

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

November 14, 1836

Phil Novr. [14th.] 1836

Why My dear Sister how long is it since we have met even on paper _ [mine?] eyes long to greet your characters and to hear how the hours pass with you what engages your particular attention _ and in what spirit you entertain them _ Is your house arranged in the new coverings we have sent and do they suit your taste? here is a string of interrogations. and yet the one my heart is most interested in, is not among them which would ask respecting the health of your family. Elizabeth Blair has been with us a fortnight and leaves us to morrow to attend the wedding of her friend Miss French _ she is still the same warm hearted girl _ notwithstanding the ordeal of a winter at court, I do not think she is of a nature to be spoild _ at least I think her fathers love. and good taste in the characters of women _ has preserved _ her from the taint of fashionable manners _ and it is much to say too for the editor of the globe _ that he should find time and retain his domestic virtues in such an atmosphere _ Frank is also here _ on his way back to school we think him a very fine boy _ like our dear Howard, in spirit & look. and he is doing very well at school. and so is James, who has [improved] greatly _ he comes every week to dine and spend the day in Boston row. there Horace is glad to see him _ and I think they are mutually useful to each other. you know Horace gave up his inclination for West Point last spring _ and is preparing himself for a civil engineer. and I think as he was not intended for the Army, it is happy for him he was at first disappointment for under present appearances. it would be more discreditable [end of page]

than ever to take an [education] from the government and not use it in its service _ I believe My dear Sister, I realize a mothers solicitude in the welfare of these children _ certainly I am continually asking my self if I have performed a mothers duty _ and feel too [keenly] the many lapses I have made, yet thank God they are good & virtuous _ have principles of integrity and a love of truth _ and I hope the love of God & wisdom will grow in their hearts as they advance in life _ and see how empty all other sources of hap

piness not having that basis proves _

you will believe how my mind is now occupied by my precious Miriam as the time approaches that we are to part with her _ she is so satisfied & happy, that I cannot bear not to partake of her feelings. and I constantly call myself unreasonable. can any man deserve her _ I should not be able to [chose] one _ but she has chosen, and thinks Mr. Cohen near perfection _ and I can but hope she will elevate him to her own standard of excellence. he seems aware of her elevation of character but do men ever consent to learn of their wives? they sometimes do without their consent. and so we must have him in the hands of providence _ she will not find it out if he does _ but suppose that her friends & not herself were at first deserved. he is expected here on the 28th. Inst. and they will either be married on the 30th. or the 7th. Decr. I expect the latter, tho' Mr. C. is very urgent for her to name the earliest period after his arrival _ Yesterday she & I overhauled her Mothers desk to take out & destroy letters _ lest they should fall in other hands _ and I became so enamored with the recollection of old scenes of past happiness they conjured up _ that few were committed to the flames. and at night the ghosts of many a year past like the sons of Magduff in succession before my minds eye. & I [end of page]

have come to [the] resolution of asking Miriam to give me these relicts. and make one common bon-fire [after of] them & mine together. when I and my generation have passed away _

I hope My dear Maria, you have got all your things _ and beg you will let us know. your bonnet went some time after the furniture _ & the stove was before either. did your silver get safe, you have not mentioned it _ we admire a fellow sett which Jo gave to Sara [Mordecai] greatly _ Sara spent a day last week in town, and looks well again. they appear very happy. Ellen's health also is improved & Sally Hays rode out yesterday for the first time since the birth of her son William Dewees _ poor little Jo Gratz has had a hard struggle with whooping cough. but hope the worst is over. Reuben is walking about the house _ and Sister can carry a lighted candle in her hand without hurting her eye _ so that you perceive our sick list is considerably improved _ and more wonderful still, our dear long suffering Isabella is so much improved that she speaks hopefully of being well herself. with all this you will think I must be very happy _ but still there is a [draw?] back _ still I have a sadness & a care. Jac is depressed, and nervous _ the same dejection that oppressed him last year is again on him _ pray ask My dear Ben to write to him

like the harp of David _ on the evil spirit of Saul _ I think
his Brothers pen may charm away his humour
and cheer him up _ sometimes I think I can scold or
talk him into better feelings _ and I have urged him to
write to Ben, but he says he can't _ & perhaps I have no
business to do so _ but I know you & he can work wonders
on him, and if you will both write to him, he will no doubt
be cheered _ every body sends love to you _ the girls are al
assembled in the dining room at work. Lizzie too, and they
send greetings of love to you & Caroline & Mary too _ to which add
mine _ and to my own dear Ben. a thousand loves & blessings
[end of page]

from all his [Sisters] give _ embrace the sweet boys for
me tell them I think of them together & apart _ remember
something each have said, and love them dearly _ tell
my dr. Sara Bodley I am concerned for her dress _ it is done
at last _ badly done. and I have no way of sending it to her
please give her \$3.50 the change of her \$5 piece which I cannot
enclose _ and hold me accountable for that amount which I
will spend for you in any thing you please _ I will write to Sara
when I can find any one to take the package. love to her
& your Sisters. and all my friends _ tell Mrs. Holly Sara

saw Miss [Austin?], the evening she was here _ Henry Etting
brought her from Balt. and put her in charge of a traveller
going to n.y. had he known she was a friend of yrs he would
have brought her home to us _ but only found out who she was
after she had gone to Dr. Greens with some ladies they travelled in
company with. God Bless you dearest Maria believe me ever your
RG.

Please send me your Orphan report
it may be of use to me _ we had a very
successful meeting of the Hebrew Society Mr. Leaser
gave us an excellent discourse. which produced
some flow of feeling & of cash _ ever yrs _
don't let Jac know I asked you & B to write

I take the liberty _ my dearest Aunt
to send you my very best love

[Address:]
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
Lexington Ky.