

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

[March? 1820]

Indeed My Dear Maria, I shall not practice so much forbear-ance as to follow your example _ particularly as I had it in contemplation to write you a full week before the arrival of your letter, and you have written so agreeably as to make me more desirous to place you in my debt again _ Yet, perhaps had I proper humility I should turn from commendations, too grateful to my heart to be harmless _ you must not praise me. Maria, for you know how I rely on your integrity _ and if you make me vain _ you will no longer love me _ and then I shall be punished for your fault _ I am glad to hear your husband has returned home again, we expected to have seen him last Month in Phila. but now I suppose it is too late for him to visit Washington this season. and we must give up the thoughts of seeing him _ you have no doubt heard of Charles Nicholas' appointment, it is thought a very good one, and adds 1000\$ to his salary. how will Ann like to reside at Richmond? she will scarcely go there until the Autumn I suppose. as the summer climate is not agreeable, in other respects she will probably be as well pleased to live there as any when out of New York. I am told Charles is very much pleased with his prospects and I sincerely wish they may be realized.

I am glad to find you have been as much interested in Ivanhoe, as I have _ and as great an admirer of it. I believe I felt a little extra pleasure from the circumstance of Rebecca's being an hebrew maiden. but she is certainly the most lovely female character he ever drew _ and indeed I admire the whole work as much as either of its predecessors
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Bois Guilbert too is an admirably drawn character _ and almost every scene would make a good picture. or be fine in dramatic representation _ I am surprised it is not an universal favorite, we have some critics here too, who "would d-n it with faint praise." but I hope we shall have a series of english tales as agreeable as the [scotch] ones _ you may believe I feel grateful for this justification of the jewish character, even old Isaac's avarice is more the effect of persecution than natural baseness of mind, and the goodness of heart sometimes glanced at. and his strong attachment to his daughter, shows that [in] other times, and other circumstances would have made him a humane being _ It is worthy of Scott, at a period when persecution has re-commenced in Europe. to hold up a picture of the superstition and cruelty in which it originated.

Mr. Verplanck has had the kindness to send me Dr. Jarvis's

discourse on the religion of the N. A. Indians which I have read with great pleasure, I wrote him my thanks last week, but my note did not go, and now it is so late, that I must get you to express them for me _ tell him I am very much gratified to have been recollected by him _ [send] when you tell me your husband & he sometimes speak favorably of me, you make another attack on my humility _ but if your friendship does not make me proud may I not bear the good opinion of other people? _

Did you hear Mr. Everett of Boston preach? I did, and was so much pleased with him, that I could not help wishing you might go to his church in New York, Mrs. Meredith would not go but several clergymen, and a large congregation of different sects of christians did, and I believe all were gratified, and none offended _ I cannot comprehend the unitarian doctrine from what I have heard or read of their sermons, and Dr. Adam's account of them _ but certainly there is great contradiction in their belief & preaching _
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an episcopal bishop, might have said amen to the whole of Mr. Everetts service the evening I heard him, without betraying his faith. and his eloquence is so simple & touching that his taste as well as his understanding would have approved _ I hear he has become the Editor of the N. American review.

I am [sorry] to hear Eliza Rodman is in bad health your account of her makes me desire to know her _ I remember many endearing traits of her childhood _ and our dear Harriets attachment to her, gives her an interest in my regards I am glad she is so great a favorite of yours _ a young female so destitute of relations of her own sex, must feel such a friend all important to her happiness _ particularly one of so gentle a nature as you describe Eliza _ Where is Mr. Rodman is he in health? _ and comfortable circumstances?

I long to see your dear children again _ Miriam [& Becky?] seem to have a great respect for Julia since she has been a bride-maid _ they are also pursuing their studies with great avidity. they commenced music about the time Julia did, but Becky who is nearest her age. knows nothing of french _ Your sons will enter college earlier then our boys _

Rachel bids me present her affectionate love, she has been slightly indisposed. her little Sarah is one of the prettiest & smartest children I have ever seen. she is a great chatter box, and talks remarkably plain. of course is the pet of the family _ The city is now very gay notwithstanding hard times _ people in the beginning of the season meant to economize but have grown tired of such an effort. and such a crowd of parties have come into March, that it is difficult to find evenings to put them in _ Isaac Hays. has just taken a Drs. degree, to

the gratification of his parents _ & friends _ remember me to
Mr. H. and believe me my dearest Maria unalterably your RG_

[Address:]
Mrs. J. O. Hoffman
New York

I found this [l...ish] letter, a few Moments
ago, in Johns [Drawwe?] _ far back and
by accident [it?] [...] with papers
OH

[Editors' Note: The year of the letter is based on the year Isaac Hays graduated from Medical School
and the month based on Rebecca's note about parties that month.]