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I do not know my Dear Ann if you have
ever experienced a period of total inability to
apply yourself to an occupation. if you have
not. then I must fail to make you understand
why your last interesting letter has been so long
unanswered, and I fear you have attributed
my silence to a wrong cause. I do not feel content
that your heart tingles so painfully over the
memory of a recalled blessing. because that is a
gift unmisgivable, and perhaps could we com-
prehend a right might be numbered among
the trials a righteous Judge desires to make us
more sensible of his infinite mercy, and prepare
our hearts better to serve him. you say right
one Sister keeps does sympathize with you, and
was alone deterred from writing. but she should
not succeed in addressing you at the time or
in the measure to make a letter acceptable -
she has been often called upon to resign those
the deeply knowledge loved - in infancy, in youth
and at maturity she ^{has} kept over her offspring -
the first bright many sweet maternal hopes -
but when to these were added the recollection of
years in which those hopes seemed realized
and the cares of maternal watchfulness were
exchanged for the pleasures of companion ship
the trial was ten fold more severe - I wish you
could see what a benignant expression rests on
her countenance, over which so many sorrows

have hoped. all her surviving children were gathered
under her roof last week. Isaac & Ellen had their chil-
dren with them, and the whole family party was com-
plete - now she is again alone. They could not prevail
on her to leave home this winter, but has promised
her daughters to visit each of them in the spring.

I hoped to have given you some account of Leary
before this time. Leary went up last week to look
after Chester to bring him down, but he said he waited for a
letter from home, I am sorry he delayed so long as
Hyman will not be able to tell you how he looks, Leary
found him out hunting and only saw him at dinner
we expect him soon, and then I will write you again.
his staying at school, proves that he is better satisfied
with Mr Botmaer and I believe Leary has concluded
to return there, under a conviction that he could not
better his situation by an exchange. He is now at
Washington on a visit to his Aunt Blair. we think
Hyman much improved in health, and hope his
sore will recover, the faster from strengthening his
constitution, I believe the physicians he has consulted
here concur in Dr Dudley's opinion. we expect to part
with Hyman, he has been very cheerful and happy
here, and is a great favorite among his cousins and
the rest of the family. his affectionate disposition has
gained all our hearts and we most gratefully thank
his dear Father for sending him to see us. had regard
that the time draws near for his departure, he
will leave in a few days for Washington. and be
ready to take advantage of a fine river. I hope
you will see an improvement in his appearance.
Thompson seems to be very happy here and is deter-
mined to take advantage of the opportunities
for improvement.

Kiss your darling little chinam for me and give
 her my blessing of the season. May she live to be
 a blessing to her parents. The dearest Ben I send
 him my best & most affectionate love. His dear boys
 make me go over his young days again. Our brother
 send their love to you both. I & beg my dear Ann
 that you will believe me sincerely your affec-
 tionate sister. RB



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Miss Benjamin Gray

Lexington Reg.



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 1846