

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

August 7, 1822

Augt. 7th. 1822

Do not suppose my dear Maria, that I mean to persecute you with letters _ the object of this is to ask you to pay a little attention to Mrs. Stokes the English Lady of whom you heard me speak last summer I received a letter from her on Friday mentioning that she had retreated from the climate of St Lewis, to Lexington where she should stay until her affairs again demanded her presences at Missouri _ she is a singular woman, her manners such as cannot be approved of. but I believe her to be highly respectable _ and certainly very unfortunate _ as she is an unprotected woman, and a stranger. the countenance of a few persons in your station in society may be of the utmost consequence to her. and as her residence will be but transient cannot be much inconvenience to you _ nor would I pay so poor a compliment to you, as to suppose there could be any danger in such association _ as an apology for her, we must remember, that when separated early in life from a profligate husband she emigrated to france, where it seems to have been the object of her friends to make [it] her forget her situation by introducing her into the society of literary persons. and perhaps discussing her own affairs in an abstract manner _ she now talks and writes of her husband _ of divorce. and other matters which on [end of page]

this side the water we consider of too serious a nature to be treated lightly, with as much freedom as if she had no particular concern in them _ I know my dear Ben, would not select such a companion for his wife, nor would I make her my own or my sisters friend _ but as a stranger, in the land, oppressed, and slandered, cast off by her husband for no crime. and only meaning to prosecute her rights so far as to enable her to live reputably in her own country _ it is desirable she should receive a little protection from the good of her own sex. that she may not be cast away. by finding them shutting her out from virtuous society [because] the [singularity] of her circumstances' makes her amenable to suspicion _ she tells me that she has taken the liberty of sending to enquire about me, of Mr. Benj Gratz _ this was no doubt to seek an introduction. and I think you

heard me say enough about her last summer, to know how far her claims on me go _ If you see her, she will soon make you acquainted with her story _ a confidence she place in every one with whom she converses _ and when you have listened to her, what ever degree of pity or censure you may bestow, I think you will be convinced that she relates facts, and "nothing extenuates _ "

I hope she may succeed and return to France, where she may be respected & happy. She is not calculated for American habits, manners, or characters _ yet I feel interested in her fate, and wish her to be assisted by the hospitable and virtuous community of every place her untoward destiny introduces her to _

Mrs. Hunt called to take leave, last Evening, she proceeded this morning to Maryland but I believe does not expect to [end of page]

home before October, they say Theodosia has captivated Mr. Bryan he has been, her attentive slave since his return _

I hope your darling is passing thro' his second summer, (which mothers consider a difficult epoch) with health _ how I long to see him, and his parents _ can you give us a little encouragement to long for the winter? you have no Idea how much comfort may be enjoyed in this climate from the new fuel the Lehigh & Schuylkill [are] pouring into our city _ and how delighted we shall be to see your bright countenance before its glowing light, dearest Maria, try to win our Benj to think of it _ Brother Simon is still at Lancaster _ but he is drawing towards the close of his business and we expect him home in a day or two _ he has kept Hyman at home much longer than he expected to be, but I do not think it is any injury to him, indeed I should not have liked him to travel alone before. he was too much indisposed. and until after Rachels confinement I could not accompany him _ now he will have to go without me, which is only to be regretted on my part. he is able [to take?] care of him self again _ if he chuses. but among his bad [habits?] imprudence with regard to health is very eminent, and the [...] it imposes on him fails to effect a change, so he is incurable _

our Sisters and their families are well _ except Gratz Etting whose nervous system was totally out of order, he is now staying with us in town, to try the effect of change _ we shall send you the Fortunes of Nigle by the first opportunity _ it is not so great a favorite as its brothers & Sisters _ but you can trace a strong family likeness and some features as beautiful as any _ it is a great pity your book-sellers are so patient, or you might be inundated with new books not altogether worth filling your own Library with but very well worth as leisure hours perusal _

Give my best love to my dear Brother, and embrace the boy for me, present me also to your Mother & Mr. Blair when

you see them, and then to your sisters _ Judith Ann. & your other nieces
say something of my wish to be entitled to love them. for your sake my
dearest Maria. and believe me, truly your attached Sister RG.

[Address:]
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
Lexington Kentucky

[Endorsement:]
Rebecca Gratz
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