

To Rev. Samuel Johnson

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W. L. Garrison

Roxbury, Jan. 18, 1879.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Your words of approval of my reply to an editorial criticism (?) in the Boston Daily Advertiser are most gratifying, because you have always shown a clearness of vision and a soundness of judgment respecting the tremendous issue still pending between Liberty and Slavery in this country, that comparatively few possess; for we have a host of persons, otherwise intelligent, highly educated, and claiming to possess no small share of political sagacity, who are as blind as bats to the actual state of things at the South, and whose optimism equals that of our complacent President at Washington. Even some of the old abolitionists seem to have lost their power to be "discerners of spirits," and to have ^{also} ~~lost~~ much of their once vital

interest in the fate of a race, whose cause they espoused with so much zeal and determination. I could name several instances, but will forbear. How it is possible for them to be thus affected by the glamour of "conciliation" is to me inexplicable; or how they can allow a question of finance or trade to take precedence of that of liberty and equal rights.

The sneer of the Daily Advertiser at the "prophets of an outgrown dispensation" is perfectly in character. On other matters its discernment and ability deserve the commendation you bestow upon it, but in regard to the Southern imbroglie and the radical abolitionists its tone and spirit are essentially as of old.

I have had the curiosity to consult the files of the Liberator to see ~~that~~ in what manner the infamous pro-slavery mob in Boston, on the 21st of October, 1835, was referred to by the Advertiser. Here is a specimen:—

"We regard the assemblage not so much as a riot as the prevention of a riot. (!) The immense majority of persons were determined that order should be ~~observed~~^{pre} served. (!) We consider the whole transaction as the triumph of the law over lawless violence, and the love of order over an attempt to produce riot and confusion. (!) The person dragged by the populace from his place of concealment was, as soon as demanded, delivered into the custody of the peace officers, who conveyed him to a place of safety [Sewerett street jail]. (!) We rejoice that they should have exhibited so much moderation as to be induced, from any consideration, to deliver their captive unharmed into the custody of a corps of constables." (!)

Is not that a travesty difficult to be matched? With renewed thanks for your strengthening letter, I remain,
Yours, always, for liberty and justice,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Ms. A. 1. 1 v. 9, p. 66A