

Philadelphia Jan^y 10th

As I dated this letter My dear Maria, I recollected that I once told you the date was always the rule for a letter - for if one had any thing to say they did not wait to note the time, - and so I have prejudged this one when I only meant to try my pen - if we were always obliged to account for our idle expressions - we should be more careful to examine into their consequences - and tho I by no means mean to gainsay the above observation, I beg you will have patience to get to the end of my sheet before you are confirmed in its truth. It seems a long time since I have written to you, but I have been so busy - and our anniversary after all was on a rainy day and few persons came to hear Mr Barnes preach - and he read the reports in such a monotonous voice and stopped to shake some words that he could not make out in my cramped hand - writing that little as I liked it before - it lost all the grace I had hoped it might gain from the manner of a poor old preacher. I thought of Lexington and your better plan and wished for your tact and courage to help Mr B and of his thunders - then our school master is a singular looking big nosed Yankee a poet for sooth - who composed the hymn he taught the children to sing - and being doubly anxious that justice should be done to his work - he stood forth at the head of his school in so ludicrous a manner - and raised his voice on high - that some of our mischievous girls could not resist the temptation to laugh - and indeed Mr M. looked such a perfect personification of the picture of a Hamburg singing school in Jos book of caricatures that I forgot my own mortification in his apparent triumph - but the children were almost all there & looked well - and the Ladies were pleased and so you need not say one word of your sisters dissent from the general opinion.

Your boys are very well - are leaving to play chess these long evenings
and Iae perceives Howard fast rate at the game - he is smart enough
at every thing, and I think you would have been amused at his
representation of a circumstance, which occurred on Friday. Your letter
made him so happy, and proud - that he could not bear any one should
read it - until he had enjoyed the perusal by himself - so he took it
up stairs and deposited it in his wardrobe - the next morning he
indulged us with a sight - and went down to deliver the newspapers
from America to her kitchen friends. When a pretty little Irish girl
I hired a few days before - said "yes indeed, and a young lady at
the ball enj'd because you were not there" Howard turned to her
in the utmost astonishment - and demanded how she knew - he sup-
posed her a witch - as he could not suppose she would presume
to use natural - but unwomanly means to discover the contents
of his letter - but she candidly confessed that she could read
and had found his treasure in its hiding place - yesterday he had
the key of his wardrobe suspended by a gold chain round
his neck, and to morrow Mrs Paul Pry is to leave the premises.
as I do not consider a person so little scrupulous with her eyes
responsible for the loss of her other dealings - Howard was
delighted with your letter too, and prizes the wholesome advice
& sound philosophy conveyed with such maternal love - he has
the tenderness of heart, and great strength of mind and it is delight-
ful to witness his thoughtful affection for both you & his dear father
he is unwilling to retire at night until Jo returns home, that
he may get letters. (I hope the next mail will bring tidings of
your husband from Lexington) respecting Benno's tooth my
dear sister, I think you would change your opinion if you
were to examine the position of his entire set - neither of his
eye teeth have come down well for want of room - and the
space of the broken one would be filled and his teeth all
be much smaller & more even for room to grow in - where as
if the piece is left in - beside the chance of decay which
is very probable from all the repels & nerve being exposed / he will
have the inconvenience and discomfort of a false tooth which
at best is disfiguring, when newly adopted -

Kiss my darling baby for me, and thank him for remembering Aunt Beebe
so well. - I returned on Friday evening - the good news we had from Ben
Etting induced me to write to him, and you may be sure be rejoiced in the
recovery of that long suffering invalid. Is it not strange, according to human
calculations, that on the broad ocean, amidst privations of all kind he should
have entirely recovered - after every sort of medicine had failed - I have always
thought God's health restored unaided by the hand of man - and in this
case too - God alone has visited the poor cripple - and removed the burden
from his racked limbs - Marvel will now forget her sorrows, and look
forward with hope - may she learn to look to him who liveth forever, for all her
blessings, and submit to his will under chastening! Ben's letter was dated 22 Oct.
he had a pleasant passage, agreeable companions, and they say here had a good
prospect of a prosperous voyage - but if he comes home well - it will be a

Mrs Benjamin Graham

Washington City
D. C.

Dr

Good voyage whether his golden returns are great or small -
give my love to dear Mr & Mrs Polack and my friend Montgomery - our
sisters & mine all desire you will accept theirs - Isaac is writing to her sister
and will express her glowing love better than I can tell you - but she loves
to talk of you - as you love to be talked of - our Brothers hold you in their hearts
of hearts - God Bless you my dearest believe me now and ever your Medister
etc.