

July 10th 1820

You anticipated not hearing from me for a month, my dear Maria, and I have just realised your expectation, strange, that you should have decided more correctly than I, when I was to be the actor, on receiving your letter, my first impulse was to answer it - and I determined to show you how grateful I am for your affection - and how generously I accept your apologies, and forgive all the omissions of which you so candidly accuse yourself, taking care at the same time to convince you I set a due value on your epistles and am exceedingly happy to receive them - but first impulses however strong are often obliged to be relinquished - and this was the fate of mine in relation to your letter - one circumstance or other intervened on the mail-day - either company interrupted me, currant jelly was to be made, or a piece of work must be finished - then a brown languid day was too stupefying for such good company - and thus your favor goes old on I have told you it is cherished by distally affection.

Before your faint denial of certain promised blessing, I had set the girls at work. pokers & caps are accordingly under the ornamenting needle, and if you do not forbid it, I shall proceed to prepare shifts & cambric caps for common use. I am just finishing a set for Rachel, and tho' she assures me, you would infinitely prefer something pretty, to these things necessary, I have determined otherwise - leaving to your younger friends, and your own taste to decorate for gala occasions.

I find the general impression is so strong here to blame you for not paying the hoped & wished for visit to Phil^a this autumn, that it is in

rain to speak of your husband's business, so my dear sister we will not enter on the discussion, but, happy in the kind wishes you express to gratify us when you can, we shall wait your own time, and trust you will bring such an apology as will not only satisfy but make you entitled to a double welcome -

Mrs Dr Caldwell told me on Saturday that they should next week commence their journey westward. she goes determined to be pleased with Lexington, and appears really to feel so much interested in every thing beyond the mountains that I have no doubt she will do her best to deserve the hospitality for which she is a candidate, and I cannot help wishing she may succeed in making herself agreeable. There is scarcely any thing more likely to entrap the vanity of an ordinary mind, than the literary pretensions of one so nearly allied as a husband. Had Mrs C. possessed more judgment & discrimination than the Dr. she might have been less dazzled by his hyperbole, and only given him credit for his solid achievements, but who will censure sincere praise, directed to one, who it is both duty and affection to admire, even tho' another cannot subscribe to it?

I know a very sensible woman, whose son is an absolute coxcomb in every thing that relates to letters. he is a poet without genius, an essayist without originality and a heap compiler of uninteresting anecdotes. yet to hear her speak of his literary labors, you would take him for an unvarnished & unpartial author - so blind is judgment when directed by maternal partiality.

By this time our friend Col. Morrison has returned home, you must tell him he is remembered here with very great affection, which often shows itself in Ellen & me, by long conversations on his respectable talents at ~~making~~ ^{of} interesting circumstances in which his youth engaged. I suppose Maria you have heard him speak of hair breadth's escapes and Indian warfare, or if not him, other worthies who may now look back with equal complacency on the early days of Kentucky

Mrs Benjamin Grate

Lexington Kentucky