

Boston, January 2^o. 1860.

Dear Mary Estlin;

I never purposed anything more fully, in letter-writing, than I did to write to you, without loss of time, immediately after the return home of my good cousin S. J. M.; and I assigned the special time for doing it, for I had a great deal to say, and had been silent a very great while. But we suddenly decided - I speak now of my family - to close our house at Leicester for the winter, and to take board in the immediate vicinity of Boston, and this care (of closing house, and removal), together with the additional meetings, printing, & other work created by the case of John Brown, brought me such an avalanche of business, that all correspondence, save of the briefest business character, was entirely out of the question. But I will not 'make excuses' any farther, for they are poor things; but my deferred pleasure, of writing to you, has been daily before my eyes, and I have daily hoped such a lull in our affairs as would let me write to you. And I am, ^{besides} not as well able to keep up with my work as I used to be, - in which respect, of unequal & uncertain health, you can only too well sympathize with me. - And now, to-day, comes to me your note of Dec. 16th, and I will, spite of all other calls, this very evening commence my note to you, - thanking you, first of all, for so kindly welcoming and so heartily & hospitably entertaining my

good Cousin Samuel J.; The very first evening of his return (he arrived on a Saturday morning and came to rest 2 or 3 days, at my father's - my wife and I having come from Leicester to meet him), he took me aside to tell me about his meeting you at Dublin, his journey back to England with you - the delightful stop in North Wales, & his visit to Mr. Wicksteed's in your company - and his subsequent meetings with you in Bristol, &c. He surely felt a true sympathy in your loss, and in your trials, and (I judge) tried to console and strengthen you, as he best could. And I am sure, from the tone and expressions of your note to me, that you heard him gladly, that you were glad of the opportunity of seeing & knowing him. I feel quite as sure that no one can be acquainted with him, - no one I mean who needs human sympathy, who has ever experienced the severe griefs & shocks of life, - without drawing comfort and strength from his kindly & cheerful spirit, his cordial and soothing tones, his sensible and considerate words. He has a reputation, far & wide, with us, and has had from his early boyhood, for possessing a spirit of uniform cheerfulness, a temper of uniform calmness & (shall I say?) sweetness, an absolute self-command, not often vouchsafed to our human nature. Old Dr. Freeman, of King's Chapel Church in this City, used to say to him, "It is no merit in you, Sam, to be good-tempered and amiable - you can't be anything else, if you try"; - "now for myself" the good Dr. would

add, "my temper has been the infirmity of my life, & caused me a constant struggle." But excuse this - you saw enough of him, I am confident, to understand his natural disposition pretty well. He has no reserve, no concealment, and in a short time one must needs feel at home with him. - Nor has he been without some pretty severe trials of his own, - of a nature to test one's natural cheerfulness and equanimity pretty severely, - and has borne the test well. - His European travel was a very great novelty to him and a very great pleasure; but he puts his visit to Eng^d, for solid satisfaction & enjoyment, before all the rest. For a time, after his return home, he seemed, ^{rather} to succumb under the fatigues of journeying, voyaging, &c., but now, I understand, speaks of himself as very well indeed - "almost as well as ever he was in his life". He has been extremely engaged since he ~~came~~ returned to Syracuse; a few short notes are all we have had from him. But my daughter Adeline is now making a visit (in company with her cousin Caroline May) to Mr. S. J. May's daughter Charlotte, (Mr. Alfred Wilkinson of Syracuse), and from her (Ade.) I hear very satisfactory accounts of Mr. M.'s health & doings. - I hope that he will be able to maintain his English friendships by correspondence. I think he can both do and get good thereby. He is more of a theologian - i.e. more interested in theological questions & discussions than I am, - and, at the same time, fully & actively

alive to all matters of practical human interest,
and, whether as a Unitarian, or as an Abolitionist,
I think is in a position to exert a very wholesome
and desirable influence ^{as to our American men & affairs} in G. Britain. My "highest
aspirations" (in that direction) would be met, if I could
send forth Wm. Lloyd Garrison and Samuel J. May, "two
and two", to present our American needs, short-comings,
inconsistencies, and wickednesses, to our brethren and
friends across the water; & draw forth from your countrymen
counsel, rebuke, criticism, aid, in the measure that Humanity requires.

It did my heart good, to read your words of John
Brown! He was a noble man, a man of large soul, of
most generous nature, of wonderful fidelity to conscience
of extraordinary adherence to principle. The Oppression of
his brethren, and his Own Duty, went hand in hand. They were
inseparably allied. It is exceedingly sad to think how, "by
wicked hands" he has been ensnared, and shamefully
put to death! Such spirits as his are of very infrequent
growth, I think, anywhere; certainly our land has
produced very few such; and their loss is an unspeak-
able loss, and one which leaves us fearfully the poorer.
But it is by no means loss entirely. You would be
surprised to find how many have been touched by his
self-devotion, his calm & devout self-sacrifice, - and
most deeply touched too; - how many who have seemed
hitherto, indifferent to the whole subject have been aroused
what a new, & strong spirit has been stirred all over the
land of the North, and what an impulse onward has
been given to a genuine Anti-Slavery Conscience & Will.

And at the South, what a change! Never before has the South realised, as she does now, the determination of the Anti-Slavery portion of the North to rid our land, if possible, of Slavery themselves, at any rate, # of all connexion with it and all responsibility for it. Now, at length, ^{the South} ~~it~~ doubts no longer; now her exasperation and her fears are thoroughly stirred, and she is proceeding to excesses of base, brutal, and cowardly treatment of Northern men, who happen to be travelling or living in her borders, - and that too on the merest suspicion, and oftentimes with a total, & almost ludicrous, mistaking of the men on whom she wreaks her cruelty & malice, - which cannot fail to prove, and are daily proving, to the North, that no Union ^{exists,} can exist, between such villains, such determined upholders of every villainy, and honest men; and that, if we (of the North) mean to be honest men, or free men, or anything but abject slaves, we must speak out now, we must act, and we must teach the South, by a signal lesson, her crime, her shame, her weakness, her unspeakable baseness. To John Brown's resolute and heroic self-sacrifice, is this new ^{ouring!} Impulse, which now thrills and nerves millions of hearts; not that his method and means meet the general approbation; for they do not; but, with slight exception, these errors are deemed to be ^{quite} overshadowed by the clear and the glorious light which his trust in God, his faith in justice and in right, his sympathy with the enslaved, and his willingness to die for their good, have shed over the land.

Nor is it for America to condemn John Brown's method; -
without the most flagrant hypocrisy, she cannot do it;
- a ~~country~~ ^{people} which glories in throwing off the oppression
of the British crown, by years of bloody struggle, in which
guilty and innocent were alike involved, is not the people
to condemn John Brown. The extent to which their censure
can justly go, relates only to the inadequacy, not to the
nature, of the means he used.

[I do not like to think, dear ell, that you may
not quite "keep up" with our daily history, from not
seeing our A.S. papers. There are such striking
incidents occurring, and our various writing and
speaking men & women are making such admirable
use of them, that I desire the whole world of free and
good souls to know & participate. And yet, I am
sure I need not trouble myself. Your brief note proves
how well you see into John Brown, & into the effects
of his actions; - besides, your own instincts and experi-
ence will go far to keep you conscious of the position
to which our Cause must needs have attained, with
such influences bearing upon it. - I wish only to
say here - Give yourself no further trouble as to
your personal subscription to the "Standard". Our
Executive Comtee purpose to send it gratuitously to
foreign donors to a certain amount; and your past
donations will entitle you to receive it, even should you
send no more, as long as you wish it to come.

As to the business part of your note to-day
recd. - I will take note of the additional Bristol

Subscription, and endeavour to have it all straight
in the acknowledgements, which have always been
made out by Mr. Chapman. R. D. Webb writes me
that, last year, the Irish subscriptions were strangely
blundered in the acknowledgement - some being credited
"20 times too much" - others far too little. - I have no
means of knowing how, or where, such errors originated.
I know Mr. C. means to be very exact; so does R. D. W.
But I do know also (entre nous) that our dear & noble
friend Webb makes strange work sometimes with figures
& money-statements, and I cannot but think a part
of the difficulty lies at his door. But we will be
vigilant. - Mr. Stephens sent the money exactly
in the best way - i.e. in a bill, drawn by the Barings
on their agents here, and payable to my order - (or,
equally well, of course, to the order of any friend of our
cause here); only, the "Jr." was omitted to my name, in
drawing the bill, and so the agents higgled a little at
the slight irregularity of paying a bill endorsed by
"Samuel May Jr", when it was made payable to "Samuel
May" - (the latter name, belonging to my father, I do not use it
of course). But, as we are well enough known, no diffi-
culty arose about cashing the draft. - R. D. Webb doesn't
often print my name alike in any 2 successive Advocates,
where he has any call to use it. I always sign S. M. Jr.
- but my last letter in "Advocate" was signed with my
father's name. It is of no sort of consequence, to be sure, except
as misleading those who wish to address a letter correctly, &c. &c.

Any suggestion of mine, as to your best way of forwarding the additional Bristol money, ~~would~~ ^{are} ~~pro~~ would doubtless reach you too late; but it might be sent with the Edinburgh, or any other money, that may still be coming; and I, if notified where it is included, will look out, and see the thing rightly adjusted.

I have no acc^t. at ~~Barris~~, nor elsewhere abroad, save with R. D. W.; and, if no direct way of sending offers, your best way will be to send to him, I think.

Our Subscription - Anniversary is to be on Wednesday, January 25th; - as last year, at the Music Hall.

We must all feel indebted to the generous English friends who are smoothing Miss Remond's way before her. - Our American Secretary of Legation at London (I don't know who he is - a slaveholder, I'll wager) only showed off what we have learned here to call his "plantation-manners". We hear that Mr. Putnam talked to him with a good deal of spirit!

You will be glad to know that I rec^d. to-day, by same ship which brought your letter, a letter from my boy in China. He was well, and had been mercifully preserved in a fearful danger at sea, - for which we ought indeed to thank, with the most fervent blessing, His gracious providence, who, whether it ~~bleses~~ heals or wounds us, alike designs our good. - My son was well, & writes very pleasantly.

I have forwarded your note to S. J. M. - I will, in turn, ask you to take charge of the enclosure for Mr. Stephens. I leave it unsealed, that you may, if you care, see it. - With a deep and fixed interest in all your cares & trials, and with memories of your name that can never pass away, I am, Truly Yr. friend, S. May