits of form exchanged between the families, and every thing settled. Miss Griffith has cancelled an engagement that was talked of when you went away. which is no doubt agreeable to her guardian adviser Sam^l R. as her delinquency in this instance takes away in the opinion of many the censure due to him on a former occasion - tho' it is very probable were the truth known, her first disappointment may be the hidden cause of this indecision. there is some truth in the song "For once when love's betrayed, the heart can bloom no more"

journey with you, whether or even you go. our sisters. niece. Aunt Nell. and
 our brothers. all send best love. to you. I hope you will be at Lexington on
 Paper. we shall pray for you. believe me with the utmost affection yours sincerely
 attached sister. Rly.

Vincennes
 April 29
 Forwarded 18 1/2

Benjamin Grator Esqr

Lexington, Ky

Via Washington

City of Washington

March 24

12 1/2