

March 23rd - 1808

My Dear Maria

I determined not to write until I could collect something amusing to communicate or felt inspired with more than my usual spirits to communicate it in for really I fear you will think stupidly has become my inseparable companion and begin to wish for a release from my correspondence. Yesterday I received a letter from New York mentioning the increased indisposition of our dear Harriet and Eliza's departure for Albany which has excited so much anxiety about her in my mind, that I must forego the above resolution and entreat my dear friend that you will forward some information of her. I hope like most bad news this account has been exaggerated and that she is not materially worse than when you last wrote. Your husband has no doubt returned on this and given more correct accounts than even her own letters. In her last to me I could discover a greater depression than she usually suffers on that account but the dreariness of winter by which her mind is ever affected might have had some influence - and as I know her equally susceptible to the charms of spring I feel my hopes revive with the advancing season. How imperfect is all human happiness! Harriet possesses a mind capable of extracting ^{the} good from every situation of life, she could be

content in any station, draw amusement & instruction from the most sterile sources, and feel the advantages of an independent mind let the world wag as it may - but, she is not exempt from her portion of trouble, the infirmities of a slender constitution reduce her to the common lot - and in the scale of happiness, she too must submit -

6. Biddle who has just returned from New York, tells us Ann has greatly improved in beauty, and that Matilda retains all her loveliness, he confirms the accounts brought by all travellers of their holding the first rank among your belles. tho' appeared a little mortified at Ann's having forgotten him - he has been on a matrimonial expedition to the Eastward, and it is said has succeeded with a Miss Gibbs, a lady of large fortune in New Port -

By a letter I received from Washington this morning, we are in expectation of seeing him here tomorrow, which you may suppose is very agreeable to us. poor D is quite sick with a sore throat, but since the arrival of the mail has been so indefatigable in his remedies that I expect a speedy recovery, will be the effect of the anticipated arrival of his friend -

When you see Mary Fackie give my affectionate love to her, and say I am greatly flattered, and gratified by her kind remembrance of me. Mr Bee without giving me any particular message, assures me I am much indebted to her good opinion - and I feel disposed to acknowledge very gratefully any favor from one I so much esteem. Is it true that James Paulding is going to be married? it is confidently reported here -

Rachel sends you her best love. your fringe is at length done

March 23 1861

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New Ogden Hoffman

New York

Miss Emily

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