

R.D. Webb to Mrs. Chapman  
Dublin 1<sup>st</sup> of 8<sup>th</sup> Mo. 1846  
1846

GARRISON MSS.

My dear friend

45  
Yesterday I returned home after an absence of 16 days - which I spent in visiting my friends and rambling about the country. I left town with my father James, his wife and little daughter. We travelled in a little carriage of his and the first day arrived at Ballinacorney in the Co. of Kildare - 28 Irish miles from Dublin. It is a pretty village & has an uncommon number of Leeches inhabitants for so small a population. Abraham Shackleton opened a boarding school there in 1726 - he was succeeded by his son Richard - this grandson Abraham, who died in 1810. The last Abraham son in law continued the school from 1800 to about 1830 - when it was given up finally. Edmund Butler was the pupil of the first Abraham & the intimate friend of Richard, whose daughter Mary Leadbeater was a poetess, a most sweet minded woman, & author of the Cottage Dialogues of which I sent you some copies two or three years since. She was a woman of extraordinary beauty of character, & was a favorite correspondent of the poet Crabbe - and is often mentioned in his letters by his son. She died in 1827 - I knew her very well and was out in a carriage with her the last time she was outside her door, a few days before his death. Her niece Betty Shackleton daughter of the last Abraham, did not read & was one of my most valued friends. She was a most admirable woman, with great natural gifts, witty, warm hearted, actually benevolent, ready handed, a true friend, a most devoted and attached abolitionist. Her sister Mary also she says has been suffering for years from some unknown internal disease which has baffled all the doctors, & I suppose not unlike Samuel Martin's. She suffers intensely every at times - mangled nerves and excruciating pains mingled together from the bottom of the heart to drink sometimes for hours together & through the night as well as the day. Yet in her intervals of ease she has as light spirits as any one I ever knew. Her flow of conversation is rather tall & wonderfully full and easy - her wit amazingly original and sprightly. I have known in Ballinacorney some of the best and most lovable & respectable specimens of humanity I ever knew any where - and they are not all gone yet. I believe there are as good saints yet alive as any whose names occupy the calendar, and that I know some of these who have walked and talked with them myself. George Shackleton lives in Ballinacorney he is a son of Abraham the 2<sup>nd</sup> & has 12 children, the 4<sup>th</sup> eldest of whom is Abraham the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Then there is his

elder brother Richard a green old bachelor who married this other day in his 65<sup>th</sup> year - and his other brother Ebenezer with a family of 5 children - one of them called Patrick the another Theobald in honor of Father Mathew - to the great honor of "pious generally" who are 14 out of 20 of them, strongly anti Catholic and staunch Tories. Ebenezer is a man of a remarkably full mind, keen sighted, original thinker - a bold & copy. But why need I go on with pictures of people, than don't see a pin for Dublin than with news see, when the last was read with do better. After two days in Ballinacorney we passed on to Thomastown in the Co. of Kilkenny - and next morning 4 miles to Woodstock one of the most beautiful demesnes in the three Kingdoms. It belongs to W. Tupper, Esq. nephew to the author of Psyche whose monument and statue by Flaxman are in the churchyard close by. Tupper's wife is a sister of the Duke of Gloucester and a descendant of Charles II. This place is most beautiful - full of hills and dells, magnificent woods, the finest trees I have ever seen - stately gardens, terraces, rockeries, cascades, shady alleys, through the trees groves, but however, & other fine things to us end. The gates are open and there is free access and a welcome to every body. I am told that even the huns may be seen visited by strangers but I have no taste for walking in upon people at dinner, who have known of my existence like them. In the house I am told they have one of those copies of Raphael's famous Maria del Sisto, described with such aptness by Mrs. Jameson in her account of the Dresden gallery given in Sketches & Views at home and abroad. From Woodstock we went on to Waterford, & from Waterford as usual down the river, by Duncannon fort and Fethard, and across Barrow ferry to our retreat opposite the Keros & Salteen. On the wild sandhills near the ferry in the dusk of the evening we met Hannah, and my only sister who had brought her five beautiful children from Manchester to join our colony - which between Porter & Harwood & Thompson & Webb 7 separate numbers 220 scattered with 1/2 mile of each other. The Porter are gone home and the rest will be all gone in less than a month. I wish you knew my sister Deborah Thompson. She is a fine, handsome, cheerful, simple minded, plentiful woman with a great gift, by dint of her charming good humors and good temper - at getting the world on her head sweetly and smoothly. She is neither scholar nor genius but is much more pleasant and enjoyable than either of these awful characters is, in a general way. H.C. Wright and Amasa Walker know her and like her very well. After we had rested a day or two, James, Debb, Hannah & myself went to Waterford again. We got up at 5 - walked 2 miles to the Ferry, 2 miles more to Fethard, foraged 4 miles to Duncannon for 6 pence each - & sailed 10 miles up the river for 6 pence more - and behold we were in Waterford. There, after a day and more spent in visiting in the weather, we made up a delightful party to Comshenanam, a wild mountain



town about 10 miles from Waterford amidst the Comeragh mountains. It is on the mountain side 1300 feet above the sea and the mountain rises still 1300 feet above the surface of the lake. The cliffs that overhang the water are some of the grandest in Ireland and a pair of eagles have their nest amongst their recesses. They are the golden eagle the noblest of the feathered tribe, as near count nobility. We ascended the mountain from the lake on one side which is not so steep as the rest - and a precious job we had of it. We were 7 women and 3 men - I such puffing blowing, and laughing & shouting and gossip & self glorification as we had! My sister who is rather large & comely was a great weight to mount so high - and got great praise for her perseverance.

There were several water drinkers amongst us, and one of them (a very sweet girl a staunch reader of Liberator's Liberator) remarked that she thought that we had decided by the advantage of my tea sipping companions - to which of course I cheerfully assented. From the top of the mountain we had a grand view over a vast extent of country, a large portion of which (including the lake itself) belongs to the eccentric Marquis of Waterford. Immediately beneath us lay Comberaun with its dark water & mighty precipices. It was 8 hours from the time we commenced the ascent till we returned to the cars that brought us to the foot of the mountain. We left them at the house of a farmer who is, or till lately was out on bail under an accusation of having murdered a woman some time since. He accompanied us up & down the mountain & was a great help to the lagging tea drinkers. He is a fair faced, good countenanced good natured fellow. He owns a large number of beautiful cattle - cow horses, and lives in the midst of radiant shuttle plenty. "Well, my dear" (as we Irish say by way of rest when telling a story) when we got back to Bannow we only rested a day, when Lizzy Poole, & Hannah & myself set off one fine morning across the ferry to Fethard and from thence down to the point of Hook you will see it on any map of Ireland. It is a long peninsula running into the sea. It is close to Bagenin Head where Strongbow landed when he invaded Ireland and where the entrenchments that he formed round his camp are still to be seen after 750 years. In Loftus Hall, the old deserted mansion of the Marquis of Ely, on the peninsula of Hook, we saw a sword which is shown as that of Strongbow. It is probably as old as his time - but I doubt if it be one that he wore. From the light-house on the Hook is a grand view of the mouth of the Suir which is there 3 miles wide - and up the river are many fine headlands - Dunmore, Credan Head, Duncannon, &c. Oh! I wish you had been there. I am almost hoarse in such places that I don't say aloud or to myself - I wish I had Rosen here! & when we got near home that night after our long walk of 20 English miles & were talking of the irksomeness of having to go farther - Lizzy Poole said, getting his own accord - I'll engage if you heard that Rosen was at Cullinstown (a mile & a half farther by the cliffs) you would be there fast enough - to which we heartily assented. Many more names in Boston, Philadelphia & New Hampshire 'd have had like attractions for us.

Now I am a little ashamed of all my talk about myself and my doings and my people and their doings, instead of telling you my confessions about the sugar duties more especially, as I have nothing to say that will do me much credit. The fact is I am not a good politician, nor an able reasoner - and the side I took was rather the result of feeling than of deliberate conviction. I am afraid the arguments are against James Haughton & myself, yet my friends Joseph Sturge & the British & Foreign Committee. I feel on this question much in the same mood as would have actuated the man who would have smothered little Eli Whitney in his cradle, from a prophetic sense of the horrible extension of slavery consequent upon the discovery of the cotton gin. I think the B. & F. Committee or the majority of them are as honestly & blindly wrong in their views as I am myself - whilst the Government (which is so partly made up of old slaveholders & staunch advocates for slavery) I believe to be thoroughly hypocritical and dishonest in the course they take on this question. I would have no marine police nor prevention force - I would not meddle in the matter - but I am puzzled - and I hate the idea of four fifths of both America & all Cuba being covered with sugar plantations & coffee of slaves. To be sure this is ridiculous enough to apprehend that even John Bull could swallow so much sugar - even with hungry Pat and Keen Sawney to help him. I think Richard Allen is rather proud of his enlightened views, or he would not have written to talk of them. He is getting rich very fast and has hardly time to turn round, so busy is he. Nevertheless he and Ann are about to visit the Rhine and part of Germany. Her health has been very poor of late. She has been suffering from spine complaint, and the severe blisters and other remedies recommended by physicians have done little good. She has wonderful spirits and energy, & has a unusual share of taste and elegant knowledge for a self taught quaker - but she is only a meddling quaker like some more of us. She is expert in German, French, Spanish, & Italian & has dabbled in I don't know how many other sorts of strange lingo. She & I are cousins and were play fellows - but she looks ten years younger than I do. I am very old looking for my years, having grey hair and being far from handsome. ~~My dear friend, I am so glad to hear of your safe arrival and to hear that you are all well and happy. I have been very anxious about you since you went, and I have been very much obliged to you for the many letters that I have received from you. I have been very much interested in the many interesting and important things that you have written to me about. I have been very much interested in the many interesting and important things that you have written to me about.~~ There is a passage which before dying I wished to blot. It contained nothing atrocious - but was simply clumsy and awkward. I might have filled half a column in the time it took me to erase it.



I am at the present moment sitting at my office desk at 6 o'clock on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of August morning - and a lovely morning it is. We have not had a fine season for many years. There has been an unusual late season of fine dry weather - no exception or very heavy rains. The country looks its best every where and there is every prospect of a fine plentiful harvest. As far as my own observations go, supported by the testimony of other observers I am satisfied that the condition of this country is steadily improving. The houses, the shops, the agriculture, the mode of living, habits of cleanliness & decency, all the appearance of civilization are greatly better now than they were 40, 30, 20, or even ten years ago. The facilities for travelling are greatly increased all over the country & at very cheap rates, compared with those in England. A great railway is about to be formed between Dublin & Cashel, 100 miles long - and it will probably be extended by branches to Cork, Limerick, & Waterford. One has been opened to Drogheda, 32 miles north, & will be likely to extend ~~westward~~ to Portadown, from whence one runs to Belfast the metropolis of the north of Ireland. In a political point of view I doubt if Ireland was ever in a more anomalous condition, or that the rich & the poor were ever more opposed to each other in their opinions and aspirations. The poor Catholics are all Republi- & 4<sup>th</sup> of the nation - The Protestants rich & poor and perhaps 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the rich Catholics are Anti-Republi- & 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the rich Catholics are Anti-Republi- & 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the rich Catholics are to be seen generally ignorant, bigoted, and pretty much led by the nose - and would not likely be utterly unable to describe the Republic they talk so much about. Indeed I think it would puzzle O'Connell to define the constitution of Ireland if Republic was attained tomorrow. Where would our army and navy come from - how we are to escape from the influence of English bribery & unfair influence wherever she had a point to gain in Ireland - how a voluntary church which he has now professed to advocate could be maintained in a country where so large a proportion of the people are members of the most bigoted priest-ridden form of Christianity. I have seen scenes in those of Philadelphia would be of frequent occurrence. I hear that Irish Protestants form an active portion of the Native American Party - This is extremely likely and wherever Irish Catholics and Irish Orangemen get together, they are likely to sever each other as the two famous Kilkenny cats did, which were put into a pit over night & the morning nothing was found but the two tails. My first the abject repeal paper in Ireland is the Nation - edited by some young fellows who are sometimes sneeringly called Young Ireland. They are perfectly Anti-English. They take up and disseminate all the stories they can gather from history of English treachery, cruelty, rapacity, bad faith, English defeats - They exhort Ireland to stand alone & as plainly as they dare, they hint at the glory & dignity of complete independence of England. They make no empty professions of loyalty to the Queen - They are all for Ireland & war to the knife when ever it can be undertaken against England with the probability of a successful issue. The decision of the English judges on the points mooted in the writ of Error will probably be delivered some time this month. It will decide

whether O'Connell & his fellow martyrs (as they are always called in the Repeal journals) are to remain in jail the remainder of their term - or are to walk out as the whole proceedings being quashed. If they be released the government will be disgraced in the eyes of the people not more than they are already. If they stay in, the hatred of the English will be increased in the popular mind. Nothing that has yet been done here at all rebuffed in the least aimed at - to lessen the power and influence of O'Connell I don't think he was ever so dear to the multitude as he is at the present moment. His Edmund being been able to procure the no. of Fair's Edinburgh Magazine for July which contains one of the best political articles I have seen on the position of Ireland in consequence of the State Trials? As to R.C. Wright the last I heard of him was from 2 letters written about the 30<sup>th</sup> of June - one to E. Case, another to myself - from Graftonbury. In them he mentions his intention to leave very shortly & travel by way of Vienna, Munich, Basle, Geneva & Paris back to England. He describes himself as cured - but I think that exertions such as injured him before and in the same climate will injure him again. His little book, on which he depended for an independent maintenance in this country, has had a very slow sale during his absence - only a few pounds worth having been sold. But Mrs. Pease's purse is long and her heart is large and she don't seem to think she can do better with her money than in promoting Henry's labours - and all in the most graceful and unobtrusive way. She is a tall noble and lovely minded woman. As to wealth, why she is one of the rich English - and I really believe she has more money than all the poor Irish who are known to you, put together. Will she desert the steership, for she fills the office well. It is odd that E. Wright, for should have made such a detestable complaint about the address when you were met but twice. It is not pretty of him, and is a little unscrupulous looking into the bargain. Neither E. nor myself has heard any thing of him since. He will hardly come to Ireland. We are too poor. I am sorry to find from the last Standard that Bradburn has been speaking at Liberty Party Meetings & that Child is agitating for Clay. It is monstrous to think of an abolitionist voting for such an infamous enemy of liberty as Clay - one who has nailed his colors to the mast of Tyranny as he has done. I cannot comprehend it. I believe the itch for political distinction in Bradburn's disease, and that this passion is much stronger, in America or at least more prevalent in America than it is here. I have received no Herald of Freedom since by the two last mails - I am not sure that any came since the week it was suspended. I would be obliged by thy bearing this in mind on my behalf. I think I.R. French will rectify the mistake if it took place in his office. The Herald is a great treat to us here in Ireland - and some of N.P.R.'s most fanatical followers are in Paddyland - and why not? for don't we bear the reputation of being already half cured from the very fact of being natives of the "brightest Gem of the ocean"?



about the next Fair - We have issued our annual circular requesting contributions, and I hope we may have some success. I am now sanguine - but I am this year disposed to be rather more in the humor of Spenser than usual. For some reason that I don't know our printing business has been extremely dull for some time past. This to be sure is not our peculiar misfortune - it is general in Dublin - and I am told 120 firm names are out of employment. The result however is that I feel miserably and I fear I want to be inclined to do as much myself for the cause with you as I did last year. I know it is thy private opinion that charity begins at home - but it is mine that the Anti Slavery enterprise is an effort for the whole human family, and that while slavery exists in any professedly Christian country, it is a folly to talk of liberty, civilization & Christianity. There are very few on this side of the Atlantic who care much or do any thing for your cause. I console myself by thinking it can't be any great harm if I have mistaken my gift when I try, and do a little for the "damned niggers". I think Anti Slavery is as much the cause of the master as of the slave.

I always depend chiefly on the services of Cork. They have taste, talents, zeal and time and have a Unitarian circle who work for them and with them, with warm good will. You know George Dromey by name. Poor fellow he has suffered for some years from a bad affection of the bronchial organs - has a tremendous cough & profuse expectoration. His wife - a very admirable woman, a native of Lubek, has just been sitting with me in consultation on these affairs. They think of going to Grasse, but will at any rate leave Ireland in search of a warmer climate and a more retired way of living. He has the lately held the station of one of the librarians of Trinity College, but is obliged to leave on account of ill health. They have an only daughter aged about 15. They lost one child by fire, one boy a young man of 19 by consumption and have had a terrible deal of trouble. He is a scholar, she is a real lady, and both are among my dearest friends.

Thank thy letter very warmly in my name for his pleasant addition to thy letter. If she knew how I cheer

Per Curiam's line



Edmund Lundy,

25, Cornhill,

Boston,

U.S.A.



To Mr. W. L.

gladifies me to see the handwriting of any of your factors she would write of lines from pure charity. An abolitionist here is almost as much looked down upon as in America - at least so far as any extension of sympathy is calculated to enable him to hold up his head. Our high degree of fellow feeling is about the same as it was three years ago - no additions & no decay of members. The invitation to the Hampshire Anniversary was cruelly kind - I cannot stir. I have just returned from a fortnight's frolic, & I feel quite erratic. As to going to see you, I would away there but inclination to lend me - of the inclination I have "Benjamin's portion" as travelling friends say, when their delighted hosts heap up the plates of dainties.

I never hear of George Thompson any more than if he were in India. I presume he is hard at work for the King of Delhi or the Raja of Sattara - & that he enjoys a handsome income and lives here or in London. I don't think he is on the best terms with the members of the Anti Corn Law League individually. I believe they had some disagreeable meeting before he sailed for India & his likely they are cool enough still. He is a fine fellow - but as he is not a rock like

Garrison was a sword from heaven like Rogers. About a fortnight for the Bible I will say L. Poole, and Oswald Murray son of John the Worthy of Bunting Bay were Glasgow - I will try Robert Moore - but I don't expect to shine or sparkle in the next number myself. I could no more write as I have written some years ago than I could fly. I live upon my laurels which are pretty fresh by this time. I must try and get something from R. L. Wright too, which thou canst make English of. Don't forget me about the Herald. In about three weeks I hope to have my family home again - & then we will be eyed for the winter. The charge of 1.11.7 was met in T. Sturges parcel - which came free except the freight from London. The box via Liverpool was the one that was charged - and it came last. My wife is on the right side - that is on thy side of the sugar question. She is much more enlightened & sensible than poor me. This is a fact, alas! Would a hopes excellent good likeness of O'Connell do well at the Fair? If so I will send a lot. That is a good fresh specimen of the Dublinian Kestrel, published by Mr. Kim in the Pa. Free The Standard is right good under its new management.

With love to all enquiring friends  
Thine very truly  
Richd. Webb