

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

November 20, [1831]

Your last letter My dear Maria mentioned that Your little Cary had some return of his fever, and now more than two weeks [have] passed without our hearing from you _ I should be very sorry to attribute your silence to a continuance of the sweet child's disorder _ yet you know [how] foolishly we are apt to blend things together in vain attempts to account for what is not within sight _ and somehow overlooking my own undeservings (for I have not answered your last) I am continually remembering that my rosy-cheeked boy had a fever _ pray dearest, tell me that he is well and that you are all _ just as I wish you to be. happy and well _ delighting every body in your usual kind way, and every day fulfilling your wise determination of gaining some grains of useful knowledge _ If you do my sister, what a sorry figure, I shall make in your society when we next meet for you know how far behind "the March of Intellect" has left me, and what ever efforts I may make to hobble after you I shall be distanced in the race _ no matter, I shall keep your triumph in view and enjoy it with as true a love as sisters heart could wish _

last week Hyman sent you "Moore's Lord Edward [Fitzgerald]" no one wrote by the same opportunity but I hope you have got the book. as we have been much interested and pleased with the perusal _ I think I told you last summer, that I made acquaintance with Pamela's daughter _ was it not too bad of her ever to have married again. after the [tragedy] here set forth so touchingly? _

Dr. Dudleys chairs are on their journey, so the interest of the institution will not suffer this time by the tardiness of professors
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of the useful arts. I hope the learned lecturer will not find his chair too composing for his studies _ your orders are not yet all executed, but will be forth coming with all convenient speed, and I hope meet your approbation.

I am glad my dear Sister, the Kentucky blacks reason so wisely the poor butchers in Virginia have indeed been deluded to their ruin, the summery way of punishing offenders by shooting them down like beasts of prey without trial or distinction _ is too shocking no doubt many innocent suffered with the guilty, and every occasion which exposes a human being to be thus dealt with, in a land of equal laws, is a political as well a moral evil _ Harriet writes that there will be a great immigration

of free blacks from Virginia to our states which I regret _ because we have already more than find employment, and therefore are exposed to suffering & vice _ it is hard they should be banish'd from one state to prey upon another _ I believe I should not have thought of your being in any danger. for I have always seen you with your own faithful people about you _ who seem to love you well enough to shield you from harm, had not your Sister & I got on the subject, just about the time when alarm was contagious _ but you have reassured me _ and I think you would be an able advocate for the race. should such be called for _

I suppose you have heard that Susan Brown is to be married immediately to Mr. C. Ingersoll. her circle then goes to Lousian-na for the winter _ he has presented his elegant french furniture to Susan, who will go to housekeeping in Walnut Street. your friend Miss Peters always desires her love to you _ and says could she use her own hand should certainly write _ but she knows you would not value a correspondence through a second hand. it was some time ago reported that Mr. Brown was addressing her _ but that you may suppose was only a jest _ she was quite disturbed about it _ as she has often declared her intention never to Marry. at present she is interested in another object a young clergyman (brother to the Mr. Richmond you are acquainted with) lately arrived from Greece. has embarked in a project [end of page]

for establishing a college in Athens _ and as he is a good deal of an enthusiast, considers it easily effected by the aid of a few rich Americans _ he has interested several Ladies Miss Peters for one, to assist in his plan _ he has written some peices in Walsh on the subject _ which I regret are not more forcible _ he has brought out a greek costume which he has put on, to shew how nobly they dress _ and said a great many feeble things in favor, of what should have elicited the strength of a powerful mind to ensure it success _ however Mr. Richmond is becoming popular. and many who have listened to him may find out better reasons for reestablishing a seat of learning on the classick ground of Athens where gross ignorance now strides over the tombs of departed genius _

I am very much pleased to hear such good accounts of the Barry's [you write] the most gratifying letters to their friends _ and all are [full of your] kindness & attentions _ Lexington owes its reputation to you _ I think they should vote you the freedom of the [...] and enclose it in a box of jewels to you _ for all who go there to seek a home, find what they seek in you _ how grateful all the Barry's friends are here! _ our dear Gratz is well again, and looks quite like he used to, he came to see me last week & was delighted with Bens [and] your portraits the Drs. wish him to take

exercise which is of advantage to his spirits _ Isabella much as usual _ Sarah had some of her boarding school friends to pass Yesterday with her, she is getting over her [disappointment] of Hannah Fishers friendship _ and is more than ever interested in her studies _ on Sunday she longs for the dear little boys and with glistening eyes tells over & over again the anecdotes her memory cherishes of their loveliness _ we have Hymans little stories, and Howards jealous love _ and Carys arch smiles _ and Bernards sober watchfulness _ and affection spreading over all _ indeed My dear Children Aunt Becky does not know which she loves best _ but she begs you will all remember her & your cousins, and all your Phila. relations _ Jac bids me tell dear Ben, he can get grass cloth handkerchiefs for him if he wishes any he sends you all his love and so do our other Brothers _ Horace finds it harder work to get lessons for Mr. Belmar _ he is improving tho _
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we gave parted with our neighbour Mr. Rutledge on I fear a hopeless tour he went to Charleston on thursday. but his disease has increased so rapidly that it is doubtful if he will ever return _ he has taken Caroline with him _ Mrs. R. does not seem to realize his danger _ how happy for her, since she has to take charge of all her large family during his absence _ and if he returns no more how could she endure such a separation if she realized his danger _

I have my young friend Julia Hoffman here, and am delighted with her, she is very intelligent, well informed. and amiable. she converses agreeably _ reads extremely well. and is quite satisfied with the domestic manner we live. so that I have no trouble to seek

amusements for her, and always find her good society _ the girls talk so much of you to her, that with looking on your picture and listening to your praise _ she fancies her self well acquainted _ pray my dear Maria, how is your finger? I hope it has got as well as my bruises _ for they have all disappeared except a little one on my forehead, and that is more felt than seen _ Adieu my dearest _ our Sisters join in the tenderest love to You & Ben
wish your most faithful & devoted Sister RG

Novr. 20th.

[Address:]
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz
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[Editors' Note: The date of this letter is based on the marriage year of Susan Catherine Brown and Charles Jared Ingersoll and Nat Turner's Rebellion in 1831.]