

Jan 27. 1826⁽¹⁾

Several days after the receipt of your letter of introduction. My dear Maria, your brother Mr Blair made his appearance, and got a very ~~good~~ footing in the good graces of the family at his first visit. the frankness of his manner and friendly address, aided by the claims he derived from you were sufficient to ensure him a most welcome reception. and if it had not been for ~~the~~ the great actor and a little other business, we should have made much greater advances in our acquaintance as he promised to come of evenings and at all times, freely to see us. but four times a week the Theatre is irresistible and so our brother & Mr Blair are drawn to it. next week this attraction will cease and I hope the weather will moderate, and then we will try make ourselves agreeable. I am too will be at home to add his portion of attention to the stranger. he has been for almost three weeks pleading the cause of charity to our wise ones at Haverburg. his object is to obtain a charter & endowment for the Deaf & Dumb Institution, and has a prospect of succeeding. the bill now proposed gives \$8000 per year for five years. by which time we hope the good resulting will induce future legislators to continue it.

Mr Blair told us he was an invalid when he left home but had so far lost the character of one that after travelling all night and part of a day from Baltimore to Phil^a he went to the theatre the second night without taking any rest - and the weather was colder than we have had in my memory before, and such as you probably never experienced. I find you have given him some directions about seeing the Lions here and he is determined not to forget any thing you have recommended but as there are some additions to our stock of public shows. I mean to take up the parable after he has gone thro your catalogue - he is very saucy tho Maria, and laughs at you & your sisters troubles. thinks you will not be very good companions, even on the principle "that misery loves company." and by hints & "givings out" looking wise and other indications of knowing something he does not tell, manages to work upon poor Ellen's candor & sagacity tho she is obliged to look ignorant & say nothing - but in a little time we shall be as wise as he, and I hope my dear you will be in a condition to look proudly in a new character, when he returns - I do not like your plan of keeping Hyman to escort you in the spring. we are very much in want of him at home Brother Simon is going to Washington next week and will be absent perhaps a month. I have been losing & losing each in turn of the three that remains, and have rarely more than one at a time at home. Now Hyman has continued so long in Kentucky that I begin to fear he will forget it is not his home - or if he does not forget will soon

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Wm. Benjamin Gatch

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