

Leicester,

Nov. 2, 1869.

Dear Cousin Sam, When I read the notice in "Liberal Christian" of your Recollections, it was my wish and expectation to write you about it forthwith. But I then had on hand a document of some ^{local} interest ~~here~~ to prepare for the Town, & to be read to a Comtee. next day. I was more than fully engaged all the following day, & on Tuesday morning I left home, & was gone until Sat. noon. My sister Caroline return'd with me, and I found such an accumulation of matters pressing that my writing-opportunities have got driven to the wall. ~ But I cannot let Ade. go to Syracuse, without carrying a word from me, on the subject, & in acknowledgment of yr. note from Canastota, which came to hand last Saturday.

I had been waiting to see the working of the medicine you so gently and forbearingly administered in your book. I

thought it most likely that the parties whom your truthful words had - not "pilloried" but - recorded ^(generally in their own words) as false to their Christian professions and ministerial duty, in the matter of Slavery, would submit to your judgment in silence, as the easiest way for them, in the circumstances. The "Register" was evidently following that dumb & shallow & unworthy policy. So far as I can hear, not a word has appeared therein in review of your Book! I have desired watchful readers to let me know of, & see, ~~the~~ ^{any} article of the kind ~~of~~ which might appear. But up to last week they ~~had~~ reported ^{that} nothing had appeared. Somebody, it seems, was stung to ^{write} the notice in Lib. Chra. You doubtless saw, some weeks ago, in that paper, Rev. Mr. McAuley's commendatory notice of your book? Were his initials given, because the L.C. wd. ^{thus} not be responsible itself for such commendation? Was the later notice anonymous, & without dissent, as

indicating the Editor's agreement thereto?

Be that as it may, the fact remains that the
medicine you administered takes effect. — ^{and the criticism is more welcome than an attempt to ignore.} It
is small criticism, ^{however,} to charge you with hiding the
faults of the Abolitionists — even had you done so
and virtually claiming, as an offset, that you should not tell
~~as a reason for not telling~~ the truth of Dr.
Gannett! It is a complete misrepresentation
of the case, to vitimate that his words (as
refer'd to by you) were hasty, or drawn forth
by provocation. Nothing more deliberate was
ever said by man, than he, in conversation
with John Pierpont & Geo. E. Ellis in a R. R.
car, declared his belief that the due observance
& execution of the Fugitive Slave Law was
necessary to the salvation of the Union.
His defence of Dr. Gannett is a thorough piece of
Special pleading — ^{the writer} affirming his own premises,
as the correct ones, & entirely leaving
out all the facts, well known to those really
in the Antislavery struggle.

As to your "failing to indicate the real
antislavery strength in the Unitarian body"
— he means, among the ministers, —
I suppose,

I have only heard, previously, the remark that you had been remarkably generous and liberal in extending the list so far as you had. And when you distinctly say you "may have forgotten some whose names should stand in this honored list," you certainly guarded the point of omission very sufficiently. It was a very difficult task to ~~say who~~ make ^a list of Antislavery ministers, - so different ~~would be~~ ^{are} the standards set up by different persons as to what constituted an abolitionist. Some thought that a single sermon a year, & praying for the slave in moderate & unexciting phrase, & abstaining from abuse of the Antislavery movement, was enough. - I make bold to say that more than that was needful, - a great deal. Of all the men he names, as omitted by you, what one ever dared to risk his pulpit by bold & fearless rebuke of iniquity, or ever went upon the A.S. platform to encourage the few laborers there, or point out to them a better & "more excellent way" ? Except Wheelock (Dover, N.H.), Alger, G. W. Stacy & E. C. Towne, I know of no brave work any of these men did before John Brown times. Then E. A. Sears could outdo him. "Not any spot, six feet by two, "Can hold a man like thee!"

I know, & admit, that it is the fact that most of these persons had decided antislavery sympathies;— they ^{men,} were ~~not~~ ^{and} had the consciousness that the abolitionists were thorough, and indispensably, in the right. They, once in a while said so; but little more came of it. The magnates of the body would have no terms kept with the cause or its adherents, and ~~they~~ ^{these lesser men} kept as quiet & safe as possible.

— ~~Some~~ ^{are essential} Some have deed and self-sacrifice to show a man's title to be ranked with Charles Follen and W. H. Furness, & John Pierpont, ^{& Theo. Parker} & Caleb Stetson, & J. G. Palfrey, & O. B. Frothingham, and Nathl. Hall, & F. Frothingham, & such as they.

And the ^{Critic} ~~writer~~ says of the omitted ones, & of others, that they were "unknown to fame." If so, how can he expect that you should publish what was unknown, or known to but the locality where they dwelt? — I believe you didn't pretend to name every one, but you certainly showed that it was in your

heart to name every one who could
possibly lay claim to the title of an
Antislavery man.

"The narrow & exclusive spirit
of Mr. May's Reflections."! That
man ought not to stand behind a wall
& fire. Such astuteness, such pene-
tration, such intuitive power of "seeing
what is not to be seen"
~~detaching the evidence~~ right not
to be hidden under a bushel, but
should be known abroad. I will venture
upon no conjecture as to ^{who} the writer is;
I would not wish to make so grave &
sad a mistake as to attribute the
authorship anywhere, where it did
not belong.

To answer your direct inquiry,
I think no one of the 13 persons named,
(or of the 10 named just previous to them)
ever spoke prior to 1845 in open anti-
slavery words, & that because most
of them were not upon the stage until
a later day. G. W. Stacy is one of the

early abolitionists, - was a Universalist, a
Restorationist - a Hopedale Communist -
& not to be named among Unitⁿ. ministers
until a comparatively late day, - when
antislavery having become tolerated, he
could be recognized. Some of the
men I had no acquaintance with - as
Joshua Young, L. G. Ware, Howard, Wheeler,
Cudworth, Bartlett, & Fitzgerald.
Most of those de names came upon the
stage, after the Missouri Compromise was
struck down, - certainly after the enactment
of the Fug. Sl. Law. - ^{that law was} too bad for any but
devils, - or old case-hardened men,
whose moral sense had been seared
by long hatred of the abolitionists - to
put up with. The Country was rising. It
was small sign of moral heroism to denounce
that infamous law in occasional speech
or sermon.

I have been compell^d. to write on
the gallop; - & am call^d. in many
directions, so must send best love for the

present, & only begging you not to
be led off on any false scent, and
not to apologise ^{or draw back} as for wrong done. — You

have evinced ~~an~~ a catholic & generous
spirit ^{in your book — not an "exclusive" one,} — Instead of blistering those false
prophets, treacherous
members of the Gospel — as their baseness
I had hearts deserved — You have only
quoted their own words — spoken of

their well known deeds. Hold them
all to that; — and give a due
rebuke to the man who gets behind a
hedge to fire at you.

Even admitting every name he claims
— your charges against the Unitarian
body are not touched.

Faithfully & Lovingly
Yrs,

J. May Jr