

Philadelphia Feb 9th

You have made me rich my dear Maria, two such treasures as your kind letters have not been in my possession for an age before, and if you pay so high for my poor wares, I shall become quite covetous. indeed my beloved, your second, was a balm to the anxiety which your first account of the state of your health excited. and tho' I am sure you have made the best of your present feelings I hope you will consider yourself as invalid, and take every possible means for your restoration. when I read your letters I longed to be with you. and indeed this desire is not likely to subside. I have lived on in the hope and under the shadow of an expectation of this kind for two years. and trust the present one will not close without giving me that happiness. but I cannot consent to your proposition of meeting half way, you must either come to me, or I will go to you - and then should such a plan be eligible we will journey together.

Your friend S. Vesplanch spent but one day in Phil^a he dined with us and we tried to detain him for a ball the next evening but could not succeed. it was the first I had been to this winter - and was a most splendid one. at Mrs Markoes, Joseph Bonaparte & his daughter were there. the latter is very diminutive and rather homely. except when she speaks her eyes are fine. and she has a good expression of countenance. the King has a face of goodness and his manners are the most affable and condescending considering the station he has filled. he appears desirous of becoming familiar with our society and conducts himself like a well bred gentleman among his peers - Markoes house is very handsome and calculated for entertainments. the host & hostess are charming. and every thing conducted in the very best style.

There were six rooms open and more than 200 visitors. The Ladies Drop
a great deal and really, it was quite a magnet to the Spectators
the Countess does not dance but she seemed much pleased. They
accept all invitations and give return dinners once a week. after
which the party are invited to adjourn to the Theatre, where the Count
has always a box. this is an arrangement which suits the young
lady very well, as she speaks very little English and having no
relation would be awkwardly situated at large parties at home -
it is reported Bonaparte has taken Sims' house - but I suppose he
will not occupy it this winter. the family have not moved yet.

I have scarcely ever known a failure which excited more feeling
than this - formerly Mr Sims was the standard of rich men - and
it was giving a sufficient standing to any fortune that could bear
a comparison with his - now all his property is for sale and its value
so much depreciated by change of times that perhaps when all is
sold his creditors will not be satisfied. his misfortune has risen out
of vast possessions in real estate not bad speculations - shops
unemployed - houses & stores untenanted - and taxes mortgages &
interests to pay - poor Mrs Sims has been an invalid too for more
than a year from a stroke of palsy. and the evening of their lives
seem likely to set in reverses & miseries.

I mentioned in my last letter that Grator Etting was expected
home & am happy to add he arrived in much better state than we
apprehended and that we entertain great hopes of his entire recovery.

What you say of Miss Kollman is corroborated by the manner in
which the speakers of W. Irving here. I am told they are both quite enthusi-
astic in his praise, but speak with a freedom from any embarrassment
such an engagement would be likely to produce. I met them at Mrs
Mockers but was not introduced and made no acquaintance with them.
did you see an article from "the John Bull" on the subject of Shakespeare

Spirits. and may health & every happiness a mother's heart can
know be yours. Rachel & Ellen bid me send their best love - give
mine to Mr H. & your children - and believe me devotedly yours Rly.

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Mrs J. B. Hoffman

New York

Thm Frost

