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May 26th 1827

I have postponed writing to you my dear sister from day to day in hopes of having something agreeable to communicate - but fear I have incurred an evil, while waiting for a distant good / which when it does arrive will find angels ready to bear it to you / - Shall therefore repair my fault and beg notwithstanding appearances you will believe me fully sensible of your goodness in submitting to so great a sacrifice of your domestic happiness as our dear Ben's leaving home occasions. Indeed my sister it grieves my heart that you should have to bear so painful a share in our distresses and I persuade myself that you will also soon share the blessing which accompanies a peace-maker - I cannot believe the sincere & united efforts of the brothers will fail of success unless evil advisers oppose their counsel & harden our deluded brothers heart against us - It would be in vain to attempt describing what I have & do suffer in this unhappy affair. It has been so much the habit of my life to reverence & love Union that in every thing which my conscience did not oppose I should yield my wishes to his, and in every thing since my Mother's death I have desired to grant him the honors of my Union & guide - it has been only where my duty to the unoffending members of the family, could not be reconciled that I have done less than he desired towards the unfortunate causes of dissension and I believe had he managed with equal discretion they & he would have been much happier - and the harmony of our once united family never been interrupted - but it is in vain to go back to the source from whence this flood of ill arose - we must endeavor

to steer the safest course, and save as much consolation from
the wreck of domestic happiness - as moderation & a conscientious discharge
of duty may furnish - how soon & what will repay him for all he
sacrifices - the self-will & misrule of his household - is a sad
reverse to the picture of domestic life his memory must furnish
upon the paternal roof - what I complained of in my last letter
about the girls conduct, upon reflection I am rather glad of - it affords
a plea for absenting myself from their presence of which they can
not complain to their Father, and I do not wish to come in contact
with them until these storms have passed away, so that I
may have no individual impediments towards an intercourse with
my brother - whatever may be the irritation of present feelings,
when affections are adjusted and time ^{has} blunted the edge of resent-
ment - injuries & insults will not appear in so strong a light -
then we may hope the memory of young days - the participation
of boyhood's sports - and above all of maternal love - will enter into
the brothers hearts, and turn them back from recent worldly strife
to nature's harmony & bonds of love -

It would be delightful to see our dear Ben among his old
friends, and hear all the affectionate things said of him, if he only
had you & the dear children here to make him look happy &
satisfied & proud. I wonder how he could leave you. The more
cause we have to appreciate your generosity towards us, the more
we marvel at the resolution he has exercised - but God will
reward you both - and I look forward to the happiness of seeing you
in brighter days when I can express my gratitude -

The people here say Ben looks better than he did on his last
visit, that (his grey hairs notwithstanding) he is more youthful than
any of his fellows - and indeed in the presence six or eight of his
class-mates when H Williams made the observation, he stood the

think he could deprive her of her child. he had been all tenderness to them both during his life. and at his death he did not think he would be so cruel. at any rate while she lived she would not be separated from her. this was all her offence - but who can tell her miseries - insults & injuries, total estrangement from her husband's family. whom she loved before - poverty & widow-hood, bodily suffering and mental agony have been her portion, but she has sustained them with muchness & resignation. for five months the expectation that the birth of her child would terminate her life, gave her a kind of heroic fortitude - and maternal love now sustains her. She has a son three months old to whom she has given its father's name - and she is devoting herself to her children they reside with her parents who are reduced in fortune & altogether bear as many miseries as usually falls to lot of one family - when you would pity for an innocent & lovely sufferer - think of the widowed Henrietta -

Mrs Benjamin Smith

Lexington Ky

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My dear Sister I have been unintentionally prolix, but just thrown my letter into the fire, and was afraid of seeing my hand writing again, I will try to find some manner to tell next time. if it is only about my children, to amuse yours - God bless them all, I try to make Ben talk of his boys for there is no subject my heart so delights in. Kiss them a thousand times for me. except the love of all here - and believe my own dear Maria. how tenderly you are remembered by your sister P. B.