On Mr Garrison

Weymouth
Decr 17th 1880.
1880

My dear friend,

I am greatly gratified to hear from you so fully & so kindly, — I, who so little deserve that kindness in view of my delinquency as a correspondent: — but my circumstances plead my excuse: & surrounded as I am by my family requiring constant care in long continued illness & suffering, I have been obliged to relinquish the pleasure of writing to my friends as I could wish: & the greater is my grateful sense of their goodness, when they continue to think kindly, to give me the

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satisfaction of hearing from them.

How can I enough thank you for the pleasure of photos of your dear Aunt & yourself? I will not say they revive the memory of your features, — for those features have never died out of my mind. I am glad to think of you as together & beg you to give my affectionate love to Mrs. Michel to whom I shall write as soon as I can command a moment to assure her that there are moments in life that are never forgot.

Your ever obliged friend

Mr. Gladstone & Miss Lyttelton

are deeply interesting to me. Such a life as Mr. Garrison's is like a torch to enlighten the world — not one land alone, — & I regret to see it passed onward from hand to hand. The History of Mr Garrison's life is the history of all that is most important in the history of our country; & his biography is but a narrative of the obstacles he met & overcame in saving it from the consequences of its sin, & in successfully urging its repentance. The chief of these are the obstacles he encountered from the heresy of proscribed funds: — the "Devil's Amen" false brethren. I can heartily recommend Mr Oliver Johnson's book as a source of dates, & as a mine of information

in many respects: — but a true life of Mr Garrison should give more information about the attempts of those who, under a political pretence engendered by deep ambition tried so long but happily so vainly, to turn Mr Garrison out of the society he founded & so admirably led, as unworthy their name & association as abolitionists. Apostate abolitionists they ought to be sent down to posterity as a warning against the treacherous betrayal of the cause they proved unworthy to sustain. Tempted by them, as they were by the high bids of the clergy for their apostacy, they gained the aid of one of their best, James G. Birney to announce their idea in a full phalanx of the abolitionists: "I affirm, he said, that Mr. Garrison is not fit to be a member of the Anti-Slavery Society, seeing as he does, to carry this cause to the polls."

and so on, ad infinitum. But you know all about this one Corpet, a specimen of the severest of those Garrison had to encounter. As man after man & woman after woman of those on whom he trusted fell away, — it sometimes seemed as if faithfulness to principle were hardly left on earth.

Looking back, from this time, I see the way he led, strewn with broken instruments: — those who did run well for a while but fell off when they became aware of the true nature of the enterprise. It was said & well said by one beloved & excellent Coadjutor, — Miss Susan Paul, — & she was one whose sight was cleared in her identity with the race we were laboring

that there were "exactly two sorts of persons in the cause — those who had every thing to lose by it, & those who had every thing to gain by it." I might in a sense amend the expression by saying it was composed of those who did their duty under whatever clear sight of what they must lose by it, & those who were deluded by false hopes of personal advancement, to try to make a tool of it for personal advancement.

You remember the old Latin proverb, — "Nothing but good of the dead." One of our duties has been & should still be, to explode that idea: to tell the truth. never to confound the precious with the vile.

to take care in what we say, to do justice to the good & true; — which only can be done by a faithful narration of their trials & temptations, — illustrated by the falling away of those that could endure neither: — and the daily beauty of their lives can only be shown by contrast with the lives it makes to seem ugly.

You know how the accursed envy & unblessed ambition of such as — I could name but need not as you know them & I have no time to write them, — led them to swindling & embezzlement, in the hope of thereby securing fame, & heaping up the associations of true abolitionists. You know that Parker never exposed

political action: – he only wished it to be effectual. – I did not think any thing could be accomplished by getting ourselves prematurely counted & then holding out temptations to slight help. When he proposed the Master-Step, – when he uttered the potent Spell – "No union but Householders," every real & great Statesman in the world (who were all watching this process of renaissance for a Nation) cried out at once – "It is this the Man they cannot allow to remain in their company because he does not act politically! – Why this is the greatest political step the world ever saw!"

You ask about the Statue of R. M. It is in progress, & grand & beautiful as promises to be. You know my first idea was, to

to perpetuate her great & noble memory, by means of an edition of her works: a complete elegant illustrated uniform edition: but consulting with Mr Thomas Starkweather, it was found that the numerous owners of copyrights could not be brought up. So that plan was impracticable. I prefer the present one, — as I did the idea of a statue for Garrison rather than the endowment of a school for freedmen in Virginia: for the man is more to posterity than his works: his life & character are greater than any thing he could do. & he is better kept in memory by a statue than by any other mode of perpetuation. Still I know the endowment of a chaunty is the generally preferred way, & the publication of books seems to most persons the most appropriate one. But

I am not sorry that the failure of my first project took place to E. M. made way for my second. The expense of the Modelling is already defrayed. Now remains the cost of the Casting. & for her country's sake, I could rejoice if any part of that expense should come from England, in small sums from many persons, – (or larger ones from a few.) But at all events, the enterprise is past the stage of possible failure: – Where the Statue shall be placed, & in what manner we have not yet decided. The Scottish judgement will mainly decide.

Will you pardon

the haste in which I am obliged to write — but I thot Speed better than legibility in this case. Nothing can better excuse illegibility than those who like yourself, are perfect in every letter writing respect.

With renewed assurances of love to you both, & most grateful satisfaction for your photographs.

I am

Your affectionate friend

W. W. Patmore

I cannot even read over. I only know the thought is all right.

I wish I could say as much for the orotes.