

Boston, November 11<sup>th</sup> 1847.  
Evening.

My dear Cousin,

Your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> came to hand this evening, and now I blame myself - almost - that I had not executed my first thought, & written to you immediately after the meeting of the Am. Unit<sup>n</sup> Assoc<sup>n</sup>. The reason I did not do so is to be found alone in the fact that our office business, with the additional cares connected with the Liberator during Mr. G.'s protracted absence, has absolutely cut off all chance to do anything else. But I will give you, now, all I know about late A. U. A. business.

The Salem Convention I did not attend; I could not, conveniently; but, still more, I chose to be away. Immediately on the adjournment of that Convention (Flurway, Oct<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>), <sup>(I think)</sup> a meeting of the A. U. A. took place in Boston, at Bedford Street Vestry, <sup>I attended the meeting.</sup> The main business was to elect a Gen. Secy., in place of W. G. Eliot who declined accepting the office. Pretty punctually to 1 o'clk. the meeting was opened - Eliot's letter of declinature (if there be such an affected word) was read, and a random talk ensued, lasting till after 2 o'clk, as to the situation of affairs - it appeared that the Magnates had no particular man in their eye to fill the vacancy; some said the Assoc<sup>n</sup> was not ready to act, and no one was bold enough to say they were ready. In this state they adjourned

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till 2 1/2 o'clock. - The <sup>23</sup> Session I did not attend, as  
I was engaged to go to Weymouth to attend, & speak at,  
an Antislavery Meeting. But, on returning to the city  
the next morning, and meeting Stephen Fairbanks in  
the street, I inquired what had been done at the  
meeting. "No choice" said he "of a Genl. Sec. was  
made; and the whole subject was referred back  
to the Executive Committee, with power to appoint  
a man to the office, whenever they found a suitable  
one - to hold office till next Annual Meeting. - But," said  
he "a balloting was held, for persons whose names had  
been reported, as suitable ones, by a Committee of Nomination;  
and the vote stood 25 for your Cousin S. J. May, 20  
for Chas. Briggs, 4 or 5 for F. J. Gray, some few (I think)  
for F. A. Farley" - and perhaps others. Among the names,  
on the list nominated, was that of John Pierpont. He was  
present, & immediately rose (so S. J. told me) and said it  
would be impossible for him, at his time of life, ~~even~~ if elected,  
to accept the office - and must not be voted for.

My own opinion is that the aforesaid magnates, when  
they found how matters stood, how strong a disposition existed  
to elect <sup>to the office of Genl. Sec.</sup> a man of progress, reform, & true liberality, <sup>because</sup> ~~there~~  
alarmed, and so introduced the motion to refer the whole  
subject to Exec. Comtee. I afterwards learned that 28  
votes would have put you in a majority. I confessed I was  
surprised, & much encouraged, when I found the A. U. A.  
nominating for Genl. Sec., among others, such men as J. Pierpont  
and yourself, and am willing to consider it in the most

hopeful light. But I firmly believe that so long as the present Conservative influences in the body are so strong and stationary as at present, the progress will be little more than an occasional demonstration like the above-mentioned.

The Exec. Comtee. have been plainly told that your appointment w<sup>d</sup> be most acceptable to a large body of Unitarians - probably to a large majority of the denomination. And yet I don't believe they will make it, though they know you would fill it well, and most usefully.

When they do appoint you, I shall believe it. - But I

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to Boston, for the winter. Saml. May

Abolitionism, and its not being allowed", was a piece  
of downright impertinence, for which, in ordinary life,  
he would be compelled to apologise. He wants to be  
a greater man than he knows how to be. - In my  
judgment, all he said may be rated at nothing; and,  
unless for civility, (and hardly on that ground,) I should  
not have advised that such a letter be answered at  
all.

When the Ex. Com. of A. A. A. want to know  
whether you will accept office of Gen. Sec., or not, and on

for slowness, & other observations have