

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

December 15, 1827

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as your last letter has no date My dear Sister, I have only the reproaches of my own conscience to tell me how long it has remained unanswered _ and these are the more severe, as I appeared to leave you to your sorrows _ when in fact my heart is filled with interest for you and your mourning Sister _ but the afflictions we receive from the hand of God _ are ever followed by consolations _ and I trust his mercies have already been manifested to you both _ perhaps this sad event may make a salutary impression on Mr. B _ and work more on his heart during his separation from his family than if he were at home and more immediately in view of its effects.

From my own experience My dear Sister, I can urge the duty of submission to the will of providence, even when it takes from us, those we love dearest & best. and tho' we cannot see through the mist of human affections, the wisdom which directs our trials _ a few years events _ bring conviction home to our hearts _ and makes us freely acknowledge our keenest sufferings are veiled mercies _ to prepare us for others not yet unfolded _

To day being very dull & rainy (as it has been for almost a fortnight) I [~~happened~~ to] open a drawer which contains old family letters, and chanced to light upon a bundle written in 1810 _ we were then new to sorrow. the loss of our beloved Mother was the only grief we had yet known, [that] was indeed removing the corner stone of our whole fabrick _ and the ruin of our domestic happiness!! but tho' we mourned _ we did not know the extent of our loss. Many a time since have I repeated with a full conviction of its force the prophets words _ "the righteous dieth and no man layeth it to heart that the righteous are removed from the evil to come" _ nay I have gone even farther. I have mentally exclaimed O My Mother. My Sisters how merciful is God, to have removed you from evils which would have broken your hearts _ [end of page]

but My dear Sister, I turn over my paper, and will leave all my sad thoughts on the other side _ I have always believed our burthens were proportioned to our strength _ and trust we shall none of us fail in endeavours to bear them patiently _ as our brothers have written to Ben all about their concerns you will know them without my saying more on the ungrateful subject except to tell him Mr. Chauncy has gone to Baltimore on business which will postpone their meeting until thursday so he must not expect as early information

I suppose Scotts new novel has reached you _ and his life of Napoleon almost as familiar in Lexington as here _ I wish I had time and attention to bestow on it _ what I have read gives me so great a desire for the whole _ I have had my young friend Julia

Hoffman during the months of October & November on a visit _ fortunately she has no taste for gay amusements, for really I could not have gratified her, the uncomfortable suspense we have been in kept me from introducing her abroad _ she is a well educated, amiable interesting girl but from living alone has contracted such a timid reserve, that she makes no figure in society _ and would not get credit in the world for half she deserves _ whilst her brother Charles gains friends & admirers where ever he appears _ he has talents _ accomplishments _ and manners to attract _ Ben will tell you why I trouble you with these strangers _ they are the children of an old friend whom I valued & have lost _ I sometimes think the occupation of "old Mortality" was not so senseless or uninteresting either, for is not retracing inscriptions on tomb-stones much the same as reading letters _ when the hands that wrote them are gone too _

our girls all declare they are out of debt to you, but Miriam seems disposed to encrease her demands upon you _ Sarah has been quite in extacies [all] day in consequence of an invitation to a Dance on christmas eve at Mrs. Markoes _ she has never received such a call before, and their [end of page]

discussion is quite amusing, Horace thinks he is included in the title of Masters Moses. and the only objection to going is his fear of meeting [crishkinkle?], which would deprive him of his accustomed presents _ before he went to bed. he gave numerous messages for all his cousins Gratz figures in his imagination as the most manly boy in the world since he has cut down a tree _ and if he could only get an opportunity he would try if he is not strong enough to do likewise _ I dearly love your accounts of your four blooming boys _ and am as proud of them as their parents can be _ tell my sweet Howard he must let Bernard & Hyman love me _ and dear Gratz must not forget me either _ I take hope from your hint that we may have the happiness of seeing you next year. how delightful it is to indulge the imagination of good things in store for future enjoyment _ life would be as tedious as a twice told tale without it our sister Hays has regained her spirits _ and all the family [is?] more cheerful & comfortable than they have been for a year _ Sister Etting has two of her husbands sisters on a visit from Baltimore _ and accompanied them to the Theatre last week, an amusement she has not sought for many years _ Mr. Etting's visit to Baltre. has improved him vastly, he has grown fat & cheerful _ all the family send the most affectionate love to our dear Ben & You, Dr. Brown & his daughter are spending the winter in Phila. Susan is an old school mate of our girls _ and they have renewed their intimacy _ and through you claim relationship _ they are kins in spirits and the ardour with which they pursue their youthful pleasures _ she is very much admired here, and quite a Tea party belle the Moses' have not made their debut _ but are very desirous I shall put them off until the galling chain is removed from our spirits

Adieu My beloved Sister & brother accept my ardent love and prayers
for your happiness _ ever your RG _

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz

Lexington Ky