

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

July 8, 1832

It is a long time My dear Sister since I have been able to write to you _ and few deprivations have been more impatiently borne _ I cannot say that I have suffered a great deal _ but felt that so much time was wasted in darkness, without occupation, that weariness would have been even a greater evil than pain _ had not my amiable & affectionate nieces devoted themselves to my care and amusement _ they read to me several hours every day _ and then would return from their visits or walks to tell the anecdotes or gossip they picked up _ so that I must have been totally ungrateful, not to be penetrated by their kindness _ our good Sister Hays too came every day. and brought word of poor Isabella, and her Martyr Mother, and if these were not motives “voluble of thanks” for all the benefits I possessed over those worthier than my self. I must have lived long in all the plenitude of health _ to little advantage _ there are few conditions in life, My dear Sister, which may not I believe afford occasions for improvement _ “sweet are the uses of adversity” Shakespeare says _ and dull must be that heart _ which in solitude & darkness _ does not meditate on brighter things than those which occupy the senses in the outer world _ my eyes are now perfectly free from disease or [inflammation] _ but are still too weak for constant use, I can only employ my self for a few hours _ and then must rest _ I cannot read at night at all _
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nor always in the day time _ but I hope they will be getting stronger by & bye _ your letters to the girls are written in such agreeable spirits that I fancy you well, tho’ you do not say much about your self. I must confess however my desire for some more particular information on that subject the sweet boys, stand out _ on your pages in bold relief to use a picture term _ I long to hug the dear creatures _ and to hear the tones of Carys voice. if they harmonize with the expression of his eyes _ I would not have him spoiled for the world _ [tell] Ben _ tho I confess it must be hard to avoid it _ you have heard I suppose how rapidly the Cholera is approaching us _ it has been some 10 days at new York _ and is increasing in its ravages _ our Physicians have returned from Canada _ their accounts have induced such preparations, as will be likely to

ameliorate the distresses & sufferings of the poor, when it makes its appearance in Phila. hospitals are provided &c but it is a frightful pestilence, to meet with all that humanity can do to lessen its evils _ people here, do not seem disposed to leave their homes. lest they should encounter it at a disadvantage without medical aid, or other comforts they can have at home, it has traversed the globe so generally that climate seems no barrier or stay _ and with all that experience can furnish _ there seems no system adopted with the usual success as in most other diseases _ we are therefore like David, in a great strait, and with his faith may say _ let us fall into the hands of God for his mercies are great” _ &c _
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Ben Etting has not yet got rid of rheumatism, Chapman has advised him to try the effects of bathing at the Yellow Springs and he is going on Tuesday _ Harriet & Miriam will accompany him they will all benefit by the change _ we have had very hot weather and the country round the Springs is very pretty & healthy _ as soon as the present alarm subsides Ben will go to House-keeping indeed he is now looking out for a habitation, and will not lose an opportunity if any should offer immediately _ Montgomery Blair is at Washington _ we hear the highest praise ~~bestowed~~ [on] him by a West Point Cadet _ he is much beloved _ very industrious _ & distinguished in his class _ he is chosen Corporal an office bestowed on the best looking person [in] the corps _

Henry [Hart?] too you see has been commanding a boat in the fight _ I hope he had not to encounter the heroines on that occasion _ for my own part _ I do not like the manner that attack was made _ it is not on the town and its [inhabitants] indiscriminately that vengeance should be taken _ but I have no doubt your Nephew acted nobly _ and he might [justly] draw [his] [sword] on savage murderers _ making the cause his _ own _ we did not see Montgomery on his way through, but expect he will call on his return _ your Sister promised me last Autumn that she would come to Phila. this summer but before congress breaks up _ people will be afraid to approach our city _ and Mr. B would not be able to leave his office earlier _ what ever old Hickory may think of rotation in office, in his own case, he seems to practice it vehemently in his cabinet & ministers abroad _ I think My dear, if he had a place in his sight for a Woman, you might be sure of gain-ing it _ pray would you like to have a Lithographe made from your picture _ to return his compliment? do not say yes _ for I should not like to send it as a companion to Van Buren _

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Horace has been sick for a few days _ but is getting well
he begs me to give his love to Aunt Maria & the boys _
and Sarah says _ do Aunt, O do give my Love _ and she
looks so very tender, that I am sure the boys would kiss the
word off her lips _ our brothers are home again and
all unite with Sisters & the girls in affectionate remem
brances _ embrace the darlings for me _ and accept
for [dearest] Ben and your self the best wishes and
purest affection of your own attached Sister RG

July 8th. 1832

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz

Lexington Ky