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My Dear Maria

Tho' it is a fortnight since I received your letter, I hope to be forgiven the apparent neglect of not answering it before - I sent it immediately to Dr. Chapman, and was informed by him, that he had written to Dr. Wilson, and that his opinion was already in Charleston so that I hope our Dear Eliza will have the advantage of it on her voyage. I have not heard from her since, and suppose she is already on the ocean. if you have any account later than that you mentioned in your last letter do communicate it, for we really all feel very anxious to hear. I have not been able to learn from the southern papers whether the Horatio has sailed. Letty will I suppose accompany her, and we must hope all things - believe all things for her good, until the welcome tidings of her amendment reaches us. You are I suppose beginning to look for the return of your husband. have you made proper preparations for his reception? reunited back the rods of health to greet him, and disarmed cough & sore eyes from your household? If you have not lost time in doing so. March has always proclaimed mischief to unprotected invalids, so you are armed with caution against its danger, and I hope will not allow its "winds to visit your cheek too roughly." Tho' you have left your chamber I hope you do not take the freedom of the whole house, going up & down stairs and into cold rooms, after a long residence in one apartment, where fire is constantly kept, is too sudden & frequent changes of climate for any one in delicate health, & you have had

sad many warnings. that Providence could not pardon a neglect of her admonitions. When you were very young, Maria, Prudence was your favorite virtue, & we thought you would adopt her as your patroness this life, but since you have had most occasion for her directions in the regulation of your own health, serious apprehensions have been entertained that the rebellious spirit that tempted Mother Eve, would win you in the favor of this unerring power -

Annie's little girl is better. the warm weather we have had produced a sensible change, which induces her mother to hope the approaching season will restore her. I hope all yours continue well. this was rather an unpropitious moment to dispose of your house, as there is so great a difficulty of procuring another. your husband must make a purchase in a pleasant, convenient situation, where he will not be inclined to re-again. My Brother has done so, and we are all delighted with it. a friend of ours who lately paid Phil^a a visit, said to me one day. why you live quite an arabian life. every time I come here, I find you have changed your home. in four years we had moved three times. but I believe our furniture will now grow old in its present station. unless the changes of life, instead of the change of humour sets us a drift. you will not fix on any new abode till Mr. Hoffmann's return. we expect Ben home next week. he has been at Washington since the first of Feb. where business detained him I hope to his advantage. as he has had an opportunity of hearing the great lawyers & the great Statesmen of the nation. and also been present at court I received a letter from James Paulding a few days since. he appears quite satisfied with his residence there

13 and has lost nothing of his caustic wit there, nor his overflowing sensibility. I hope he will get on the right hand of fortune at last. he is a great favorite in the society of Washington.

Your friends here are all well, and send you affectionate remembrance. I have been greatly satiated by my good sisters for not writing to you before. because we then might hope to hear from you. indeed when I got your letter, I thought to have answered it by return of mail. but two days passed before I saw Dr. Chapman, and then I met him in the street as I was going to the house of mourning. the eldest brother of my dear Mother died suddenly, at an advanced age, his life from the cradle to the tomb had been a life of childhood & innocence. his capacities too limited for usefulness or activity in this world, but not too humble to glorify God and serve him in truth & constancy. his departure is not a ^{surprise} as several days Aunt Cohen did not recover from ^{but for} his last moments, and we passed much of the ^{witnessing} ^{I take} ^{up} ^{time} on this, that you may not regretfully regret ^{me} ⁱⁿ ^{writing}.

embrace your dear children for me. and give my love to Edward. accept also the affectionate salutations of Sally Rachel & all the family. Sally thank God continues well. I am sorry Marys health improves so slowly. she has been misinformed respecting the Co. Pulla writes me, that she has been angry with them, about a report, of which they know nothing - Mrs. Ogden & Gatty are expected here in May. Mr. Meredith has bought the house the Hamilt-tons lived in at Chestnut street. which he has improved & furnished very handsomely, and they live in very excellent style. Gertrude goes in company & is admired. Adieu. My dear friend, may you have all happiness, and health to enjoy it yours Affectionate Rly.

March 10th 1816

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Miss Gutz

Mrs. Ogden Hoffman
New York

Received