

Philadelphia Dec^r 29th

My Dear Maria

I have been delighted to see your husband, and to listen to his accounts of you and your little darlings. I have scarcely ever seen him look better or appear in more agreeable spirits. his visit on Thursday cheered us all, and I do not know when I felt happier than while in his company - but since then I have constantly been disappointed every time he called I have been out - Miss Rachel must just take it into her head to play a naughty trick, and has been quite sick in consequence of it. She has been obliged to keep her bed for two days, but is now much better, and I hope will take better care of her self for the future. She acknowledges with some mortification that this untoward circumstance cost her as much suffering as she might anticipate with a blessing annexed to it had she prospered in her undertaking. and as the annals of such ladies as you & the continually present the rise & progress of a new generation I cannot help lamenting every mischance that occurs in your painful career - From Mr. Hoffmann's hints I presume you are in expectation of the arrival of your home of trial very soon. You have always been so mercifully sustained through those perils. that I confidently rely on the continued blessing of Providence to guard you in the present. at the same time my love, I beseech you to act with the utmost prudence, as this inclement season must require. and the absence of your husband particularly imposes on you. You have much of my thoughts, and my constant prayers for your preservation & happiness. your good neighbours the Ogden's must supply the place of your absent friends, and in some measure replace Eliza's loss. I know they love you, and that they are capable of great kindness when they love. I am sorry to hear dear little George has been so sick. do not

be afraid of the warm oil. it sometimes produces no other visible effects than restoring the appetite. I think you had better give it to him again after an interval of three or four weeks. has Charles perfectly recovered?

I never saw Ann look better. she has a fine colour and appears to enjoy perfect health - I am sorry to find you have such good grounds to complain of her. because I thought she had been at least awakened to a proper sense of all your kindness towards her, and I have heard her express so much affection for you, that I hoped it would influence her future conduct. but really I believe she has not any idea that her omission must appear ungrateful in your eyes. she has been always such a favoured child of fortune so much caressed - and so much attended to - that she seems to think her friends sufficiently rewarded by the pleasure they feel in obliging her -

Since her return from New York we have seen very little of her. we have sometimes felt hurt, that she neglected us in our misfortunes. and have thought we had claims on her. but a little reflection has banished every angry feeling. and convinced us that the error, if there be any - arose from her natural disposition. I hope she may long find her path through life smooth & strewed with flowers, that she may like the bee, rove from one sweet to another and gather honey from the fairest - she has the talent of pleasing whoever pleases her. and while youth & loveliness lasts she will always be successful. & of course happy - I do not doubt she will think more seriously by & bye. and ~~then~~ learn to distinguish who are really her friends - If she does not love you with all her heart & soul then - I shall never presume to have any knowledge of her character - I wrote a note to her enclosing an extract of your letter respecting Lucy's mother, which brought her round to see us, we had not met before in a long time, but she has been here twice since, and as she does not go into company this winter, she has promised to come more frequently here - she is delighted with her father & brother's visit. she reads a great deal. and passes her time at home very hospitably - Kiss sweet Julia for me. she must be very lovely and very interesting. I should love to see her mimickry. My little namesake

Dec 29 - 1892



M^{rs} Ogden Hoffman

New York