

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

May 17, 1835

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Mr. Furness sent to inform us that Dr. Channing could preach in his church this morning, and tho I do not expect to hear any one I like so well as I do himself _ we have determined to go listen to this apostle of the new creed _ I had once the impudence to tell him, the nearer the christian doctrine approached to the tenents of the old revelation the more perfect it must become _ and he acknowledged there was truth in the remark _ his health is so feeble he is obliged to leave Boston every spring _ but go where he will Dr. Channing finds a home in the hearts of his hearers _ I have told you all this My Dear Maria to excuse my not devoting a larger portion of this morning to you, as I intended to do _ but having your delightful letter to acknowledge and more over a prospect of soon seeing you, more clearly defined, to communicate _ I have turned my back on the breakfast table, (before the stragglers have come in) to tell you our present plans _ Hyman left home this morning for a visit to centre county _ which if he executes in the period [allotted], we shall probably be ready in three weeks to begin our journey West ward _ the two Sarah's and Horace accompany us & Hyman our escort _ I shall write to ask your Sister to let Elizabeth go with us _ as it will be a fortnight later before Montgomery can leave the Point. and she seems to prefer travelling with Sarah [end of page]

Montgomerys health has been very much impaired by the climate and discipline of West-Point _ but his recent journey & relaxation has benefitted him I hope essentially and he thinks his native air will reinstate him, he has returned to fight for a prize and there is little doubt of his obtaining it, if he is as prudent as he is clever.

I am sorry we shall be too late to see Miss Martineau not that I claim the privilege of "friendship" but that I found her so agreeable _ so intelligent, so unaffected that her great talents seem to be only felt in their happiest influence _ they do not throw you at a distance but like the sun warm & [vivify _] she & Fanny Butler & Washington Irving _ are the perfection of good society they are so free from pretention _ but bless us, how very

unequal is [they] exchange they make for the pleasure
they give me _ I hope My dear Sister you will see Miss
M. for I have cherished the pride of doing her some service
and my little favorite Mrs. [Erwin] seems to have sympa
thized with me

12 oClock _ Dr. Channing has earned his reputation _ I never heard
a more interesting _ powerful & energetic discourse _ and his whole
soul speaks out with an inspiration which seems to illuminate his
entire frame _ he preached on the virtue of self denial _ and its power
to confer happiness _ until he convinced every one present. that a life
of ease and self indulgence was a life of misery _ and made apparent
the force of Davids assertion "it is well for me, that I have been
afflicted _ since affliction gives strength to bear crosses & evils with a
becoming spirit _ I wish some of my friends heavy laden with cares
could have benefitted by his representation, of the power inherent in every
human being to resist. and controll their burdens _ or put out the
strength necessary [to] bear their weight
[end of page]

Poor Becky Cohen has learned this lesson instinctively _ she suffers
without complaining, and may linger very long in her present state
she says she shall miss my visits. but expresses no feeling of regret
to say truth our Sister Etting is a tie more binding on my duties, but
she will I hope have so much improved _ (being now better), that I
shall have no greater difficulty in leaving home than most
always arise in such a family of invalids _ Ellen took her
daughter to Baltimore this morning, and so Richea will have
no nursling but the Dr.'s little son to engross her _ you would
be amused at the devotedness of our Sisters to their grandchildren
Frank is the best Physician for the Walnut street invalids
Isabellas chamber is a perfect toy-shop. and there is so much
happiness in his smiles _ that one can hardly believe _ wisdom
is at all necessary _ in company with innocence _

I hope our dear Ben has quite recovered from his cold _ I sus
pect the excitement and turmoil of public business _ bank
making & vexations has something to do in his loss of flesh but
a good citizen must take share in the trouble even when others
reap advantage & honors by their labours _ if we cannot command
success _ we can do more _ we can deserve it" _ and this I know My
dear Brother will do _ whatever may be the result _ do not let your
spirit be moved so long as you have this comfortable reflection _

I could not but admire the quietness of Fanny Kembles demeanour
this morning _ tho' her journal is abroad _ abused, critised, [caracatured]
and exhibited in every print shop _ and on every tongue _ it is
provoking to see a copy procured for you on the day it first appeared
grow stale before it reaches you _ no private opportunity offering _
but I suppose you can get it already in the book stores at Lexington _
they all send much love to you _ let me hear from you My dear

Sister, and tell me if I can bring any thing to you, that you think
of from Phila. embrace the dear Boys for me. (there is joy in the
thought of seeing them _ & you and our beloved Ben) God Bless you
all prays your affectionate RGratz

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz

Lexington Ky