

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

March 8, 1822

I do not know my dear Maria, whether you owe me a letter, or I you. as our last passed each other on the road, but as I have not thanked you for one which gave me a great deal of pleasure. & feel as if it was very long since I had written will not wait to weigh the matter _ but speak right on _ would I could dare to hope we might pass the next summer to gether! Yesterday we had letters from Jo who acknowledges the receipt of yours, and bids me tell you that it gave him great pleasure, he calls your son [Jehoshaphat]. which is the beautiful title of endearment all his nephews have had in rotation. but best of all he says, he shall be home in April. he writes in good Spirits tho' disappointed of going to France or Italy. or finding a market for his tobacco at Gibraltar _

our brother Hyman has got out again. after a confinement on low diet for three or four weeks _ and is at present the only male at home. Jac being on a journey at Bellefonte. did you not miss him? for I believe he writes every two or three days to our dear Ben, that he may have an opportunity of saying something to you and about Gratz. the sweet fellow! _ before he left us, he bought the Pirate for you, which I believe this day starts on his journey to Kentucky. it would be unfair to say one word about this book until you have read it. but what do you think _ there is an American novel "the Spy" which some American critics of pretty high pretensions. prefer to "the Pirate" _ and when you have seen it, for I suppose it is within your reach long since. if you do not admit the comparison _ you will at least place it in the forefront of native tales. and at no great distance from the best novel [writings] of the present day. only excepting Waverly & Co [end of page]

the Author Mr. Cooper, of West-chester, New York _ has another work in the press, which promises to try his talent for discription of american scenery _ Mr. Strickland the Architect, (with whom by the by we are at present very busy, as he is to furnish a plan for the new Orphan Asylum) has recently returned from England and brings very bad accounts of the situation of W. Irving. he left him dangerously ill _ the poor fellow lost a sister & brother to whom he was much attached, and he being one of those persons on whose nervous sensibility his frail tenement has a very dubious hold _ it was apprehended that he would not recover _ which, independently of his great worth as an individual, I should consider a national loss _ as we are just stepping into a literary reputation in Europe _ and he has been one of [the] best received Authors _ as you see Walsh's papers, you know how much has been

said here, of the unfortunate fire _ and how much has been done to repair the losses of the Society _ if no lives had been sacrificed, the people think we should be better off than ever _ but I do not _ before this unwished for notoriety _ we could "[pursue] the even tenor of our way." and feared no interference so long as each did their duty _ but now every body has given money to rebuild _ and every body will give advise _ the constitution of the society _ the plan of an Asylum _ and the regulation of the family. has become every body's business _ and of course the difficulties of the managers are much encreased _ for the interest of the society requires its patrons should be respected _ did you not pity me, when you saw my name in the paper? I could not help it _ it was printed at Harrisburg _ & copied here _

I am very sorry we have given you such a bad citizen as the inventor of slander you mention. in such a place as this _ such petty acts are stingless. and the malice once detected. no one cares about the woman _ and half the circle never hears or think about the matter _ but in smaller communities such incendiaries are full of mischief for a time. tho' I should hope old residents might out balance any such attack _

Mr. Berryman, here ruled the Western
[end of page]

[~~Appollo~~] Apollo soon leaves the city crowned with honors of various kinds _ among his other distinctions he is a member of the Phrenological Society _ an institution whose fame will no doubt reach you in full blaze _ Dr. Bell & Mr. Cabot & Isaac Hays [are] doing their best to give it notoriety. [bid?] the lectures of Sir George McKensie _ Dr. Gall &c _ when initiated I will give you further information on the subject but to shew how likely it is to spread I must mention, that Sarah Moses, feels Horaces' head to find out whether he is [proud] _

Our Brothers & Sisters and their families are all well _ and send you affectionate love. Simon has enjoyed better health this winter than for a long time, and looks the youngest of the two elders _ but I hope the foul-fiend [rhumatism] will soon decamp and leave Hyman at liberty to grow full again _ he just comes in to dinner, and bids me tell you that Mr. Stone of Richmond has taken the Pirate [into] custody and will deliver him up to you as soon as arrived.

do My dear Maria let me hear from you soon _ fill a sheet [with?] anecdotes of darling Gratz, I am sure you have an abundance of them in recollection if not his father can help you out _ pray have you no intention of giving him a name? _ give him a thousand kisses [from] his aunt & cousins _ my best love to my dear Ben, I wish he had finished writing in numbers _ that I might be blessed with the sight of his hand writing in something that I could understand _

God [Bless] you both _ and make you thrice blessed in your boy _ believe me my dearest, your affectionate

Sister RGratz

March 8th. 1822 _

Ellen desires her best love to you & her uncle, she is very busy knitting a purse. who do you think it is for? _

[Address:]

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
Lexington Kentucky

[Endorsement:]

R. Gratz
8. Mar. 1822