

Boston, Mond. Evng. Jan. 2<sup>o</sup>. 1865.

Dear friend Richard Webb;

I came from home - Leicester - this afternoon, where I meant to have made at least a beginning of this letter, (but could not bring it about,) - & where I received, a few days before, yours of Dec. 3-7. - It had been longer than usual in crossing the water, but got a hearty welcome when it did appear, as your letters always do. I am sorry that I don't do my part in the correspondence better, - i.e. oftener. For I write to nobody who gives me such good returns nor to any one who more kindly & leniently construes all I say. My old minister, Rev. John Pierpont, many years ago, in writing to his wife from Europe, after alluding to some undesigned delay & of his in writing to her, & to the unsatisfactory nature of his letters generally, said to her, "forgive me when I do not write to you, and when I do." - I often think of this when I am writing, & fear that my apologies are called for quite as often for what I do write, as for not writing at all. Yet not so much with you. You have always encouraged & incited me to all plainness & frankness of speech, and have never reproached me, either in respect of omission or commission - I write much less than I used, in every direction (save perhaps to my immediate family, when we are apart). My work of Society correspondence is less, & of a different kind. I write to no one abroad as frequently as I did. You know how utterly disappointed I have been in England, - while I cannot say but that you, & Dr. Estlin, always warned me that I was counting too much upon the Antislavery reputation of England. I knew that the great Antislavery acts of England were in the past; and yet not wholly so. Still she kept up vigorously her efforts to suppress the Slave Trade, and the great West India

Emancipation was engineered by men still on the stage, and in public life. I could not believe that England would ever so unblushingly, so obstinately, espouse the side of "American Slavery, the vilest the Sun looks upon", in a struggle to perpetuate their diabolical system of Murder, lust, & fraud, and to cause it to dominate over all the soil of this Country. It was a <sup>cause of</sup> mortification & astonishment to find it so, to which to this day I have never been able to give <sup>full</sup> expression. I cannot think but that even Mr Estlin himself, had he lived to see these last 4 years, would have been amazed to witness the length to which British legislators, nobles, gentlemen, merchants, and people of almost (or quite) all classes have gone in aiding and strengthening and encouraging and urging on the American Slaveholders' Rebellion. Then, to see how much <sup>in Gr. Britain,</sup> <sup>& how long</sup> our own antislavery friends, with some exceptions, were under a cloud, in regard to the character, purpose, and results of our Civil Contest, - that many, even of them, could discern little or no difference in the antislavery significance of the positions of the Contestants, and were for years so sceptical of any good & great results from our death-grapple with the Organized Slave Power of the land - this was a bitter drop in the cup indeed. The position and course of Englishmen, the almost unobstructed appropriation of all that British wealth and ingenuity could supply, have been the most powerful aids and levers which the Southern Rebellion has ever had; and the long protraction of the war is directly traceable to what England has done to supply to the Rebels the materials and sinews of War. - I hate to write <sup>to Englishmen</sup> much in this scolding and complaining way, - but in honesty I must sometimes tell what I do so deeply feel. I have been restrained too, <sup>I frankly say,</sup> very often, by the slow development of <sup>our own</sup> National Purpose

in regard to Slavery. Often needing to rely on faith, myself,  
when Sight there was none (or little), I could not reasonably  
expect those abroad to be cheered when I was not. Yet,  
I never doubted with which party (<sup>ie.</sup> North or South) were  
all the Antislavery integrity, purpose, & noble Character  
of this land; nor, any more, where the Antislavery of  
Europe ought to be. With some exceptions, I did not find  
it there; and ever wondered, <sup>what could be the cause of</sup> ~~why~~ this difference between  
them! These <sup>Reasons</sup> ~~Excuses~~ have combined to make me write  
less. It is an imperfect reason for not writing to such good  
and true souls as yourself & a few others; but even your  
own self, for a long time, did not (as I thought) understand  
me, or our Country. For more than 20 years I was not backward  
to testify against the corruptions, the sins, the oppressions, the  
<sup>more culpable</sup> ~~more~~ than pagan idolatry of my Country. I would not stand with  
her in the wrong. But must I continue to censure, and  
protest, and keep aloof, when she arrests her steps, stops to  
survey her ground, begins to see the wrong of her past course,  
begins to comprehend the true character of her Southern  
associates and the <sup>only</sup> ~~subject~~ of their <sup>past</sup> union with the North, begins  
at length to re-trace her steps, sets her face in the right direction,  
and ~~begin~~ strikes Slavery telling blows, which soon ~~are~~  
~~created~~ <sup>multiply rapidly</sup> ~~and~~ at length culminate  
in the determination to destroy it utterly, root and branch. Shall  
I not stand for, and with, my Country, when she is right? Yes,  
all the more will I, and may I, and must I, because I did  
not fail to rebuke her, when she was false to both God and  
man. I will not be, I cannot be, a mal-content, — though  
some among us are so (with a deal of cant, I think) — when  
the Nation, its Government and its People, ~~are~~ making such  
wonderful strides towards Justice, Liberty, and Redemption.

Now please believe me, dear friend Webb, I had never the remotest idea of writing these last 2 pages, when I commenced this note. But it came, and so - here it is. And so I have a new illustration of Mr. Pierpont's words - "Forgive me when I do not write, and when I do." - About six weeks ago, I wrote a very long (undoubtedly tedious) epistle to Eliza Wigham. Having said in it, at such length, many things which I wanted to say, both to Miss Estlin and to you, and having neither the time nor the "spunk" [is that an English or an American word?] to write two other letters at the time, and being indebted to you both, I asked Miss W. to send to Miss E., and the latter to pass on to you, the said long, tedious letter, - hoping, at least you would find in it evidences of my sincere respect and affection for each. Have you seen, or heard of, that letter? It must have reached Miss W. just about the time yrs. to me left Dublin. About weeks ago, I had an excellent letter from dear Miss Estlin; - kind, so devoid of reproach for all my failures as a correspondent, so cheering to my soul in all respects, that I have felt the happier and better ever since. I trust not to delay an acknowledgment of it long.

And now let me say - for business has been too long deferred - that the Bank Note (Bk. of Ireland on Bk. of Eng. no. 9223.) for £22. 15. 6 is safely to hand. In the name of our Society, our Cause, and our Country, I thank you for your own most generous donation. In the name of the Liberator (which is identified so intimately with all three of them) I thank you for your generous purpose to it, of which it shall have benefit. I thank Miss Estlin, also, for her generous purpose and deed to the Liberator, & through it to the Cause she has loved and furthered so faithfully. I thank Mr. Palmer, your son Alfred, and all friends, who remember us so well, and are not drawn back from the Antislavery work, until it is done.

Ms. B. 1. 6 v. 10 p. 13

Tuesd. Evng. Jan. 3. - One object I had in writing this, <sup>note</sup> just now, - i.e. for tomorrow's Steamship, - was that it might announce to you a little parcel of books, &c. which I was intending to forward to the care of S. A. Graves, Baltic Building, Liverpool for you. That parcel was to contain, among some other matters, a copy of Senator Wilson's book on the Antislavery History & Measures of the present ~~the~~ <sup>the previous</sup> Congresses of the United States - it being a gift from Mr. Wilson to you. Also, Mr. Garrison had some lithographic likenesses, &c. to send. And my wife desired to send to you, as a New Year's gift, one of Mrs. Child's very interesting books - "Looking towards Sunset" - mostly a compilation, but with a number of original pieces of her own. Most unfortunately, - & very carelessly on the part of her publishers, - the entire edition became exhausted at Christmas. From that time to this, not a copy could be had, although the call has been large; and to-day, it appears that <sup>the new edition is not</sup> ~~it is not~~ likely to be ready for a fortnight at least. Moreover, Mr. Garrison's contributions to my parcel were not ready. So, perforce, I had to give up the sending ~~it~~ it tomorrow; and must wait at least 2 weeks longer. But I hope there will be no farther delay than that, and you may, if you please, look for such a parcel, from Mr. Graves, some 2 weeks after yr. getting this. Should there be some additional expense at Liverpool, beyond what I can here pay, - to Mr. Graves, I mean, - may I look to you to meet it, & charge it to me in first settlement we may have?

I have often wondered whether you did not receive from me a long letter, despatched to you last summer (I think the latter part of August) - in answer to inquiries made by yr. friend Dr. Hancock. I took considerable pains to collect & condense

the information he asked for, & <sup>to</sup> put it in a tolerably convenient form for use. I asked you to please let me know if it were rec<sup>d</sup>, - if rec<sup>d</sup>. in season for use at the Social Science Meeting, - and whether it were used there. I should still like to be informed on these points; and you needn't fear to tell me the exact facts in the case. -

I told Mr. Garrison to-day of your own & Miss Estlin's generous purpose towards the Liberator. What with the liberality of friends, & the increased subscription-price of the paper, - [even now, much less than it used to be when the real value of our currency is considered] - I have little doubt that the Liberator will live through another year. Mr. G. seemed greatly gratified at these proofs of sympathy & friendship on your part & Mary Estlin's. It is a great consolation to him to know that your <sup>& her</sup> interest in the Cause is still so warm and unabated. Our Society, as I need not to tell you, is not so united - does not see on all points so thoroughly 'eye to eye', as it formerly, & almost uniformly heretofore, has done. Nor do I need, I suppose, to tell you the ostensible grounds of the difference. - Mr. Garrison, & the Lib., and the Standard, as edited by Quincy and A. Johnson, and J. M. McKim, and very many more of the Abolitionists, whose position with regard to Slavery never by any possibility could cease to be one of the most distinct antagonism to it, have been, and are, by certain zealots, hyper-critical folk, charged with apostacy to Anti-Slavery! - while some few, as sensible & long-headed as Wendell Phillips, give these impracticables and new-born ultraists only too much encouragement by indirect censures, and (with regard to the Standard) severe denunciation. Our coming meetings, thro' the winter & Spring, are not likely to be pleasant

or harmonious, on this account. - Wendell Phillips, by  
his action in regard to the Cleveland Convention, <sup>and all the winter previous,</sup> did all he  
could, & that was not a little, to divide the only Antislavery  
political party of the North, and that after it was a clean  
moral demonstration that the Republican Party would not  
set aside Mr. Lincoln; even when all the political managers of  
the Cl. Conv<sup>n</sup> saw that their party-movement was an abortion,  
& their candidates themselves had withdrawn, - (not surely on Gen.  
Fremont's part in any very cordial or noble way - but ex necessitate  
rei) - even then W. P. regretted that withdrawal, while S. S. Foster  
and such as he, blamed it in <sup>a</sup> still stronger manner. - Now I  
maintain that W. P.'s attitude & course were a legitimate subjects  
of inquiry, of criticism, and of objection. I insist we were  
not bound, as individuals or as a Society, to follow along with him.  
To me, and to many others, belonging to no political party, and  
asking no favours of any such, it seemed that, with all his  
faults & mistakes, Abraham Lincoln was greatly to be preferred  
to John C. Fremont on Anti-slavery grounds; that the success  
of Emancipation was surer in the hands of the former, than it  
would be with the latter; & that in no respects would the Cause,  
or the Country, be a gainer by the exchange, while in some it  
would be inevitably a loser. For this, & nothing but this, that  
I know, or <sup>can imagine</sup> ~~suspect~~, - unless private griefs & grudges exist  
of which I care to know nothing, & surely do not suspect,  
in the case of such a man as W. Phillips - these Seceders  
(for that they virtually are now, & will prove themselves <sup>soon</sup>) accuse  
Mr. Garrison, the Lib., the Stand., & others of us, with being apostates  
from the Antislavery Cause! Some of these rampant partisans  
are men who, in regard to the Antislavery Cause, have only been  
outsiders, or out-riders occasionally, & fair weather friends, in  
the times gone by, - and always acting with the Republican  
party at voting times, & taking offices at its hands, and that  
at times when its antislavery position was absolutely nothing,  
in comparison to that which it laid down at Baltimore, upon

which its Candidates were elected, and which it is now  
in all its departments, laboring to carry into the Constitution  
and Laws of the Land. To my vision, it is a very doubtful

service we render to the present Slaves, or to the Cause of  
Universal Emancipation, to stand off & denounce such a party,  
and the Govt. of the Country with it; - indeed, I consider it a positive  
disservice & damage. But I don't, therefore, think those men

"apostates" from Antislavery. - I have said they would be "seceders".  
They will make a very strong effort to get the Antislavery Society  
into their own hands. If they fail in that, they will secede - mark  
my word. An uneasy spirit of jealousy controls some of them  
- and Wendell Phillips, that name of glorious deeds & memory  
is too far committed, I fear, to his exaggerations & one-sidedness,  
to be a reconciling & guiding power in our assemblies. His great  
eloquence, & vigorous statements, will carry very many with him.

Perhaps these remarks - which I desire should be in the strictest  
confidence, nor go beyond yourself, for it is only to those in our most  
intimate counsels that I speak so plainly, all my fears & trouble  
may suffice to answer your question, whether there is any estrangement  
between Phillips on one side, & Garrison & Junney on the other.  
is certainly some alienation, not yet (I think) "estrangement", but liable  
to grow to that. I hear Phillips denies there is any; and he is, I  
believe, careful to speak only kindly of Garrison. - I agree with  
you that Garrison is sometimes too sharp, - as towards D. Ricketson  
well-meaning man, but not profound, nor well-balanced, - and as towards  
Prof. Newman lately, "still narrow & querulous". I don't think Newman  
that language. Towards M. D. Conway, I do not think G. has been at all  
too severe - but the contrary. He (Conway) was, I think, most leniently  
dealt with from the first. His preposterous folly & self-conceit deserved  
much more stinging rebuke than it ever got. - And now that he persists  
claiming he was "sent" to England as a representative of the Am. Abolition  
with almost plenary powers, his bare-faced assumptions are more unpardonable  
than ever, - as I think. I showed that remark of yours to Garrison, & told  
him that I partly agreed with you, but not as to M. D. C. (which I said to myself  
when first reading your letter.) Did I wrong in letting him see it? I hope  
won't think so. He was not in the least offended, but said he thought  
had been very considerate of Conway, & desirous to let it drop & be forgotten.

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Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> 8 a.m. - I can add a little before it is time for Steamer's mail to close. - I note the change of your residence, & truly hope it will be for the best to you all. I cannot make out the name of the place, as the rapidity of your writing & the thinness of the paper interfered to make this last note of yours unusually difficult to make out. When you write again, please name your new residence more clearly. I am glad the old premises in Gt. B. St. are not given up. Do you sometimes walk the 2 miles between home and office? - You always kindly ask about my son Edw., and I believe I usually name him. After near 2 yrs. Service in the Mississippi river, (and 1 year before on blockading services), he was called last Aug. to Washington for some temporary service in the Navy Department, - expected by him to be not over some 6 or 8 wks., but wh. has extended to this time. He is very well now, or when last heard from, over a week since. My other son (20 yrs. old) came home in Nov. from 100 days service in the Army, much reduced by a fever which he had taken in the damps & miasma of the Potomac river country. Getting back to N. England he recovered rapidly & went about his former business again; but unfortunately, 3 wks. since, fell in the street on the ice, & broke a ligament on the right ankle, which is likely to confine him for at least 2 months longer, the physician thinks. - My wife & 2 Daughters are pretty well. - We send our best New Year's Wishes to you, & all your family. - I am owing Richard a letter, & don't know just how to direct one to him. Will you tell me, when you write next? I will endeavour that Alfred has the photog. of Col. Shaw wh. he desires; - My kind regards to him. -

I shall be curious to see what the Pro-rebel papers in England say of Sherman's march thro' Georgia, & Capture of Savannah! How does it look to you, in a military point of view? The attempt on Wilmington, N.C. was a failure, - 'tis said, from want of Co-operation on the part of the Naval & Land forces. Wilmington is the principal place into which the blockade-runners (as British institution exclusively) go; - i.e. the vessels are British, but a considerable share of Northern made goods goes in there, sent by men, who care for neither man nor God, provided they make large profits.

As soon as Congress re-assembles, after their holidays, it is understood that the bill to amend the Constitution by adding an Article to Prohibit Slavery forever will come up. It passed the Senate, last Session, by a vote of 37 to 6. It requires 2 thirds to pass it - did not get that in the House, tho' it had a great majority - 94 to 64. I believe it will now be passed, but there are some doubts hanging over it. The next Congress is sure to pass it, and the President may summon them together any time after the 4<sup>th</sup> of March. - The Westons are all well - all in the country now. Mr. & Mrs. Laugel (Mrs. Chapman's daughter) are now here, in fine health & spirits - Caroline & Anne W. - the whole family in fact - are ardent Republicans, and

thorough-going defenders of Mr. Lincoln & his measures, right through. -  
Remond has been engaged in enlisting colored men into the U. S. Army for  
a long time, - perhaps a year & a half; I don't precisely recollect.  
Wm. W. Brown lectures considerably; but has added a branch of special  
medical practice, and hangs out his sign, "Dr. W. W. Brown". - I hardly  
know what F. Douglass is doing just now. - Geo. Thompson's labors in the  
lecturing field seem to wear upon him a good deal. It is not time to tell you  
what will come out of his new business. It is now in operation; & the article  
made is very neatly presented for sale, & at reasonable prices. But the gain  
there, at best, must be moderate, I think. Now I must stop.

Goodbye. Peace be with you all. <sup>Yr. friend</sup>  
Saml. May

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p.s.  
Mrs. Garrison's health remains without much change. She  
very slowly improves, if at all. She does occasionally walk out - o - door  
for a half mile, or so, - but with some difficulty. She is pretty cheerful  
the greater part of the time. They are all greatly pleased with their new  
residence, at Roxbury, (on an elevated spot). It is just about 2 ms. fr.  
the A. S. office to Mr. G.'s house. Young Wm. & his young wife - a fine  
couple - live with them. Wendell P. Garrison is (you doubtless know)  
engaged to J. M. McKim's daughter Lucy. - I wish you would come  
over to America & see us all here. Can't it be done? Can't you come  
to our May meetings? - And, dear Mr. W., why do you not write for the  
Dublin papers, the English papers, &c., if you don't feel as ready as formerly to  
do for us? I am sure your views would enlighten & steady.