

Mebrose, Dec. 11, 1854.

198

Friend Garrison:

I have obtained a copy of your picture "from life by T. M. Johnston... J. H. Buffords' Lith. Boston, Mass.", & it recites ~~me~~ so well my notion of "the eternal fitness of things", that I would like to know if Mrs. Garrison & ~~the~~ your children do not think it the best which has been taken of you.

Stearns said to me, speaking of The Commonwealth & its new conductor: "We have now got an able man at its head, & mean to make it the best paper in the country." Nevertheless, I see it continues to abuse yourself & common sense for the cause both took in the late election which resulted so gloriously, alike for the great cause you have so long advocated, for the country, & for humanity. It seems

the new conductor, with the assistance of
Conway the diplomat & I know not what
others, will not allow you to consider
yourself, nor to be deemed by others,
anything but "an Abolitionist." He will
have it, not merely as your avowed
enemies have so absurdly insisted, that
"Garrison is a man of only one idea," but
that you are just the man who has no
business to have more than one. I do
not regard this as ill-will, either to
yourself or to the Anti-Slavery cause.
It is simple stupidity, & ignorance of
"the Situation"; while it shows the new
conductor, instead of giving promise of
justifying the "large expectations" of his
sanguine friends, has, so far, only been
vindicting his patronymie against all
suspicion of being a misnomer. I believe
"everything has its use", & therefore dislike
to witness such waste of even so poor an
article as slack. How much of such

"perilous stuff" will it take to make its
vehicle "the best paper in the country"?

But—"May not a supporter of the
President criticise his acts?" I say, No! not
when the criticism would manifestly tend
to defeat his reelection, & put in his place
the candidate of the slaveholding Rebels.
Some of your efficient supporters used to
think your language needlessly expensating.
But what would have been thought of the
head of that good man, Samuel J. May,
if, when the pro-slavery mob had seized
William Lloyd Garrison, & was ready to take
the incendiary's life, your old friend had
proceeded, in the name of "free speech" & in
the "itching ears" of that mob, to "criticise"
Mr. Garrison's "abusive epithets"? "There is
a time for all things". But that would
not have been the time, nor the place either,
to "criticise" the editor of the Liberator; and
just as little was the heated ^{moment} of the recent
election, & a newspaper claiming to be friendly

to the Union, the time & the place for
"supporters" of the President" to "criticise"
Abraham Lincoln. The proper estimate
of the difference between the two cases,
would be just the different values of an
individual's life & the life of a Nation. —
But I find myself preaching this Sunday
to an audience of one, nay, worse than that,
"carrying coals to Newcastle," & will here
erect the superfluities.

Since you cannot, if you would,
notice all your critics, & think, having
put yourself so fully "on the record," you
must occasionally rejoice, that "the
critic always criticises himself."

You probably did n't know it,
but I began reading the Liberator in
1835 or '6: I have never ceased to read it
with a profound admiration of its editor's
thorough devotion to its grand specialty,
though not, as no one knows better than

Yourself, always accepting either the opinions
 or the measures it has so ably main-
 tained. And, since this infernal Rebel-
 lion broke out, I have read the old,
 fearless, uncompromising hebdomadal
 with an increasing interest. If I am not
 now one of its subscribers, it is because,
 & only because, so long as I owe an
 honest person or a bank a dollar, as I
 should not do if my creditors had
 paid their honest debts, I can not, for
 my own sake, justly incur the cost
 of subscribing for any paper, though
 having, I wish I had less, occasion to
 read a score. But, while so denouncing
 myself, I have not scrupled to invite
 others to subscribe for it, & sometimes,
 have been gratified to find the invitation
 complied with.

I have not yet read the last
 Liberator, nor the last Commonwealth.
 Of the latter, however, I am not "a

constant reader", though I mean to
be, when it shall have ^{been} made
itself "the best paper in the
country".

Truly yours,

Geo. Brown.

P.S. Monday: "Sitting at the receipt of Custom".

The enclosed slip was just
sent to ~~my~~ me by John T.
Quadrick, the collector of this
Port.

G.B.

7/11
Tom



