

From your Study Chair, Sunday P. M. —

Dear friend & Cousin;

July 12/57.

I have just finished the perusal of your Correspondence with Mr. Pierpont, to which I have given 4 hours; and of which I will briefly give you <sup>some of</sup> my impressions, while they are fresh. Let me add, that a share of the 4 hours was consumed in taking a memorandum of the correspondence. This I know is a liberty wh., in most cases, I could not take in the circumstances. But I began it, in order to give my wife (who wished to read it, but had not the time, as she went on to Geneva yesterday) the outlines of it. I shall make no other use of it, without your leave. But I would like your permission, if you can give it, to show it, (or, to speak more correctly, to allow it to help my memory in relating what I can of this correspondence,) to my father & mother, and to Messrs. Garrison & Phillips, <sup>St. F. Jackson</sup> who are so pointedly mentioned therein. One more suggestion — I wish you might be at liberty to lay the whole correspondence before Messrs. G. & P. & F. J.; and, to that end, <sup>ask</sup> ~~ask~~ Mr. Pierpont's consent. ~~to that end.~~

I have been struck, first, with Mr. P.'s intellectual astuteness & power of fence. Rufus Choate, with the prospect of a double fee, could not have exceeded it. I think Mr. P. himself never showed more keenness, or ability of this sort.

But I mourn (quite out of place as he thinks it to have any such intrusive things as "feelings" on such a subject, when a dear & trusted friend, who has stood firm & strong for 40 years, descends to a mean action, & ~~pursists~~ persists in arguing that it is a very good one). I must mourn at the special pleading which Mr. P. uses throughout. I think he avoids the real question all through; and while seeming to be so exact in his logic, still throws dust which blinds himself, & perhaps many others, to the true point at issue.

Again — he seems to have lost much of his moral sense — his quick perception

of the Right & Wrong, - at least of <sup>the</sup> power in that direction which I once gave him credit for. I think; with you, he could not have argued, felt, thought, or written so, 20 years ago. He may think he has "grown"; if so, I am sure it is not upward.

If some worldly demon had not possessed him, in this paltry act of "elimination" (!), he might have foreseen that he would not make money by it. John Pierpont's name had become a hated one among tyrants, - as D. Webster's was; - and no amount of subsequent cringing (as in Mr. Webster's case), or of silence, or "elimination" (as in Mr. P.'s) could ever induce them to forgive, or to cease their hatred. Oh! it is a bitter thing - not that it increases our burdens, <sup>but that it weakens our trust in man,</sup> - that such a soldier as John Pierpont should ground his arms, & grow tired of the moral warfare, & have nothing but sneers & contemptuous allusions to those who, (sacrificing far more than he ever did, and his sacrifices were not small,) still stand in the thickest of the fight.

He utterly omits every word that might lead one to suppose that you & Phillips & Garrison had any other motive for your rebuke of him, <sup>beyond</sup> ~~than~~ a purpose to blacken his reputation.

I must say that I think you erred in two things - 1<sup>st</sup> In offering the exchange of pulpits. You see it did no good, while it gave him some advantage of retort; and, not being particularly called for, & being so heartily made, appears to me to diminish very much the weight of your testimony against his "self-prostitution" to the slaveholder's service. 2<sup>d</sup> In being moved by his casuistry (?) to admit that you were wrong, & hasty, & unkind, in ~~then~~ bringing the matter forward as you did in the Boston meeting. I think your statement, about the rule in Matt. 18:1, a very just one. The act of "elimination" was a public <sup>one</sup> done before "all Israel & the Jews"; you knew it; it was a vital <sup>point</sup> & legitimate to our disunion; Mr. Pierpont was then & there present and could defend & clear himself from this charge, just coming from a

hundred months, under the most favourable circumstances, to the faces  
of those ~~from~~ whose censure he would gladly avoid if he could, and so that  
his own justification, if he could establish it, would go into all the  
antislavery papers, & leading journals of ~~the~~ the country. - I think  
he should thank you for your act; but he makes it plain, by his  
winning & complaints throughout that you did introduce it without first  
consulting with him, that he does not himself wholly & heartily  
believe his own wire-drawn argument, that the "elimination"  
was a good, honourable, single-minded effort towards the better  
education of the slaveholder's children. I deeply felt, in Boston,  
when Mr. Pierpont was speaking, that he made his own case worse by  
every word he uttered. I have had the same feeling, but more strongly,  
while reading this correspondence.

With the exceptions named, I think your part of the  
correspondence very forcible & just. I am sure he must deeply  
feel your appeal & argument, tho' he tries to think you have made  
nothing of the latter. But his desperate efforts to whitewash that  
"elimination", show how deeply the arrow has entered. I sorrow for  
him. I am sure you do. To me, it is like seeing my father, or  
my mother, lapse into some great sin. He was long my Minister and  
my friend. I honored & respected and revered him, from my soul. I  
sympathized in his trials, & felt served (in my little field) by the  
example of his constancy. It is the most painful lesson I have  
ever had, to teach me not to "put my trust in princes".

I preached an hour to your people this morning. I gave them  
my soul about the Sin of our being in any "Union" with the oppressor.  
I much enjoyed the opportunity. I have also much enjoyed my visit to your  
family. God bless & comfort you all. Aff'ly Yours, Saml May Jr -



John & Mary  
July 12, 1857

Ms. A. 1. 1. 69