

**Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz**

**May 10, [1820]**

I am afraid your good resolutions of writing to [me] often, My dear Maria, will give out, when you come to consider what a stupid correspondent you gain by it \_ ever since the arrival of your request that a letter should greet your return from Cane-wood I have intended to write \_ but intentions travel much faster than actions with us all I believe, and among the most faulty in that particular (I am sorry to say) you will find your Sister \_ but I am not so insensible as to disregard favors, and if you are not discouraged by what you have already experienced, I hope to improve by your example.

I am glad to hear you have recovered from the first inconvenience of your indisposition. tho' from some hints that have reached us, suppose you are not yet done with the "apothecary-shop." you must not expect more than half my sympathy on this occasion, as our Sister Rachel has bespoke the other half. and indeed I have such old fashioned notions on the subject, that I look upon the patriarchal blessing as a blessing still. and think mothers do not pay too dear for their treasures, even thro' their period of personal inconvenience. I hope you were not Dr. Caldwell's patient in his failure of a first attempt as physician \_ his other dis-comfitures are quite laughable. Mrs. C. who is all attention to Col Morrison furnished him with the Drs. defence and his valedictory address. they have not added much to his literary fame in this quarter. and I think the Kentuckians must have adopted him for their own, before they can patronize such rodomontade \_ I have no doubt the T. University [end of page]

will draw together literary men, and induce a taste for literature & science. your society will eventually be improved by it and Dr. C. may be a very useful man, but you must have greater than he, to give it such a character as the great western nation will aspire to. Your poets are complimentary. Miss Hunt must be accomplished indeed to extract poetry from the latin & greek

We have a neighbour who courts the muses, and every few weeks issues from the press a neat pamphlet on hot press letter paper beautifully printed and bearing classical titles. these he sends to the ladies whom he visits, and very modestly denies the Authorship, or affects great surprise how he could be detected \_ no one attempts to criticise his poetry, for no one understands it, the wits read it up & down the page and declare

it has the advantage of being equally fine either way \_ I hope he is not a relation of yours, Maria he is a virginian \_ his name Carter \_ was married to a Daughter of Genl. Lee \_ from whom he unsuccessfully petitioned our legislature to be unmarried, last winter \_ he has four daughters at school here \_ is very rich \_ a great admirer of beauty and our compassionate ladies have sympathized in his unhappiness on account of his domestic inquietude \_ but his poetry has dissolved the spell \_ indeed some of the fair, now take pity on his wife & think had she petitioned for a divorce, she might be justified on the score of his false pretensions to inspiration \_ they think his flirtation with the muses cause sufficient to disgust a woman of sound understanding \_

What is the reason My dear Maria, that you do not tell Ben you wish to pay us a visit \_ you know nothing could  
[end of page]

give me greater pleasure, and I believe he would not deny us the gratification you so kindly are willing to afford \_ every thing that it is in my power to do, shall be done to make you happy here \_ pray do say so to him, and try if he cannot bring you \_ you need not feel timid about coming to our big city you know, there is no place in the country where people can be more at liberty to chose their mode of life \_ and you shall command every thing to suit your own taste & convenience here \_

there is another novel just out by the Author of Ivanhoe, if it is as good, you shall see it \_ I am glad you admired Rebecca, for she is just such a representation, of a good girl as I think human nature can reach \_ Ivanhoes insensibility to her, you must recollect, may be accounted to his previous attachment \_ his prejudice was a characteristic of the age he lived in \_ he fought for Rebecca. tho' he despised her race \_ the veil that is drawn over his feelings was necessary to the fable \_ and the [beauti?]-ful [sensibility] of hers, so regulated, yet so intense might [...] the [triumph] of faith over human affections \_ I have dwelt on this character as we sometimes do, on an exquisite painting until the canvass seems to breathe and we believe it is life \_

Jo & Jac are managers of the Deaf & Dumb Institution \_ we are all much interested, you will be so too when you witness the expression of countenance every new idea lightens up in these poor little blanks \_ the Col. will tell you how capable they are of improvement and how happy they appear while receiving instruction \_ he & [our] Brothers have gone to take a ride this afternoon along the new Canal up the Schuylkill \_

Give my best love to Dear Ben & Hyman, pray Maria give Hyman charges in all his Sisters names not to expose himself to an unhealthy climate in the approaching warm season \_ I have

many apprehensions of his long journey & wish he was back again \_  
Your husband is very much spoild as a correspondent \_ do you require all  
his spare time \_ that he cannot give me any? Adieu My dear Maria, May  
God bless You and him, prays your most affectionate RG  
[end of page]

Rachel Cohen just comes in and begs you & Ben will accept her love  
Our Sister & Ellen also send theirs \_ present mine to your Mother \_ Adieu

May 10th.

[Address:]  
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[Editors' Note: The letter is dated 1820 since it continues several themes from her previous letter dated April 4, 1820, RGC0277.]