

103 Springfield St.

Boston (Sunday) Mar. 24<sup>th</sup> 1867

My dear Friend Garrison,

19 I thank you very heartily for your very kind and cheering remembrance of my seventieth birthday. It was, as you say, a turning point in my earthly existence, which naturally gave intensity to many thoughts and emotions that are not wholly new to me, for the varied experiences of life often suggests them to all of us, - but the crisis of threescore & ten brings them home to us with a freshness & force that they never had before. The reason, I suppose, is that it is myself now, & not another; it is here now, & not in the distance.

My life experience has not been a trying one; I have never had the severe & harsh things to encounter which many others have had, & under which it seems to me my faith

would not have borne me up; but a good Providence has dealt very gently with me, and has led me by still waters. It is very sweet to look back over one's course in life, and to be able to trace the Father's goodness in so many touching ways, - very generally most apparent now where it was least apparent at the time. What assurance it gives us of His love! It seems as if one could go very calmly & trustingly forward into what remains of life. Yet, to be truthful, I must say, I have not that calm trust, that freedom from anxiety <sup>about the things of to-morrow</sup> which such proofs of over-ruling goodness might inspire. Perhaps it is best we should not have it. We may need the anxiety as a spur to effort; and as a very good lady once said to me, when I told her that my way seemed ~~very~~ dark before me, "The way will open before you, - doubt it not!" And so it has; & so it will; - and yet, - Well, I ought not to unfold ~~me~~ this weakness of faith to you; certainly to nobody but you, who, I know, will not misunderstand nor make too much of it.

For there are bright & cheering seasons when every cloud  
is lifted. It is probably a good deal a matter of tem-  
perament. Yet cheerful or depressed, it is always re-  
freshing & comforting to say, "Thy will, not mine,  
be done." - That embraces in itself all prayer, and  
<sup>at least it should inspire & limit</sup>  
it never fails to calm troubled waters.

In looking back over the changes of  
my uneventful life, - among all the influen-  
ces for good which have led me and mould-  
ed me better than I could have hoped, -  
there is hardly one which has had a more pow-  
erful <sup>frarracting</sup> effect on my character & my views, than  
my acquaintance with you. Extending over  
so many years, & bringing us into such inti-  
mate relations, it has been full of the best con-  
sequences to me. To me, as to ever so many  
others, the acting with you in the great moral work,  
which encountered such bitter opposition, led to deep-  
er convictions of truth & right than we ever had before;  
the cowardly became courageous; - as Luther, who was  
no coward, said in his great extremity, 'God helps me; I can  
do no other; - so many timid & shrinking ones, - in the strength  
which your bold & earnest utterance of truth inspired, became  
bold & earnest too to speak for it. Such, though much less  
efficiently than in many others, was its effect upon me.

How naturally do I associate with yours the names  
of so many others dear to you as to myself for this  
inspiration of a higher life. To Samuel J. May & Samuel E.  
Sewall I owe my first knowledge of you. And then come up  
to my mind a host of others, among whom, without disparagement  
to any, I cannot but mention Lydia Maria Child & John G. Whittier.  
Others may have <sup>been</sup> preeminently helped by others not less gift-  
ed & true; but these come up spontaneously to me as hav-  
ing, with you, been helpers above most others to me. This  
was in the first stage of the great work. Subsequently came  
the many others for bind themselves in my thought with you  
among whom I will only mention, Lucretia Mott & George Thompson.  
What inspiring & elevating influences have come to me, <sup>from</sup> all  
these, in the very centre of whom I bind them & all to-  
gether in one, is your own image. — How many dear ones  
too in your own family, & in my own circle, gather round  
in my thought as sharing together the happiness of your  
home, — at all times made the home of so many.

But here I must stop, not because I have  
said all, or half, that I wanted to say. Indeed my mind  
misgives me that I have so poorly said what I wanted  
that I had better not said any thing, but in simple acknow-  
ledgement of your kind letter and its accompanying greenback,  
which, considering the many claims, little & great, upon your  
resources, I fear you ought not to have bestowed. I know  
well the largeness and generosity of your nature, and that, if  
you had the means, you would delight to make many &  
many others as happy as money could make them. I have  
had abundant proof of it before. Accept the thanks & love  
of your old friend, to whom it comes so new to style himself  
A Septuagenarian Robt. J. Wallcut