

June 3rd - 1818

I am very much perplexed, my dear Maria, how to answer your simple question, why you have not heard from me? yet I do assure you it was not new to my thoughts. I have asked myself the question every day for a month, and each time determined to answer it as it should have been done long before. but fatigues of body and mind occasioned by some latent indisposition, and the occupation of my time which Rachels bad spirits & the indisposition of Richards little girl has given me kept me from you and all my more distant friends, but all these painful things are I hope passing away - and then, you know, how naturally my attention will turn to you, who have always such a strong hold on my heart. I am much grieved at the situation of Mrs Ogden, the poor Girls will meet with their severest affliction in her loss. the last year of their life has been full of care and trouble. but all will appear light when compared with their present bereavement. Mrs M's presence will be a support to them, but we know how little human aid can do to lighten such a stroke.

As you do not mention your own health, I hope you have nothing to complain of on that score. the domestic difficulties you name, are too common in our country. I believe it is an evil growing out of our own indifference to the moral conduct of servants, if we required those who behaved improperly to their former employers, the fear of not obtaining service would keep them much more faithful to their engagements, and more anxious to obtain a good character by deserving it. but we need not expect to reform

19
the age, until the community agree on some general plan to that
effect. Ann's health has been very feeble indeed this Spring, but
I think she begins to look better, tho she tells me her appetite has
not improved. The tooth ach has added greatly to her other complaints.
She has lately been with a dentist, who has extracted three, and
relieved her from much pain & more apprehension. Your observations
are very judicious, and I should rejoice to see your wishes realised
in her, but I believe her habits are too confirmed to be changed.
Had she a disposition to be contented with her lot, I think she
would now be so. Her husband's salary is a very comfortable sup-
port for them. She has received attentions in P. that should be, not
only satisfactory but flattering to her, the best society and on the best
terms is hers. entertainments are not expected from her, but her
society is courted, and her friendship solicited. her husband is a
favorite, and has more consequence in Phil^a than he can have
any where else. his friends here are among influential persons
of high rank in society. These for a man whose talents can not
raise him to distinction among strangers are most important ad-
vantages and I fear if they fail to procure contentment. Those
undefined expectations change of residence & situation hold out.
will be followed by disappointment. experience, my dear Maria, will
teach Ann, that the seat of happiness must be within her own
breast, and that whatever may be her lot in this world, the
wisest plan is to make the best of that circumstances will
allow. very few persons realize the expectations they have formed
of life, but happily the hand of time so gradually unveils their
destiny, that they are scarcely aware how ^{much} the bright colors of hope
have faded into sober reality.

With regard to my self. My dear friend, my taste has so much changed
that the loss of society will not interfere much with my enjoyment

June 3 1878

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Mrs Ogden Hoffman

New York