

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

November 20, 1822

Novr. 20th. 1822

We have both been so long silent my dear Maria, that it would be difficult to say which is the debtor _ but as you have been visited by affliction I take great blame to my self for not having told you before, that my heart sympathizes in your sorrow and would have offered consolation if I had not felt some diffidence in obtruding upon you _ your aged and venerable Aunt was called away in the fullness of years. and but that affection ever mourns such deprivations _ she has only exchanged the infirmities of nature. for that more perfect state, to which our best hopes and wishes would conduct us _ and where we all trust to meet when the duties and toils of this world are finished _ our dear Ben's letters report you and the darling boy well at which I rejoice and now can almost return as good accounts from hence _ Jac, is in Bellefonte with Gratz Etting, who had really been a most distressed and distressing sufferer for six months _ he had a nervous fever in the spring which sunk him into a state of despondency, that appeared to resist every effort _ he passed greater part of the summer in town with us but was always melancholy and depressed, at length however, he consented to [end of page]

go home, and every letter brings more favorable accounts the mail to-day brought one from himself to his mother _ and we now hope, his uncle will leave him perfectly well _ Mr. McIlvaine has no doubt told you what a desperate state all our neighbourhood was in _ but now we begin to see something like bloom on the cheeks of our belles _ and the season is truly delightful _ the city begins to look gay with many coloured garments floating about the streets _ the beautiful new Theatre is finished _ concerts and parties have commenced _ and the busy throngs are in full preparation for Winter _ but I hear the girls say there are so many of the fashionables in mourning _ that tea-parties will be dark & thin _ and I am sure you would be grieved to see the change which has taken place in [the] happy face of Mrs. John Sergeant _ I met her this afternoon, in the deepest black, her countenance pale & sad

and her visage so thin you would scarcely have recognized her _ , she has been very ill _ her husband was at the point of death _ but was mercifully restored _ and her son, in whom she so dearly prided _ her only son, was taken from her! her friends say this is the first sorrow she has known it is a very keen one _ but she is recovering from it and I hope will be as happy again, as she was wont to be _

I wish Mr. McIlvaine had been able to have taken the "voice from St Helena" to you. you would have been so delighted with the exiled Napoleon _ he was great to the last, and would you believe it _ he was more over a good man! _ what a strange bug bear he used to appear to me in the height of his power _ because we never got a sight of the man _ and the tracts of blood thro' which his [end of page]

conquering armies marched sickn'ed and appalled one _ but when the Lion is caged we can admire [the] his royal nature, and feel contempt for the little animals that love to worry [him] thro the bars of his prison _ the English nation is disgraced by the usage he suffered in his captivity but you will have the book and judge for your self

Is Mrs. Stokes still in Lexington? I wrote to her soon after she informed me of her arrival there but have never heard from her since I am much indebted to your Sister Boswell and your self for the kindness she received from you, and should like to know what has become of her _ as you predicted the formidable Mrs. Caldwell _ is lost in the crowd here _ we never hear of her out of the little circle of her immediate friends _ she has two brothers married since she left this place for Kentucky, and I suppose her new sisters interest her too much to make it necessary that she should go abroad for amusement. all your friends here are well _ and send love to you, Ellen & Rosa, and the little Moseses [have] gone to a grand [A...?] this evening, Ellen [commenced] a letter to you some days ago, which I suppose will find its ways to you by the next mail she is so busy purse-making for her different friends & beaux that [she] would think there was plenty of money among them _ tho' in fact, we hear of nothing but hard times breakages &c _ and the fortunes of [her] lover seems too stationary to promise a speedy change in her situation _ but she is happy _ and I contented, as the man in the play says _ indeed, I might say while she is contented, I shall be happy. for her loss will be a serious one to me, when ever her better destiny separates us _ write to me soon, my dear Sister, I long to hear from you my sweet nephew, and my beloved Ben _ to whom present my affectionate love, also to your Mother _ and tell me something of my friend Mr. Blair _ Adieu Beloved, believe me most sincerely

your Sister RG _

[Address:]

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
Lexington Ky

[Endorsement:]

Rebecca Gratz
Nov. 20. 1822