

Your letter my dear sister, was gratefully received.
 The sympathy of those we love soothe our sorrows - and when
 we must weep we are grateful for the tears which mingle
 with our own, from hearts which bear a part of our grief, and
 consecrate the virtues of those we mourn - I have endeavored
 to write to you my dear Maria before this but could not
 for all my thoughts & feelings were unutterable. Would that
 your dear family were with us. I long to see my dear Brother
 and sister & these lovely boys - separation is doubly severe
 when such visitations occur - we talk of you every day
 little Horace has heard so much of Tony that he seems
 to think of him incessantly. repeats every day that he is
 coming over the mountains to see us in the spring and all
 his infantile projects of pleasure & instruction are agitated
 with little Ben Brother as he styles him - you may
 suppose my dear sister that these precious children are
 the objects of my constant and tenderest concern they
 have given me a deep interest in life - which the
 many & severe trials it has pleased Heaven to visit
 upon me, might otherwise have made a heavy yoke
 of penance - but I dare not complain - and feel that
 I ought not whilst so many beloved friends are left
 and so many important duties still remain to be
 done - poor Isabella Etting is suffering under the

most afflicting disease I ever witnessed. every day
for nearly three months she has appeared as if in
the agonies of death. her spasms are such struggles
as fasting nature seems to yield to. and for the
first month her physicians daily spoke so discouraging
ly of her situation that those who were not in her chamber
dreaded every messenger might be coming to announce her
departure - for a single week she was better. but again
she is reduced to the same state. and her poor Mother is
almost worn out with anxiety & fatigue - one Brother
Simon has also been confined with another of those bites
which gave us so much alarm last Spring - it was not so
in so vital a part as the former. and he has suffered
less. but still is at home in consequence. however he is
recovered from it, thank God!

We have been alarmed by the small pox throughout the
city. and have by the advice of our physicians had all
the children re-vaccinated. as the disease is much lightened
by that measure. in the early history of vaccination, very
little attention was paid to the character of the disease
and a Malignant or partial disease was frequently
introduced which is no protection against small-pox - in
our family, one out of the seven, has now the genuine
disease which is a proof that she had it not in the first
instance - Dr. Hays performed the operation. and by the bye
he told us, that he found among his papers one marked
with your son's name enclosing the scab of a genuine
vaccination so you need have no apprehensions on the subject
should the disease appear at Lexington.

Rebecca Grets
Answered Feb 22^d 1823

Mrs Benjamin Grets
Levington Ky