

Mr. Lalor - Carlyle - Webster's Trial
N. L. Carpenter - D. Gannett

Boston, Feb. 18, 1850.

Dear Mr. Estlin,

I am not about to have time to write you as I should be glad to do. Tomorrow (as I now expect) I shall make up and despatch to Mr. Webb, at Dublin, (who has usually acted, most kindly, as Foreign Agent for the "National A. S. Bazaar!") a box containing such messages and missives for our Irish, Scotch and English friends as circumstances enable us to ^{send to them} ~~send~~. I intend ^{to send} for yourself an American Almanac for 1850, a Unitarian Annual Register (if it merits this year, I can scarce speak), Bowditch's excellent work on Slavery - a magazine of important facts, ecclesiastical, moral, political, etc., Chas. Sumner's Argument before the Supreme Court of Massachusetts on the Right of Colored Children to an equal share in the public schools, & a Narrative of an escaped Slave Thomas Jones. These last 3, I intend to send also to Mr. Lalor, with the Annual Report of the Mass^{ts}. Society, & perhaps some other documents. — Mr. L. did a capital work in his reply to Thos. Carlyle's miserable paper on the Negroes. How finely its calm, clear, & elevated moral tone contrasted with Carlyle's fretful, snappish, cynical spirit towards "Quashee!" The meanest American slaveholder would find it hard to out-do Mr. Carlyle in his contemptuous, venomous feelings towards every man who has had the audacity to be born black. His article will be a great comfort to the American Slave trade & owners. Indeed it is almost an invitation to the Slaveholders of this country

to possess themselves of the West Indies, ~~and~~ stock them with
Slaves, and compel the negro to bring ^{from their soil} Sugar, coffee, pepper, &c. for
the enlightened, liberal, & virtuous (!) white man, - under which
circumstances, ^{I presume,} no objection will be made to the pumpkins for
himself. I declare I have no words to express the astonishment
I feel at the thought of Carlyle's writing so low & vulgar a piece.

I have the pleasure of acknowledging two letters from
you ~~was~~ received since the date of my last to you, - the first
dated Jan. 4th (recd. Jan. 25.), the other dated Jan. 24, (recd. Feb. 12th).
I wonder I have never said anything to you about the "Mary Jane"
for I have frequently thought about that vessel & ~~and~~ my brother &
myself have speculated on what could have become of her. When
I left Boston the first of last June, (to spend some months at
Leicester), I left a memorandum with him of the vessel, with
the name of her Captain, and the time of her sailing from Bristol -
"early in May". He engaged to keep a lookout for her. In
December he returned the mem^o. to me, & I have carried it in
my pocket ever since. I am very glad that no lives were lost
in her. It is very sad to hear, & terrible to imagine, such events
at sea. I regret my loss of your parcel very much; others
however suffered in this respect much worse than I. - I shall
hope for the safe arrival of the "Recovery, Capt. Lowther" - you
don't say whether she is Ship, Barge, or Brig. We can hardly look
for her here before the middle of March, I suppose, if she sails about
the 1st of February, as you say.

Dr. Webster's trial has been assigned for the 19th of March - one month from today (for I am now writing, Feb. 19th). It will be a trial of intense interest - the mind of the community seems to have been already excited to the highest possible point about it; but if the excitement can & should increase, some people will go out of their wits. As usual, the most singular, improbable & contradictory rumors, about evidence, are in circulation. Dr. W. has been visited at the Gaol, at his own request, by several of the principal gentlemen of Cambridge with whom he has been associated. I have heard quite directly of these interviews - Dr. W. is represented as being quite chatty, with regard to the passing events of the day, only slightly alluding to his situation; his manner, rather non-chalant; - so far as I have heard, this is about the ~~whole~~ character of all interviews with him, no very deep moral impression being made. The conclusion to which you have come agrees very nearly with the prevailing opinion here; that Dr. Webster killed Dr. Parkman there are few who seriously disbelieve, not many who seriously doubt it; - that the act was the result of a previously-laid, definite plan & purpose, I think, is not generally supposed; else, is it conceivable that Dr. W. should have himself called at Dr. Parkman's house, ^{on} the morning of the fatal day, & made an appointment for Dr. P. to meet him at the Medical College at an hour named (half-past one) ? - Dr. P. was a blunt, rather satirical, man, & having been ^(as we know he was) angry, at Webster's delay of payment, quite likely bore pretty hardly in his talk. Dr. Webster is jealous & quick-tempered (I should say rather irascible); I believe him to have been inflamed, past his power of self-command; and having struck a mortal blow, was so much flurried that he could

not use common self-possession in disposing of the remains.
All the circumstantial evidence is very strong against him; positive,
direct evidence, none exists I believe; in its absence, I think no
Jury will find a verdict of Guilty. If they do, his chances of life are
very small.

I return you herewith Dr. Hutton's note to yourself of
19th Octo. last, and thank you very much for the sight of it. I should
have been very glad to publish what he says of Knapth & Mazzini
and of Garrison's Nonresistance views in connexion, could it have been done
with propriety. I have sent several A.S. documents to Dr. Hutton
thru conveyance, and did think of writing to him, but it will be un-
profitable.

R. L. Carpenter has gone to New York, &c. and is not ex-
pected here again until May. I was very sorry he was not in Boston
attend the Annual meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, &
at least, some of its sessions. Of course I am to wait until I see him
the sum you mention, see Liberator, &c. I had a hearty laugh at
idea of Dr. Gannett being very fond of me! He is always kind in his
manner towards me, to be sure, and I don't suppose would do any violence
to put me out of the way (!) though he did once tell me that I was doing
more harm than any other man in Massachusetts - for, he said, Garrison & the
were known to be bad men, & their violence, &c. would therefore be comparatively power-
less but I had a character, &c. & therefore more influence, which I was exerting as an
Abolitionist in a most disastrous & fatal manner. — God, however, is a more
reliable teacher than Dr. Gannett, and if He ever taught me anything, it has
to stand firm & true to the Cause of the Slave, and I trust never to desert it, tho'
ten thousand Doctors of Divinity thunder anathemas. As to George E. Ellis, I
believe him not to be a trust worthy man; he is able, insinuating, plausible
it may be too strong, possibly, to say he is "a hater of God & man", but I see no
evidence that he is a lover of either. And Mr. Quincy surely did not speak
as he did, until G. E. E. had made such a development & display of the
condition of his own breast, as would justify the language of very severe repro-

As to the "Standard" subscription, you are under no obligation to
pay, and I beseech you not to do so. If my memory serves me, I had your name
put upon the free list, and it was not intended that you should ever pay.
— Wm. H. Channing has gone to New York, where he edits the "Spirit of the
I will keep a Memorandum standing in my Notebook, until he answers you,
I will write to him soon. I enclose a note from my little daughter. With affectionate regards
I am Yours, Saml. May

MS. B. 1. 6. v. 14. p. 13