

2/19 1822

I am not quite sure, my dear Maria, that you are
entitled to an apology, altho I have been so long silent that
I am almost ashamed of myself, and long most ardently
to hear from you. you owe me a letter I believe notwithstanding -
but somehow your conscience is not very sensitive on this subject
and you are sure, to express as much as you may, a letter
will always make your peace. I wish you had more curiosity
about Phil^a for then it would urge you to enquire what is
going on, and you would oftener be inclined to tell me something
about yourself & son in return for the news I could tell you -
do you know the dear little fellow is free to make choice of a
mother mate, as the infant beauty. Harriet Bayard is no more!
whether she felt a victim to religion or vanity is not determined
the priest who baptised her threw a large cub of ^{cold} water over her
head, and her young mother, and dotting grand mother could not
resist the pleasure of exhibiting her to every visitor. Many a gentle
slumber was broken, and warm night clothes exchanged for more
becoming draps, to elicit hollow praise from evening guests. till at
length the tender babe felt sick and after a few days desperate
sufferings expired, to the infinite distress of her parents - it is
nearly a month since, the family are just coming out again -

You have heard of the more dreadful calamity we have
experienced in the destructive fire of the Orphan Asylum, and
I am sure have sympathised with our distressed poor little souls,
how sad their fate! one would scarcely think it possible such a
total destruction could take place in so rapid a manner, there
was not an article of any thing saved, except what was found
the bodies of those who escaped - we have taken a house in

market. There between Church Hill and Centre square, until an Asylum
can be rebuilt. The whole state takes an interest in our misfortune
and as much money is already raised as will completely replace
every pecuniary loss. but the heart-rending circumstance of so many
having perished will create a new anxiety in the breast of the thousands
which while it deepens the interest takes off much from the satisfaction
of their labours. they have been much abused as public feeling rather
than judgment operates on the first occurrence of a fatal accident. but
while sensible they were not neglectful of any duty. they can only unite
their regrets, and confess that liable to such worse dispensations, these
utmost endeavours are insufficient to secure their helpless charge from
every danger. Our brother Hyman has been staying at home for a whole
week, in which time he has been cupped & bled & phlebotomized. but not cured
of his rheumatism. unfortunately soon after Chapman had undertaken his
case, he was confined by a sore-foot, and has not been able to see him. I hope
however I shall be able to prevail on Hyman to keep in a little longer, as
fresh winds will undo what little advantage he may have gained.

We keep a supply of novels for his amusement in the day time
and play whist with him of evenings. Mr. Hays comes sometimes to
regale him with piquette but all this is very dull business to him
and he threatens hard to break through his restraints and return to
the counting-house. If we had your little darling here, the case would
be altered. I think he would reconcile his uncle to the sofa for
a month, for I never saw him so fond of any child. You will say
I never saw a child so attractive. I do not know, my dear that I
ever did. we all have a great yearning of heart towards him, and
so lament the separation. It is cruel of you, Maria not to write
often - do you depend on Ben's letters? if so, know that I rarely
see them, and tho' they do contain the welcome "all's well" - there are
so many dear sketches one wishes to hear, that you must really
open a domestic calendar for me.

Ellen could tell you of the gaiety of the city for the & Rosa
partake pretty freely of them. the latter enjoys it greatly -
all the charms of novelty are in her favor. and she is a good

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Mrs Benjamin Grate

Lexington
Ky

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FEB



R. Grate
9 Feb. 1822

Wm
12 Feb 1822