

Cambridge, Jan. 20. 1834.

My dear cousin & friend.

It is so very long since I have written, and so very long since I have had the pleasure of receiving a letter from you, that I hardly know where to begin now - this I know, however - I want to write you, and I want to hear from you. There is no necessity, I am sure, in your estimation, that there should be some particular object in view ~~left~~ in order that we should write to each other. - I have occasionally read your letters to your Father, and have learned some of your movements from the papers. But all this does not supply the place which a letter, direct from you to me, would supply. So I do hope that you will be able to find an half hour or so to let me know what you are doing & how you are - and if you have any word of counsel or admonition to me, so much the better. I know that half an hour is a great deal to ask of time so fully occupied as yours is - but as it is so seldom of late that you have been called to employ it in this way I do not doubt that you will readily give it. - I have heard that you had returned to house-keeping - have you domestics? or are you in like affliction in this respect with every one hereabouts? - I regularly receive the Unionist, and am more & more pleased with it. It is surely edited with decided ability, and only prejudice against its views on Slavery can prevent it from becoming an influential moral & political Journal. Some of its articles have been written with apparently far more attention & carefulness than is usually bestowed on newspaper articles - for instance, the article in No. 21

on the American Press, and in No. 24. on the assertion of the advocates of Slavery that Slavery is consistent with Revelation. There is, in short, a large amount of Editorial matter, and of an excellent kind. With regard to the last article I mentioned, it seems to me no Christian can allow that his religion sanctions slave-holding; - but I think the arguments which are adduced in that article hardly sufficient to establish the point that slaveholding was entirely discountenanced by the Mosaiic Law.

The writer of that article relies a good deal on the fact that the Israelites were forbidden to enslave any of their own nation - that is, the visible Church of God - hence he would argue against the slavery existing in our own country. This is an argument of little weight, it appears to me, in our day, when a fuller Revelation has made it clear to us that God does, and always has, regarded with compassion all nations who dwell upon the face of the earth. But this is but a part of the article - and the writer fairly shows that the servants of Abraham, ^{& the patriarchs,} and the slavery of the Israelites, was an entirely different affair thing, from our slaves, and our system of Slavery.

The reason why Slavery was permitted by God under the old dispensations, I think, may be found in the fact that God had not then made his Revelation perfect to man. He chose to declare his will, ^{disclose} & his character, to men gradually - wishing to educate them according to the nature he had given them, which demands slow & progressive steps; men have received divine truth, as they were able to bear & understand it. The whole Mosaiic dispensation shows most fully that this was the case, ~~and~~ that God then dealt with his people ~~then~~ by sensible manifestation & direct displays of his attributes, because at that time it was

necessary. The Israelites had not made ^{such} an advancement in the knowledge of spiritual things ~~which~~ ^{as} would enable them to be affected by spiritual views. They were ~~not~~ ^{not prepared} ~~sufficiently~~ to see God in their consciences, their hearts, in "the visible things he had made", and he therefore made himself known to them directly, and through the medium of their own senses. And so it ever with all his dealings with them - He permitted certain relations to exist between man & man, because men were not then prepared to receive a Revelation which forbade these. But with us, ~~the case is very different.~~ ~~Every thing is changed~~ we have a Revelation clear & full of the Character & Will of God, and of our duties to Him, & to one another; and how we can justify Slave holding, and show it to be consistent with that character & will, & those duties, is more than I can see - it cannot be ~~done~~ ^{shown}. The holding of our fellow men in bondage is contrary to what we know of the character & will of God - I say, to what we know, and by this we shall be judged, and not by what the Jews knew, or by what any other people knew. Let not the men who have ^{the} perfect light of Christianity, attempt to ~~conceal~~ ^{shield} and justify their sins under the cover of the Law of Moses. -

But I had no intention of writing one line on the subject when I began. You may perhaps like to know something of what I have been doing of late. Since I wrote you last I have preached at various places. I was at Leicester 3 Sundays (one of which however was an exchange with Mr. Johnson of Grafton). I then returned to Boston to Thanksgiving - made sad by the death of Miss Elizabeth Bond, one of the most admirable young ladies which the wide world could show. - I took up my abode in Cambridge, but have preached every Sunday. I have preached at Frammingham (for Mr. Chapman, who was settled there ~~last~~ ^{on} about 3 months since, and now has been compelled to go to the South ~~for~~ ^{on} account of a severe attack on his lungs, with but a faint hope that he will ever return) - at Brookline, for Dr. Pierce - for Mr. Newell in Cambridge, Dr. Lowell & Mr. Young & F. T. Gray in Boston - the last 4, half a day each. I have also been to Fall River where I preached 3 Sundays. An excellent Society might be formed,

in Fall River, and will be if they can get a minister soon; but if they do not have a minister soon, they will be likely to suffer severely. - One of the Committee there inquired of me about you, asking if you would like to come to Fall River. I could give him no other answer than that I had heard you say you would not leave B., till that place could be supplied by another man. I spoke of your Anti-Slavery-ism; he said that would form no objection in his mind; ^{I suppose that} probably all would not agree with him. - I wish to send ^{one page} Mr. Philip Scarborough - will you be good enough to give it to him? He may think I had forgotten it; and if I could have obtained the information he desired I should have written him at once - as it was, it was not worth

Saml. May Jr
 Jan. 20. 1834



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Rev. Samuel J. May

Brooklyn.

(Conn.)

Single.

P.S. The Liberator stopped, for want of postage; I suppose. Of course you know you are welcome to my subscription for the year; though I am sorry the paper was given up.

while to write merely to tell that I had not got the information. He wanted me to inquire of my grandfather respecting a kind of grass, called "tall meadow oat-grass" - its value for low lands. I did inquire, but my Grandf. could not tell me about it, as he had never seen the grass. - I also had a commission to execute for Lieut. Mather. respecting a proper interpretation of a word "day" in the 1st Chap. of Genesis. I was unable to get the information he wanted, ^{in a} ~~from~~ the shape which would have served his purpose, and in consequence I did not trouble him with any communication about it. If you see Lieut. M., or when you do see him, will you please say this to him. It is plain I must stop. Remember me to your Wife, & my B. friends - write me soon and believe me, very truly yours - S. May Jr

Ms. A. 6. 1. 2