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Phil - May 18th - 1815

I feel my Dear Maria that I am fully intitled to at least half the blame of the tardiness which has crept into our late punctual correspondence, and if I were not much more than half the loser by it, I should hardly think myself entitled to your forgiveness. but truly, I have so little to tell, that can be interesting enough to engage a mind in the constant fulfilment of such active duties as daily occupy yours. that without any disparagement to the ardour of your friendship (which I would not doubt for the world) I often check my inclination to write, as a fruitless effort to entertain you, and a hopeless one of drawing you to your desk - and therefore in your own style, commune with you in imagination, rather committing my letters to paper, notwithstanding all which, my friend, we talk of you to all who have had an opportunity of seeing you and endeavour to make ourselves familiar with all your concerns - Mr. Hoffman almost cheated us into a hope that you would pay us a visit this summer - on expressing our wish that he would stay here a day longer - as said he, "I would rather bring Maria and pay you a visit in the summer." ignorant of any particular objection to this plan, until your letter arrived, I was only waiting for the season to advance into something like pleasant Spring before I reminded him of his hint. but you have anticipated me, a few such families as yours would soon make up the ravages of war - I am rejoiced to hear Dear Eliza is again blest, and hope her health will improve, tell her I hope she will find time in her nursery sometimes to renew her communications with her old friends -

I wish Charles would bring his family here before he goes Northward. They would form quite a female group, and his little daughters would be delightful companions and occupation for their Grandmother & Aunts. Maria is really a charming woman, her character has had more offshoots of unfolding in the varied duties of Mother & Wife. and has been painfully tried by the deplorable situation of her sister. as much as possible she devotes herself to her Mother & Mrs. M - her husband's absence too, is a trial of fortitude, but she retains her amiable equanimity of temper & spirits tho' her sensibility cannot be doubted, where her every day exertions to relieve or share her Mother's case is witnessed.

Our Fashionable world is running mad, after these Titled strangers. They are received with the most distinguished hospitality. Town & Country feasts made for them daily and even children anxious to get a sight of nobility crowd round the door to see them go to & from their carriages -

I have only seen them in the street yet - but think it probable shall meet them this Evening at Mrs. Markoe's - are you not pleased at the appointment so honorable & advantageous to our friend J Paulding? he left town yesterday on his way to Washington. you are to lose W Irving too I understand. what new garnishes have risen up to supply their places, or are you to sustain a loss unrequited? fashion so entirely prevails every thing that perhaps even their wit & pleasantry might lose its charm when the novelty is gone and, thus you must console yourselves that they do not wait its wane -

I thank you my dear, for the recollection you express regarding my journeying with with. So this summer Niagara is associated in your mind with so many agreeable recollections - that you attach sentiments of another nature, with your love of the sublime & grand. indeed, there is no trial in nature I would more gladly take a journey to behold - and should rejoice to be companion to become his companion, if I could satisfy myself to

May 16. 1815
1834

Miss Lydia Hoffman
N.Y.

New York

