

March 10th 1857.

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I am rich indeed this week my
 Dear Anna, for I have letters to answer from
 both you and my Dear Bea, and I must payfully
 come to pay my dues, as ye see one, I shall not
 write two letters this time, but I beg you will
 not think me such an unprincipled debtor as
 to deny the fact, and it would not avail me
 much, with a person of such a correct memory, as
 your lady ships - have forwarded when a great shake
 occurs in our correspondence I shall take it for
 granted that I am the defaulter, so if you would
 not subject yourself to the imposition of two letters
 for one, you must be reasonably persuaded
 both yours, & my dear Brother's letter are full of
 interest to me, I first congratulate dear Howard
 I shiver on the birth of their son, and then be-
 lieve that they are going so far from home
 I do not think woe of going to "a new country and
 commencing a new business," his Father's spiritual
 should be Howard's guiding star. he has had little
 experience in the ways of the world, was not brought
 up to commerce and knows nothing of the people
 among he is going to live. I hope Mr. Claiborne is
 capable & willing to be his friend & adviser and
 from my heart pray they may be successful & happy.
 I should rejoice in my freedom from material
 anxieties & responsibilities - if there were not so many
 children of my beloved sister & Brother, who are dear
 enough to my heart, to make me almost as dis-
 comfortable as if they were my own - I am
 moved wonderfully from her confidence

and walked into her nursery when her babe
was less than a fortnight old. Poor Becky is still
confined to her bed from debility & extreme weakness
in her limbs. The effects of her children with measles
when she was too sick to bear fatigue & anxiety, has
I suppose helped to infect this trial on her, she is
now slowly recovering. ~~Chas~~ Elting has obtained
his suit, and will date in May. A kind step-mother,
his great joy on the occasion will satisfy his Mother
tho she is very loath to part with her darling. In the
Autumn he is to go to Annapolis where the Naval
School is situated, two years is allowed for his
education, & then to Sea. He will be seven then by
that time, the latest period for admission, there is
great advantage in the new arrangement, of prepa-
ring them there for the service. Formerly a boy had
no chance of studying, and when put into the Navy
at an early age, would forego many advantages
which they now possess. I was very glad to have
Mango's letter to her grandmother made, gave satisfac-
tion to Mrs. Thornaby. It is hard to lose the love of our
early friends & protectors from either misunder-
standing, or misrepresentation, and it really con-
cerned me much in this case, because Mango will
always speak & feel the utmost love & grati-
tude to her Mother during all the period of her
school day life. She never heard reproaches
heaped on the name of step-mother, without
warmly defending from her own experience
that character. What estrangement took place
in after years, I know not, but her heart is in its
right place again, and I hope Mrs. T. will
return to her. Mango's health is good, and she takes
a Mother's delight in her babe.

a worthy possession for some time - and since
the old Breckinridge family are disposed of would
go to ruin, if left uninhabited. I often think
of the three happy weeks we once spent
there, when the walls were hung with
beautiful family pictures, representing the
Breckins of another generation, and the
old library held ²⁰⁰ vols of a shattered
collection, which spoke eloquently of
other days, when the lovely names
these represented were in the pride
of youth. 302

Lizzie tells me in one of her letters
that her Mother talks of going next summer
to visit her sons at St Louis, and take little
Betty to see her Father, but I do not think
she will have resolution to go so far - What do
you hear of Appoline & Mrs Alexander?
Dr. Mares' family are absent, & I know nothing
about them - I am glad that Mary, Brodley
family are doing well - and that Sarah has
recovered her health -

Our Sisters & Brothers send affectionate
greetings - I believe they all write to you.
at least they talk of doing so, in order that they
may receive your letters in return. Sally May
wishes the same indulgence - Julia sends her
love - believe me been in that of your affectionate
sister 303