Freedom's Cottage,
Roxbury, April 14, 1834.

My much esteemed Friend:

Your beautifully executed and most affectionate note, enclosed in a letter from my dear Helen, came duly to hand; and I hasten to acknowledge my obligations to you.— You will get a poor return, because whenever I am most oppressed by a sense of the unmerited favors of my friends, I am then the most unskilful in the use of words. My heart always vanquishes my pen. To say, "I thank you," is a return so common and cheap, that, unless you attach to these words, in this instance, (and I beg you to do so,) something incomparably better than is found in their usual acceptation, you will have no just conception of my gratitude.

I use the term gratitude, not only because you have honored me with a note, which in itself should prompt this feeling, but because you say, in reference to dear H. and myself,—"I have no fears in consigning the lovely plant to thy care, knowing thou wilt assuredly watch over it for good."

Yes, my lovely friend,—unworthy as I am to receive so precious a trust,—it shall be my constant care and pride to cherish that plant with the utmost tenderness and assiduity. I am sure that the love which I bear for her whom I have chosen, is based upon imperishable worth; that it is not a transient flash of passion, but an undying attachment of the soul; and that, although time may give it maturity and greater expansion, yet it cannot diminish nor destroy the principle. There are so many fine traits in Helen's character, that they will always be entwined like golden cords around my affections.— How much do I admire the goodness of her heart, the simplicity of her manners, and the innocence and purity of her mind!

You speak of the joy which fills and gathers around my heart. Yes, I am indeed happy — exquisitely happy. Why should I not be? I might be sad, if Helen were making me a cold and formal return for my love; but she perfects and enlarges my happiness, by pouring out the affections of her soul, without measure, and in the most endearing manner. I can weep delicious tears, in the abundance of my bliss. Heaven has beneficently supplied a void in my breast, and I am happy. There is one who cherishes for me feelings which soar above the common sympathies of the world — which are stronger and holier than those of friendship merely — and I reciprocate those feelings, in all their intensity.

You know, dear friend, that in the estimation of thousands, I am, both physically and morally, a very terrible monster. How little do they know me! — Why, I feel more and more child-like, as time hurries me on to the maturity of manhood. My mind is as susceptible as it was in my infancy — it is a fountain of tenderness. It is not usual for men to indulge in tears; yet how freely do I weep! Not that I am unhappy when I weep — not that I am subject to painful depressions of spirits — not that there is the least degree of misanthropy in my disposition: exactly the reverse of all this is true. A kind word, a fine thought, a lovely scene, a tone of music, will easily bring a tear to my eye; and yet I doubt if any personal injury or outrage could extort a drop, however aggravated the attack or keen the anguish. In endurance of martyrdom, I am all adamant — I know that I possess an Indian fortitude, which the fires of persecution can never subdue — a hostile world cannot move me from the path of duty; — and yet I am a very woman in the gentleness of my disposition. This may seem paradoxical to some — but not to one so inflexible in the storm, and so dove-like in the sun-shine, as yourself.

I am happy to have this opportunity to tell you how greatly I have admired that generous devotion and dauntless courage, as well as sterling friendship and lively sympathy, which you exhibited in going into a dreary prison, and resolutely staying with her who has been so cruelly treated by the enemies of an outcast and guiltless race. Your conduct was full of angelic heroism and majesty. I love to recur to it, inasmuch as you are ordinarily so like a lily of the valley; and I praise you because you deserve not only this, but a better tribute. I speak admiringly, as a brother to a sister. My amiable friend May has frequently spoken of you to me in the most exalted terms of commendation.

It is pleasing to hear that there is some prospect of your having a Female Anti-Slavery Society in Brooklyn.— O! the poor victims of tyranny — is there one in this land who feels and strives in their behalf, strongly and perseveringly enough? I fear not — at least, I am sure that in this, as in all other respects, I come far short of my duty.

For the liberal — altogether too liberal supply of nut-cakes and apples, sent by you and my sweet H., I beg you to accept a whole ream of thanks.

It is not improbable that I may be in Brooklyn a week from this evening, on my way to Philadelphia. Still, there is no certainty of it. If I am preserved in health, you may certainly expect my arrival in all next week.

Your kind wishes and fervent aspirations duly affect my heart. I beseech you and Helen not to forget me in your supplications to our heavenly Benefactor.

Remember how I am crushed under the weight of duties, and excuse every defect in this imperfect epistle.

Love to Helen and all the family. I can only add that I am Yours, most affectionately,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Miss Anna E. Benson.

N. B. I sent a letter to your father last week; but I wish him to feel under no obligation to answer it, although I shall always be glad to hear from him. I remember the number of his years, and would not impose the slightest burden upon him.

Tell Miss Sarah that she may ultimately expect a letter from me. One from her will be truly acceptable.

Wrapper & envelope full bought

Wrapper. — Paid.

Miss Anna E. Benton,
Norwich,
Connecticut.