

Boston, Jan. 15, 1859.

Dear Mr. Parker:

208 In common with a host of warmly attached personal friends, and a great multitude of enlightened and grateful admirers of your character and labors, I am made very sad to hear that your bodily indisposition is of so serious a nature as not only to preclude you from exercising your public functions at Music Hall, but also to require, at this wintery season, an ocean voyage and a residence in a foreign clime, as essential to your restoration to health. You have fought long and bravely against disease, and by high resolve and heroic purpose endeavored to expel the enemy. Doubtless, the conflict has been too long protracted on your part; and now that the fleshly nature is compelled to yield, though the mind is as clear and vigorous as ever, I trust you will give it all possible chances of recovery, by taking absolute rest from all mental excitement, and summoning as much determination to get well, as you have shown not to consider yourself sick.

As an act of friendly consideration, I have forbore calling to see you, knowing you need to be kept very secluded, and rejoicing to hear that you are so well guarded in this respect; yet I hope it may be possible for me to give you the parting hand, and my benediction at the same time, without burdening you, before you leave the city. Of that, you and Mrs. Parker must be the judge.

I shall try to look wholly on the bright side, and hope for the best results in regard to your voyage and a change of climate. Life with you, I am sure, is mainly desirable that you may continue your labors in the field of humanity, and for the good of all mankind. How much you have done for the freedom of the human mind, for the exposure of political corruption, for the removal of theological error, for the suppression of religious bigotry and superstition, for the overthrow of injustice, for the slave in his fetters, for the prisoner in his cell, for "the perishing classes" of every description, it is not for you to know, it is not for me to compute. You have touched, quickened,

inspired thousands of minds, which in their turn shall impregnate other minds with generous and noble sentiments, down through the centuries to come, — an ever widening circle, on both sides of the Atlantic. "The past, at least, is secure." What the future has in store, only the Infinite Father knows. His will be done!

I thank you for the many kind words you have spoken in my behalf, and for various acts of kindness done to me and mine. As I have nothing to offer in return but my grateful acknowledgments, I must ever remain your debtor. If, however, at any time or in any way, I can be of service to you, it will give me great pleasure to perform it.

I proffer my heartfelt sympathies to your dear wife in this time of trial. I have ever admired her meek and quiet spirit, her sweet and gentle nature, her benevolent disposition, her domestic consecration, and felt that you were singularly fortunate in your choice of such a partner for life. She belongs to my calendar of living saints. —

May all the disembodied ones, and all the good angels, watch over you both, and a gracious Providence prolong your lives to "a green old age"!

I send my warm regards to dear Miss Stevenson, entertaining as I do for her the highest respect in regard to her rare womanly culture, her intellectual vigor, her moral excellence, and her sympathetic nature, drawing her closely to the side of the distressed and suffering, the poor and perishing. Tell her she is in my eyes very beautiful, in the highest and noblest sense of the term.

To all that I have written, my own dear wife most heartily responds.

Mrs. Hamilton Willis made us a visit yesterday, and desired me to say to you that, in case Dr. Howe could not go with you abroad, and it would be agreeable to you, her husband would esteem it both a privilege and a pleasure to be your travelling assistant and companion.

Please make no attempt to answer this.

Your attached and sympathizing friend,  
Thos. Parker. Wm. Lloyd Garrison.