557 11 x

while

Feb 19th 1827

I can hardly tell you my dear Sister how happy I was to receive your letter on Friday, nor yet a sadness came over my heart when I read of poor dear Sara Bradley's trial and the image of her lovely boy came before me — but these are sorrows that are wisely sent and we must bow our chastened hearts before the almighty disposer of good and evil and submit to his will. Sara is a pious Mother and will not repine. when the first feelings of anguish have subsided and she will take comfort too, that one of her most earnest wishes was accomplished at the very period a treasured blessing was with drawn. I admire the feelings that induced her Husband to sacrifice his resentment at the moment of his trial it seems as if he reached his own heart in the holy presence of him who rules the destiny of All, and learned to forgive as he would be forgiven. I admire Sara's sweet reliance on our dear Lord's friendship which shewed she could be just, altho her love & duty as a wife must have made the separation such a painful one. you were two earnest & high minded women or you might have been partial for life. and I wish you both joy of the happy result and the example your wisdom & forbearance has set to the good wives & gossips of your community. when I come again to Lexington I shall hope to see Fanny Bradley among the most domestic members of your domestic circle. and Sara's bright eyes dancing with the healthy consciousness of such a change.

every topick in your letter is full of interest to me. Mrs Bostwick took strong hold on my affections, she was compelling & kind & I so pitied a widowed mother, whose children were estranged from her. and whose labour & most harrassed thoughts were to be urged against those, who ought to have cherished her with devoted love. I am glad Mrs Shelby had returned to comfort her. Does it not seem that the hand of providence

had interposed in her behalf in giving back to her the daughter she most loves and removing one who might have worked both their ruin. I hope Laura will learn to honor and respect her parent too now that she has been living among strangers and feels how different that relationship is to all others in the world. Since I last wrote I have been to a Party where I met Mr Farnes, and at his church where I heard an excellent sermon from Mr Dewey. Mr Farnes told me he & I ought to be intimate to each other according to the usual system of mankind - because in religion we were not very different, and yet not alike - I told him that I claimed the privileges of not being intimate to any mans religion - yet [two] firmly attached to my own - and so I will be my dear Mother are you, and being so, why should you suppose the fear of death might make you falter. since the God you serve, is the same who created you - appointed your duties - has given you a clear perception of his holiness - his mercy and his providential care. and guarding you through the paths of life will not desert you in the "valley of the shadow of death" and as his attributes cannot change in whatever state mysterious nature may place the ~~place the~~ creature man, what ever region the immortal spirit may inhabit - the same God whose breath made Man a living soul - inhabits eternity to which that soul is destined. I cannot comprehend why the worship of God should be so fertile of ills while on earth, but I do not doubt some good end is to be answered - and so I submit as far as regards myself - and believe obedience is better than sacrifice. therefore am in principal as well as practice a conformist to the law - now if even this might not be necessary - it cannot be wrong - while no moral or religious [mutual] obligation is infringed, opinion makes the difference and with opinion I will not war, while I see good men, pursuing each road that leads to the same end the worship of God.

You have heard that my Dear Julia Hoffman has lost her Father, he was an excellent man, and a firm friend of mine - I expect Julia to come to me as soon as she can arrange her affairs she will look after my housekeeping for the present - and after a [illegible]

may be parted on of the same moment by friends so far from each other, that distance & mountains cannot intervene to shut out the glorious view - that love, when all earth fades from our mortal eyes, shall be not together view the heavens and adore them there forever - Sal is at Hamsburg, we heard yesterday that he was well - perhaps he has written to Ben, but he is so lazy in that way that there is no depending on him. our other Brothers are well and so is the whole country. Sisters have each but a single daughter - Father at home - they are cheerful tho' lonely - the Cobbers have moved, without my any to Becky, and I hope a new habitation will introduce something new to better their condition - it is sad & extraordinary

writing to me, Kiss Hannah & Polly & her Brother for me and remember me to my friends in Town & country. D. has a Lemonade Machine & hopes with the assistance of an old friend & Brother to make a fortune & on which he has the praise & on which my friend & Brother has written - Adieu Believe me, ever Your affectionate Brother

Benjamin Gratz

Lexington Ky

Postage
Paid
Virginia

to see so many forever a clog on fortunes wheel never rising with its evolutions - Sarah has at length gone to cultivate flowers, and I trust some wild bloom, to make his lot more flourishing - little dear Ky mean some of his plants are in flower and my little Carys rose bush beautiful already - Margaret has taken excellent care of them all winter, embrace all my dear boys for me, I wish I had Horace & Bernard here, now James has gone away & Horace talks of his designs this Spring. I shall be forlorn without my young heard - God Bless them & You my dear Foster & Brother, Mary do not be so long again without