

Oct 28th 1836

I have had so many inducements to write to you my dear sister that I scarcely have how to account for my long silence, except that my time has been occupied, or frittered away upon less agreeable things, and that I have not been quite well - I had almost finished a letter to go by Mr Josephs on Tuesday evening when he called for it - but it was not signed sealed & delivered - and found its way to the grate where I could not help thinking it produced a brighter effect than if it had reached its original destination - but I need not have stopped to tell you all this when I have to introduce Dr Hays' second son, born on the 19th Inst. and his interesting Mother doing very well - tho she had set her heart on having a girl, they mean to call him William Devereux in honor of the Dr's friend & patron. These families are greatly pleased with the compliment. Mary has been staying with Sara for the last two months & in a few days they take their departure for a milder clime. The old gentleman literally is running for his life, as his shattered frame cannot stand the brutes which they go down the Mississippi to Mobile - I reproach myself on reading your last letter for permitting you to feel disquieting about our Brother Etting. When our hearts were united and encouraging hopes of his restoration, his health is still improving at the moderate pace of an old man. a sleepless night - or failing appetite, occasionally proves a drawback - but still the work of improvement goes on again, he can walk about his room alone for a few turns, and sits up a large portion of the day - our sister's strength failed tho in the struggle and for some time I have been more anxious about her than Reuben but she too is better for the last two days, and Sara Nordieen &

quite well - so now my sweet sister the domestic burden
of care must be removed from your brow. When you look
at the Phil^a family, not through that fairy mirror which
shows things as they are in truth, because it is not
permitted mortals to present such a view of themselves
as to satisfy the eye of friendship thus aided, but as
we look at things in "this working day world." yesterday
brought me accounts of the sudden death of my friend Henry
Hays, with a request that Myman would make arrangements
for forwarding the removal of his remains to the cemetery at
Newport where the family are all deposited. There are two daily
admonished that in "the middle of life we are in death," we
scarce cease to grieve for those who precede us - we are dejected
and leave the cups of sorrow to our friends. Henry was one of
the most pure, warm hearted beings I have ever known, and
so devoted to his family that his loss to them cannot be
supplied. His sister was as dependent as an infant for support
and I do not think can long survive her. Years of affection-
ate intercourse has made her very dear to me. Young friends
wisely of "omitted friends." we feel this truth & should long it to hear
I am rejoiced that my dear Ben was gratified by your
affectionate present of our Mother's picture, I was sure it
would be so, and hope he will find its companion as well
executed. Which with your other things have been some
ten days on their journey and I hope will arrive safe and
be suited to your taste. I think Mrs Darling has done great
justice to her father's tuition in the art of portrait painting
she is an excellent artist, I wish you could see some of
her beautiful groups of children - which is her favorite study
I suppose before this every one has seen Mr Coburn's
portrait & genealogy for you, as all are anxious that you
should know & approve him.

embrace your dear boys for me - it makes my heart glad
to hear such good accounts of them all - and Howard's resolution to
be happy & industrious away from home - sweet Cory is constantly
in my thoughts - little Frank would have grieved his heart, he is so good
& good - I took them to Norfolk last Monday, and we expect he will
return this evening. I am sorry for poor Matilda - God forbid that
she should suffer, as Miss M. did - I do not know what the best
women say of you - but you have raised expectations that some
good may come of the complaints you make against yourself
shall I send you Dr. Sweets' book as you have been so long out of practice

Dear

My dear Benjamin

Lexington July

To

Adm. My own beloved sister and brother
May God bless you abundantly with all
good things, and keep you healthily many
years
your Affl.

Tell my dear Ben all his sisters send their fondest love
I bless him every time I look at his benignant face, and am ready
not again to deprive myself of the light of his countenance by the long
-boated covering Mason Brown compared to prison-bars, you both look so happy
and so lovingly that I could kiss the canvas, and I know you feel so
too -