

128 E. 12th St.

New York, June 17, 1873.

My Dear Garrison,

I think it probable, from information derived from one of the Clerks in the C. U. office, that "Fast Asleep" and "Wide Awake" have been sent to you by mail, and that you have got them now. They are very beautiful chromos, fit to hang on any body's wall.

I think my plan of a <sup>request</sup> ~~request~~ to be addressed to you by some of your more conspicuous and influential friends, ~~and~~ asking you to write your Autobiography, will be carried out; and my opinion is, that, when it is once known that you intend to undertake the work, the publishers will be after you in eager competition, with liberal offers. It is not of much conse-

quence, I think, that you are destitute of  
memoranda for such a work. The files of  
the papers you have edited, supplemented  
by your own recollections, will be all  
you will need, and I believe that when  
you have once begun, the work  
will flow easily and naturally from  
your pen. It must not be a series  
of essays, but a simple, frank and  
clear account of yourself, of your child-  
hood and youth, of the circumstances  
that led you to become a printer, then  
an editor, &c.; of the influences that  
made you a Reformer first and then  
an Abolitionist in special, and of the  
principles and motives that guided you  
through the <sup>anti-slavery</sup> struggle. It would be well,  
I think, for you to read some of the  
best Autobiographies, in order to catch  
something of their spirit and style. The  
stately method of the essay will not do;  
you want to put yourself on easy

and familiar terms with your readers,  
and pack your chapters with incidents,  
pleasantly related. But why should I spread  
to you who know far better than I do what  
such a work should be? I do so only be-  
cause I am ambitious for your success.  
I believe you can and will make a book  
that will live in history, and that your  
descendants will regard with pride.

You speak of a recent letter of  
mine as "severely unanxious" you. That was  
not what I meant. It is not for me to  
censure an old friend whom I love  
and revere as I do you. I only meant  
to tell <sup>you</sup> how deeply I was pained by what  
I felt were your unjust, unexcused of Mr.  
Gouley; not that you were <sup>intentionally or even</sup> consciously  
unjust, but that your view of Mr. Gouley's  
character was a mistaken one. You  
say you regarded him as "the incarnation  
of the spirit of American compromise."  
Just here is the proof of your injustice. He  
was no more such an "incarnation" than

Giddings, <sup>Lincoln</sup> Henry Wilson, Sumner, and hundreds  
of those whom you habitually eulogize. He has  
never supported Henry Clay against Polk, but he  
the supported him in spite of his compromise  
ly spirit, as Giddings and hundreds of other  
you anti-slavery men did. Even you desired the  
you election of Clay rather than Polk, as the  
we Liberty party of that day charged. When Clay  
you and Webster made the compromises of 1850  
of Mr. Greeley denounced them and ridiculed  
called them, and that those compro-  
he mises and their authors fell into public  
the contempt was owing largely to his influence  
an orator. He fought the Fugitive Slave law  
in with all his might, and while he gave  
an sort of support to Gen. Scott in 1852, the  
of he "spit" upon the platform on which he  
the stood, and was among the very earliest  
I to leave the Whig and join the Republi-  
be lican party. Read his "History of Slavery in  
so America," and his "Recollections of a Boy's Life,"  
et and you cannot help seeing how unjust you  
y are in regarding him as the "incarnation

of American Compromise." Having <sup>well</sup> put  
him into that category, you readily believed  
the worst that his enemies say of him. Your  
credulity in this direction seemed to me phe-  
nomenal. I, who knew him intimately and  
thoroughly, felt your blows almost as if they  
had been struck at my own heart; just as  
I should have felt similar denunciations of  
1889. Thus you constantly assumed that he  
~~was plotting~~ <sup>plotted</sup> for his own nomination, and, for  
the sake of success, sold himself to the Dem-  
ocratic party; when I know that such charges  
were absolutely false and without a shadow  
of proof. I could not, <sup>but</sup> remember your  
denunciations of Grant for sailing at  
the annexation of San Domingo, and for  
compassing the removal of Sumner from the  
Committee of Foreign Affairs, and I could  
not re-write all this with the zeal with  
which you subsequently supported his  
re-election, and the harshness with which  
you treated those who agreed with you

in the first instance and differed from  
you in the last. I do not say this to  
conceal you, for I know you but ex-  
posed your honest convictions; I say it  
to show you how I felt, and trust you  
may understand why I could not agree  
with you. As for the Independent, its  
treatment of Mr. Greeley was simply  
outrageous, and it disgusted thousands  
of the most earnest supporters of Grant,  
including all the editors of the paper save  
only the one who managed its politics during  
the campaign - I mean the Rev. Dr. Spear.  
Dr. Sewitt I do not mention in this connection,  
because for years he has hardly been an  
editor, only a compiler of the "Ministerial  
Register" and an occasional contributor.  
That he wrote the obituary of Mr. Greeley  
I knew by internal evidence, and might  
glad he was, doubtless, of the oppor-  
tunity to disparage a man whom he  
had always hated and misrepresented.

But enough of this. I want to forget  
it all, though I was deeply wounded at the time.

With love to all your household,  
I am yours, with unabated esteem and  
affection.

Oliver Johnson.

