

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

August 18, 1834

Your last letter my dear Maria was exactly to my taste it represented you in such good spirits that I loved to look upon your bright face as it appeared before my mind's eye _ and tho you told me of a fall that disfigured you _ and I remembered the suffering of a similar accident _ I could only admire your fortitude under an infliction which I confess nearly [subdued] mine _ I sincerely hope you have recovered from your bruises and have no worse consequences to dread from the accident _ Carys love & bravery _ and the anxious group around must have inspired you in spite of your pain or I do not think you could have laughed at the hard blows you received _ I had no such sympathy, being alone. and in the dark when I fell _ and could have cried to find how much more [disappointment] at a days delay in [our] journey. than pity for my wounds was felt _ and so my dear Sister I have come to the conclusion that to live in an atmosphere of love such as surrounds you _ is the happiest state of existence. for when evils do come, they are shared by so many we love. that our mental energy triumphs over bodily pain for their sakes. [it does] not require the philosophy of the schools to understand that every effect must have a cause _ and those who know You will be at no loss to discover why you are so beloved.

our friend Mr. Furness has been spending the summer in Boston with his family _ and introduced to me a young Gentleman who was to take his place for a few weeks _ I went to have him Preach last week & yesterday again, and have been delighted with his fine talents, we have found him a very agreeable acquaintance beside _ it is very remarkable how many [able] & eloquent men the Unitarian Church possesses _ whilst it is so rare to hear of a good preacher among the Orthodox congregations _ Mr. Angier will no doubt be distinguished [end of page]

I should like to have procured his sermons for you, but he [was] too modest to let me see them _ I was amused at an expedient of Mrs. Butlers to reconcile her taste & her conscience _ she takes a vol of [Dr.] Channings sermons to church with her _ and after going through the service with the congregation _ reads out of her own book when she finds the preacher dull _ or unsatisfactory _

you must think us quite in a state of lawless outrage _ on this side the mountains, from the account of Riots and violence committed in our cities _ It is really disgraceful to our hitherto peaceful communities that such should occur _ and I do not know how the

misjudging [philanthrophists] can reconcile themselves to the effect they have produced by making the black population obnoxious to their [neighbours] _ and dissatisfied with their own stations _ they [operate] on the worst part, and the respectable suffer _ the scene of riot here was in those southern dens you visited, and it is said many lives were lost _ but the police have been successful, and many of the ring leaders imprisoned. [~~but~~] the Charleston outrage was far more infamous than any in which the poor negroes were concerned _ that beautiful convent the pride of the Catholics and the valuable seminary where education was successfully doing its good work to all denomi-nations, was really too rich a spoil for bigotry & prejudice _

our Sister Etting continues to improve _ she is able to walk out every day. and tho' you would hardly recognize her in the little thin old woman she looks, I hope to see some changes for the better take place before you meet. she constantly talks of her favorite How-ard. and the other dear boys _ but Howard holds his highest place of favor. for my own part I love them all so well, that when the particular qualities of one comes before me something in his brother bears it [company?] and thus I find in each a link to my affections and draws the whole together in our groupe

Ellen returned from Baltimore on Friday _ not much improved but the intense heat for steam boat travelling was sufficient to debilitate a stronger person _ now we have lovely weather
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and hope the change will arrest the progress of pestilence, in those cities visited by it _ I have not heard of any case in Phila. tho' Elizabeth writes to Sarah ~~that~~ [there] ~~it was~~ [such] [no] reportd in Washington but the board of health is so well informed that until they tell us of its appearance we may be satisfied that it does not exist _

Our brothers send you a great deal of love _ and so do the Girls _ and our Sisters _ it is quite an event, when I get a letter from you _ Isabella pleads so hard that it may be brought to her, that I have not the heart to deny her _ & she reads it over & over again, keeps it under her pillow till I reclaim it, and then is so grateful _ admires & dwells on it with so much pleasure _ that I am sure you would be glad to see how happy you can make her. _ In nothing is the benevolence of Providence more conspicuous than in that wise economy which places within the reach of every human being the powers of enjoying happiness [however] limited a sphere they move in _ Isabella _ with disturbed rest at night _ and a portion of every day past in pain & oppression _ is at intervals more cheerful and takes a livelier interest in external objects _ than many who have ease & health uninterrupted _ she talks of riding out with her Mother _ but I confess I am afraid of the experiment _ lest she may lose alittle

which she can not afford to part with _ her breathing is affected by fatigue _ and we do not know what exercise so long untried she can bear _

offer my best love to My dear brother, how my heart glows at the accounts you give of him, always employed & kind & happy _ giving and receiving the blessings of domestic love, and having in the exercise of those charities which the divine Author of our being made necessary to man in social intercourse with his fellow man _ If you [...?] St [Pierrce?] theory it is because with the variety _ or contrast of dispositions your sympathies & [principles] are the same _

embrace your dear children for me _ and give my love to Henry _ Accept dear Sister the united love of all your nieces _ & Horace _ who wont be included _
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How does your Orphan Asylum come on? last week we had a little skirmish in ours, which will be remembered some time by those [concerned], four of the boys took it into their heads to abscond, in order to get a fill of [apples]. three were fortunate enough to get home again in the evening, almost blistered by the sun, as they ran off without their hats _ the fourth was taken up as a vagrant, and put in the “house of refuge” _ where he was detained two days _ they are now all habited in girls attire by way of punishment _ and are ashamed to be seen _ I fear more on account of their dress _ than the roguery of stealing their

neighbours fruit _ we had great apprehensions of losing Mrs. Hall this summer _ but she has recovered. we have an assistant Matron employed _ and hope by good care to keep her yet in the institution which has grown up & flourished under her management _ God Bless you
My dear Maria, believe me always with the truest love Your
affectionate Sister RG

August 18th. 1834.

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
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