

COPY OF LETTER FROM REBECCA GRATZ, OF PHILADELPHIA, TO HER COUSIN RICHEA GRATZ ETTING, OF BALTIMORE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL COHEN, NEPHEW OF THE LATTER.

I am very grateful my dear Richea, for your affectionate communication, and believe me I sincerely participate your joy on the occasion of dear Kitty's safety and happiness, this day is one to her of maternal anxiety but it is mitigated by a sense of religious confidence in Him, who is all Merciful and who ordained this covenant. Every Mother in Israel must be sensible of a secret joy in manifesting her gratitude for the blessing of a son and preservation thro' the perils of his birth, in this act of obedience to the divine law. Your dear Mother's presence will make her trial lighter. You must again exercise your kindness towards us and let us know how Kitty is after her exertion and how you all are after yesterday's fast. You will think me unreasonable my dear Richea to make claims on you, when I have been so undeserving your indulgence. If to be sensible of my omission, and sufficiently reproachful will satisfy you, I need not fear to make my request and if you should ever feel as stupid as I have been this summer you will need no other apology from me. In the pride of health and sensibility we are not willing to allow that our mental capacities are dependent on the free and regular circulation of the blood, but when languor pervades the system we are brought to the humiliating conviction. I heard a most energetic discussion on this subject some time ago, by a very enthusiastic gentleman, who perhaps had never experienced the head or tooth-ach, and could philosophise on the superiority of mind over the machine which it inhabits and thought it as independent of the wear and tear of it as your fingers would be of a hole in your glove, but what says reason and nature on this subject, as well as might your body affect to be indifferent to heat and cold. The

The compact is too close and inseparable between mind and body for one power to act without the assistance of the other and while I have been oppressed by my usual summer debility I have not felt the capacity to produce an agreeable letter, and so have left my desk full of unanswered letters from all my correspondents and if you do not see in this some remains of dullness I shall attribute it to your nephew, who has no doubt put you in such good humour, that you are disposed to impart your own brightness to all you look upon. Pray has Fanny been calculating the stars, that she has already decided on the profession of arms for the young stranger? Or is her true-love a soldier to whom she means to confide his training? The study of astrology is now almost forgotten and well it is so. Guy Mannering would frighten one, if he were prying into the nativity of our new nephew. Our Horace I can assure you is one of the finest boys of his age I ever saw and if your youngster reaches his size in two months you need not be ashamed of him. Pray what name has Kitty given to him? I suppose as he is the first, he has to sustain the honor of the houses from which he sprung and has a family name. We were here in almost as much perplexity as the Shandean family on this important subject, and concluded much in the same way by introducing quite a new one. However, as the custom of names is changed since the age of the Patriarchs, one title is as good as another, each depending on the bearer to stamp its importance and not deriving its signification from antecedent circumstances.

Present me very affectionately to my dear Cousin and thank her for her letter which afforded me more pleasure than I can describe. I am so gratified to be associated in her interests, she must be assured I shall ever feel, whatever gives her pleasure or pain. Present me also to each individual of the family, assure them of my affection

and congratulations, and believe me, my dear Richea, most sincerely,
ly, and with great affection Your friend and Cousin

R.G.

Sept. 19th 1820

Addressed Miss Richea G. Etting,
Care of Solomon Etting Esqr.
Baltimore.

Although I am not your debtor my dear Richea yet I cannot
refuse the offer of this little space to tell you how sincerely I
sympathise in the joy and thankfulness^{with} which you are all filled and
to assure that I most cordially unite in prayers for our dear Kitty
and good wishes for the little stranger. If you are as fond of
nursing as I am you will be anticipating a great deal of pleasure
in playing with your little nephew and as I shall be a great deal
occupied in that way with Horace I shall imagine myself a participator
in your delights. If you will only think of me as often I shall
be quite satisfied. Present my best love to your dear Parents, Kitty
and every member of the families and receive the assurance of the
unalterable affection of your own.

Ellen

Miriam sends much love to
you and her dear Kitty.

(Ellen Hays?)