

128 East 12th St.,
New York, April 1, 1871.

My Dear Garrison,

It is a long time since I
either wrote to or heard from you; but
having to-day received the sad news of
Helen's severe and dangerous illness, I
cannot longer be silent. I need not tell
you how deeply I was pained by the
knowledge of your deep affliction. Another
attack of paralysis must have put the life
of your dear wife in immediate and
imminent peril; and even if she rati-
fies in a measure, there is reason to
fear that she can never again be as
well as she ~~was~~ has been during
the last few years. Knowing as I do
how deep and tender is your affection
for her—an affection hallowed by so many

years of happiness passed with her—I
can ^{well} ~~well~~ understand how agonizing
must be your anxiety in view of her
present condition. I can only assure
you of my tenderest sympathy, and
express the hope that your earnest
desire for the continuance of her life
may be gratified. If she is well enough
to receive a message from me, pray
assure her of my tender regard and
affection. Mary Anne would join me in
this, but she is not with me to night, and
has not yet heard the news of this last
attack. Her own sister is lying at the
point of death in Iowa, and she her-
self has spent most of the time for the
last fortnight with her niece in this
city, who, with a large boarding-house
on her hands, is in feeble health. Her
own health the past winter has been
unusually good—the effect, I think, of
her last year's ^{winter's} residence in Florida.

I have been leading, virtually, a new branch of my my profession, since I went into the Tribune. My duties are so unlike those imposed upon me in the Independent that at first they were rather perplexing; but I have mastered them at last. My task, primarily, is to edit the Weekly and Semi-Weekly papers. For the most part, save stories and poems, these papers are made from the daily; and I have to select from the mass of matter, first, what shall go in entire, and next, to condense and arrange the whole body of news. The only unpleasant feature of it all is the fact, that on one morning of the week I have to be at the office at 2 o'clock, and spend three or four hours in putting the Weekly to press. The edition is so large (125,000) that the stereotype plates have to be got ready to be put on the press the moment the daily of Wednesday morning is worked

off. My alarm clock wakes me ten
minutes past 4, when I dress and take
a Third Avenue car for the Tribune
office. I usually return to bed at 5,
and sleep till nine; and sometimes I
go to bed early Tuesday night, so as to
get a good long sleep before the clock
wakes me. At first I feared the task
might prove too much for me, but I
have borne it well, and am better now
than I was a year ago. Of course, when
I am not engaged on the Weekly, and
semi-weekly I do something on the
daily.

The Golden Age bids fair to be
a grand success. Theodore is working like
a beaver, and friends in goodly number
are rallying around him. The paper is
very attractive in its appearance and
general plan, and seems to fill a
place not occupied by any other. With
some weaknesses and faults, he has

great ability, and I hope he will suc-
ceed. The paper has paid expenses
thus far; but of course the tug will
come in the summer months, when
new subscribers cease to come in, while
the expenses ^{will be} ~~are~~ undiminished. He is
worth \$30,000 himself, and has friends
to back him to the tune of \$25,000 more;
and as the paper is not large, and is upon
an economical basis, I think it will
not fail. He requests me to say that
he shall be glad to number you among
his contributors, though he is not able at
present to pay independent prices. For
articles only half as long as those you
send to the Independent he will pay
you \$10, and you can write on topics
which are hardly ^{available} ~~open~~ to you in that paper.
Your religious views would be especially
welcome. While Helen is so very ill, I fear
you will not be able to write at all;
but when she gets better, as I hope
she will soon, perhaps you can avail

yourself to some extent of the new opportunity.

My purpose in calling on Wendell to-day was to suggest that perhaps ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~niece~~ could furnish just the accommodations which Fanny and her husband desire to obtain for their brief residence in New York; but of course, while Helen is so ill, they will not think of leaving home. I have told Wendell of the location and character of the house kept by our niece (Miss Letitia Tilton), and if they should conclude to come, he can go and explore for them. It is in 16th St (West), close to the Sixth Avenue, and not far from Union Square. The rooms are pleasant, the table good, and I think the terms would be reasonable.

You and I are among the old

folks, and cannot confidently count upon
many years more in this world. But
this thought gives me no unhappiness. Life
to me has been, on the whole, very happy,
and I am in no hurry for the end;
but on the other hand I have no
dread, but only the brightest anticipa-
tions of the future. To have worked
for so many years for the abolition of
slavery, and to have witnessed that
grand event, is enough, it seems to
me to satisfy any ordinary ambition.

I have been hoping for months
to find an opportunity to go to Boston,
but it does not come, and I fear it
is far off. I am very, very busy.

With love for your whole house-
hold, I am, my dear Garrison,

Your unwavering friend,

Oliver Johnson

