

Boston, May 15, 1842.

96 My very dear friend:

If I am the most neglectful of all your correspondents, I shall ever aim to be the most faithful of all your friends. This may seem paradoxical, though the assertion is full of sincerity and truth.

Two years ago, I was preparing to embark for England, in company with my increasingly beloved friend, N. P. Rogers. Though crowded with delightful incidents and remarkable events, in the aggregate they appear only ^{like} two moments - two flashes of thought - two glances of the eye. Thus does the soul assert its immortality, and bid defiance to the lapse of time. It can more easily sustain the weight of an eternity, than the body the wear and tear of a century. But when I closely scan those two years in detail, they seem to embrace a large portion of my existence. Scene after scene rises before my mental vision, with such distinctness and freshness, that I seem to be living in the past, and to have no connection with the present, no interest in the future. I have taken an affectionate farewell of all my American friends - I have given the last look to my native land - I am all afloat on the vast Atlantic, now impeded by protracted calms, now hurrying onward by favoring gales, and anon tempest-shaken - I hail the Irish coast in the distance - I am walking in the streets of commercial Liverpool - I am flying on the wings of steam toward "the capital city of mankind" - I am in the midst of the roar and commotion of London! - But I must pause, or Memory will occupy the remainder of this sheet, large as it is, in recapitulating events which, however deeply interesting to me as reminiscences of the past, are too well known by you to be chronicled in this epistle.

Some time has elapsed since I received a letter from you. You were somewhat ill at that time, and under medical treatment. Although I am deeply your debtor, on the score of epistolary exchanges, yet as you ever esteem it to be more blessed to give than to receive, your silence has led me to fear that you have not yet fully recovered from your sickness. If this be so, I can sympathize with you from experience. Since the new year came in, all the members of my family have been more or less ill. At one time, we were all on the sick list - mother, three sisters, wife, children, our "help," my brother, and myself! The children have had the measles, scarlet fever, coughs, and the usual ills which childhood is "heir to." My wife's eldest sister, Mary Benson, died about the first of February, after a most distressing illness; but happy in her mind as an angel - and all

"Dressed for the flight, and ready to be gone." She was a member of the orthodox Society of

Friends, and greatly beloved by a very large circle of acquaintance. When I first knew her, she was strongly influenced by sectarian prejudices, though her spirit was always lovely; but she gradually rose above the dominion of ~~the~~ sect, till she rejoiced in the complete enfranchisement of her soul. Her dying testimonies were precious. My own brother has been an invalid in my house for more than two years past, and is gradually ~~hastening~~ towards the grave, his disease being incurable. My brother-in-law has just lost a beautiful babe, fourteen months old, and been otherwise afflicted. These, indeed, are ordinary events; for in what climate is disease not found - in what nation, or among what people, has death ceased to destroy? Our bodies are of the earth, earthly: why should we marvel that the dust returns to dust? It is strange, it is wonderful, that while there is no event more common, more more certain, than death; yet there is none which jars the chords of the soul so rudely, or which takes mankind so completely by surprise. Why is this? Is it because

"All men think all men mortal but themselves"?

This solves the enigma, in part; but it is also owing, doubtless, to the uncertainty of that period when "the inevitable hour" shall transpire. In her apostrophe to Death, Mrs. Hemans thrillingly says -

"We know when moons shall wane,
When summer birds from far shall cross the sea;
When Autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain; -
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?"

Is it when Spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our path grow pale?
They have one season, all are ours to die!"

Is this any cause for lamentation? Is it not the merciful arrangement of our Heavenly Father? Do we not look upon the dissolution of our mortal bodies with too much apprehension, as though it were a frightful or an unnatural event? Is not Christianity dishonored by the manner in which death is regarded by many of its professors? Are they not too apt to speak of it as a mysterious dispensation - to hoist black signals of distress for public observation, as though a dreadful calamity had happened - to disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to mourn? In what sense can a natural event be said to be mysterious, or a dispensation of Divine Providence? Away with all this! "Now is Christ risen from the dead!" Let that be our exultation - our song - our triumph. "O Grave! where is thy victory? O Death! where is thy sting?" Let us rejoice that we are mortal - that we are not always to be pilgrims and strangers in this sin-blighted world. If the gospel does not make those who truly embrace it stoical, neither does it make them misanthropic. It is the will of God that our bodies should moulder in the dust, and that our souls should live forever. The will of God be done! From the heart let us say it.

I have not written to you, nor to any of my friends across the ocean, any thing respecting a petty conspiracy which was made, a short time ^{since}, to injure my character, and that of some of the most prominent friends of the anti-slavery cause in this city and vicinity, in connexion with the Liberator; nor would I now go into any explanation of the matter, were it not for the information which has reached me, that Charles Stuart (once among my most ardent friends, but now bitterly hostile in spirit, because I cannot see eye to eye with him on the subject of woman's rights, non-resistance, &c. &c.) is industriously engaged in circulating, in various parts of England, copies of a paper issued in this city, (only one number having made its appearance,) entitled "Knapp's Liberator," in order to prove that I am no better than a swindler or a knave! "Et tu, Brute!" Is it possible that my old friend Stuart can be guilty of this mean and wicked conduct? Have I indeed fallen so low in his estimation, that he regards me as a villain in practice, as well as a heretic in speculation? So it would seem, if what I hear of him be true. For this and for other acts of injustice and unkindness, on his part, toward myself, I make all possible allowance on account of his peculiar temperament, and most cheerfully forgive him, even as I pray to be forgiven by my Father who is in heaven, for all the offences which I have committed against him or my fellow-men, in thought, word or deed.

It is proper, under these circumstances, that you should have at least a brief statement of the facts in the case; especially as my silence in the Liberator, respecting the charges thus brought against me and the Liberator Committee, may have seemed unaccountable to you and others, being ignorant of the reasons for that silence.

I am charged with having defrauded my former partner in business, Isaac Knapp, of his share in the ownership of the Liberator; and Francis Jackson, Ellis Gray Loring, Samuel Philbrick, Edmund Quincy, and William Bussell, (men of the best reputation, and of perfect integrity of character,) with being accomplices in this swindling plot!!

To those who are personally acquainted with the parties implicated, (putting myself out of the question,) this charge is not only monstrous, but ludicrous. Sooner than intentionally to commit a dishonest act, I believe every one of them would rather perish at the stake. In this instance, they have allowed themselves to be libelled with impunity - some, because they are non-resistants, and therefore cannot go to law; others, because they know that no defence is needed from them against such accusers; and all, because they are too elevated in mind to descend to gratify personal selfishness and petty spite by a public conflict. I have been induced to preserve unbroken silence in the Liberator, for two reasons: - first, and mainly, out of pity and long-suffering toward my unfortunate and erring friend Knapp;

and, secondly, because I knew that he was only a tool in the hands of three obscure, designing individuals, who had their personal ends to gratify, and who were eager to obtain even an infamous notoriety through the columns of the Liberator.

[Let me give you the facts in a nut-shell. Mr. Knapp and myself commenced the Liberator in January, 1831, without a single subscriber. For a time, we were partners in business. Our subscription list gradually increased, but the expenses of the paper much exceeded its income; and had it not been for the assistance which was generously afforded us by a few individuals out of their own pockets, we could not have sustained the Liberator a single year. In 1835, the partnership between Mr. Knapp and myself was dissolved; he continuing to be the printer, and I the editor of the paper. Every year, donations to a considerable amount were required to keep the paper in existence; but this pecuniary burden was borne with great cheerfulness by a few personal friends, because they believed that they could not devote their money to a better purpose, and that the downfall of the Liberator would prove a serious injury to the anti-slavery enterprise. If here it is necessary to state, that Mr. Knapp is constitutionally a feeble man, with little or no energy, with no business adaptation, and without any kind of order or method in conducting the affairs of this life. Still, he fancied that he could do business to great advantage, and had a passion to engage in it on a large scale. Besides being very imprudent in printing various anti-slavery works, (which, ^{at that early period} could be much more easily given away than sold,) on his own responsibility, he ^{subsequently} opened an anti-slavery depository in this city, from which he might have obtained a handsome income, if he had been a truly business man; for the sales rapidly increased up to the hour of the unfortunate division in the anti-slavery ranks, and amounted annually to a pretty large sum. Instead of keeping his accounts in regular order, he allowed them to remain in confusion - being, in numerous instances, unable to tell how much he owed others, or how much others were indebted to him. At length, his affairs became desperate; he could not meet his payments; the sight of his creditors, and their continual duns, vexed his spirit, and drove him to despondency; he neglected his business, and in an evil hour secretly resorted to the intoxicating bowl; his temper became soured, his vision obscured, his moral sense injured; and he made himself a burden to our cause, and a prey to self-inflicted misery. Most unfortunately, too, he had the infatuation to marry a young girl - a mere doll, feeble in mind and fond of dress - who was in every respect unfitted to his situation and wants. He seemed to doat upon her very weaknesses, and she was unquestionably very strongly attached to him. Poor afflicted one! Within a short time, she has been called to find a refuge from grief and suffering in the silent tomb. It was a happy release for her. I hope it will not prove detrimental to her bereaved partner. They ought never to have been united together. But "love is blind," it is said - and the adage was exactly verified in this instance.

Many and loud were the complaints of the friends of the Liberator, respecting the indolence of Mr. Knapp, and his inattention to business. At last, those who had generously kept the paper alive by their timely donations, unanimously came to the determination, that they would no longer contribute of their substance to sustain it, unless an arrangement could be made to relieve it of the needless pecuniary burden which was imposed upon it, in consequence of Mr. K's idleness and dissipation. In the autumn of 1839, meetings were held by those who were most deeply interested in this matter, in Boston, (among whom were Mr. and Mrs. Child, Mr. and Mrs. Chapman, J. Jackson, C. S. Loring, E. Quincy, W. Russell, &c.) at which the feelings of the friends of the Liberator were fully and frankly made known in regard to the connection of Mr. Knapp with the paper. It was ascertained, that, by another arrangement, from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars per annum, which they had long been paying Mr. Knapp to support him in doing nothing, and worse than nothing, could be saved to the anti-slavery cause and to the paper. They were still willing to meet all needful expenses, but not to be defrauded in this manner, from year to year, especially when their kindness was so deplorably perverted. The facts in the case could not be denied. A committee was appointed to confer with Mr. Knapp, in order to effect the desired arrangement in an amicable and equitable manner. This he entered into with much reluctance, of course. As a matter of experiment, it was agreed that he should waive all right and title to any part of the Liberator for the term of two years, — he being paid such remuneration as impartial referees might feel disposed to award. It was further agreed that, during this period, the pecuniary concerns of the paper should be managed by a responsible committee, in whom the friends could feel the utmost confidence, and, consequently, the present committee kindly consented to act in this capacity, to the universal gratification of the friends of the Liberator. When the question of remuneration was submitted to the referees, (who were all quite friendly to Mr. Knapp,) they summoned a number of practical printers as witnesses to determine the amount that ought to be awarded to Mr. Knapp. On being asked, of what pecuniary value a newspaper could be, which over and above its receipts, they, of course, said, none whatever. Two things were essential to the continuance of the Liberator; first, that I should be connected with it as its editor; and, secondly, that its pecuniary affairs should be so managed as to inspire confidence among its benefactors and friends; and neither of these could be done on the old plan. As a matter of kindness and good will, rather than of equity, the referees decided that I should pay Mr. Knapp \$150 — half of it to be paid yearly. This decision was cheerfully met on my part.

To say that I separated from my friend Knapp with great reluctance, and pain of mind — that I exerted myself to the utmost to retain him as printer of the Liberator — that I greatly compassionated his forlorn condition, and did every thing in his behalf that friendship and sympathy could suggest — is simply to assert the truth, which all my friends in this quarter know full well. But the existence of the Liberator depended upon this new arrangement; and justice to those who had to sustain it required that it should be made.

This arrangement was to expire in two years by its own limitation — that is, on the first day of January, 1842. So economical and excellent has it proved, that, with a much less number of subscribers than the paper had at the time of the transfer, it last year amply defrayed all its expenses from its receipts, instead of taking from the pockets of its friends some \$1500 or more in private donations, as it formerly did while in the hands of Mr. Knapp. Can those friends be blamed for being unwilling to squander so large a sum upon idleness and improvidence? And what right had Mr. Knapp to insist upon this exaction, seeing that he was of no benefit to the course or the paper? ...

After we separated, I endeavored to stimulate Mr. Knapp to active exertions to retrieve his character, and promised to exert all my influence to aid him, if he would lead a sober and industrious life. I pointed out to him a mode in which I felt certain that he could do well for himself; and I assured him that all my friends were his friends, who would cheerfully contribute to his relief, provided he would only respect himself, and evince a disposition to work for a livelihood. Instead of listening to this advice, or to the friendly suggestions of others, he gave himself up to idleness, the use of strong drink, and even to gambling — often wandering about not knowing where to find a place of rest at night — leaving his poor wife a prey to grief and shame and making a complete wreck of himself. For a number of weeks, I sheltered him and his wife under my roof — assisted him in other respects — and collected for him between thirty and forty dollars, from a few friends in a distant place; for, kindly disposed as were the anti-slavery friends in this region toward him, it was in vain to solicit aid from them, so long as he gave himself to the intoxicating bowl and the gambling table. You perceive what returns he has made for my kindness; but my heart yearns over him, and I cannot reproach him.

[Before the time of the transfer had expired, (some eighteen months,) Mr. Knapp failed in business, and conveyed all the property in his hands to his creditors. He was indebted to them to the amount of several thousand dollars, a very small portion of which was realized by them. Among other things which legally and equitably fell into their hands was his interest in the Liberator, namely, half of the subscription list, as the other half had never been alienated by myself. From the time he had no more claim as a proprietor in the establishment than yourself. No negotiation could be had with him any more than with Prince Albert. The property belonged to his creditors, and it was for them to decide how they would dispose of it.

As the last year was drawing to its close, it was deemed desirable and important by the Liberator Committee, that the former interest of Mr. Knapp in the paper should be purchased of his creditors, or else that some other arrangement should be made which should leave me untrammelled in the management of the Liberator. Accordingly, they deputed Mr. Loring to see the assignee, and to state him the facts in the case, with a view to causing a legal transfer to be made. Mr. Loring discharged this duty most fairly and honorably. He informed the assignee that the property in the paper was only nominal; that it had always been a losing concern; and, therefore, that he could offer for Mr. Knapp's interest in it only a small amount, (\$25,) in order to a legal adjustment of the matter. It was further stated to him,

that, in case this offer should be refused, I should issue a new paper on the 1st of January, 1842, to be entitled "Garrison's Liberator," which would effectually settle the matter without cost; for it was important, since Mr. Knapp had no longer any direct interest in it, that the control of the paper should be exclusively in my hands. The assignee said he would confer with the creditors. He did so, and they very readily accepted Mr. Loring's offer. The transfer was then made to me in a legal manner; and thus, both legally and morally, all right and title to any part of the subscription list ceased for ever on the part of Mr. Knapp and his creditors. And this is the fraudulent conduct of which the Liberator Committee and myself have been guilty!

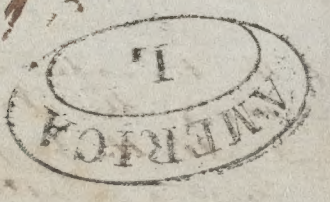
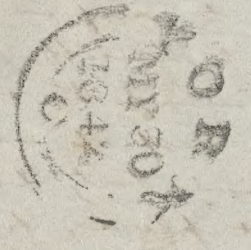
Since the fall of 1839, Mr. Knapp has not manifested the slightest interest in the anti-slavery cause, but has done all that he could, in connexion with certain selfish and unprincipled individuals, to injure my character, to destroy confidence in the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Board, and to alienate the friends of our sacred enterprise from each other. It shows that he has never been an abolitionist from principle. The discovery makes my heart ache.

Backed up by these individuals, whom I knew to be deadly hostile to myself, to the Massachusetts A. S. Society, and to the most prominent advocates in our ranks, and upon whose word or bond no reliance could be placed, — and who were selfishly as well as maliciously animated in seeking to restore him to his former situation, —

One sheet.
Folio post.

Elizabeth Pease,
Darlington,
England.

But I felt it due to you to give you some account of the proceedings of them, in order that you may be enabled to understand the evil course pursued by Capt. Sturges. If you can, you may let him read this letter, and perhaps he will be disposed to atone for his conduct. You may let my other friends read it, who feel my interest in the matter. It is, in brief, a very simple affair; but it has been magnified by the ravings of enemies, and so that account deserves some notice. Good story reason why I have should say still than let unprincipled knave Knapp to state my character with impunity is, an unprincipled knave Knapp's crime — and admission for the last three years before the world, as it is known only to a comparatively small number even of the abolitionists in New-England. I have named his name and guilt from the public eye with the month of probably kindred and Christian charity, and for a time to the injury of my own cause. — My conduct is true. To the summer meeting of the A. S. Society in New-York — all in New-York — and though I intended to come to see you, I was prevented by Mr. Knapp's and his family's and his property. He is all in a state of spirit.



Mr. Knapp endeavored to purchase back his half of the Liberator, and once more to have the exclusive control of the financial concerns of the Liberator. But the Committee could not consent to make any contract with him; for the reasons which, two years before, had imperatively required that his connexion with the paper should cease, not only remained in full force, but had been strengthened by his subsequent conduct. If he had been permitted to resume his former position, the Liberator would inevitably have gone down. No confidence was placed in the promises that he made, or in his ability or willingness to labor. As for his backers, they were known to be of a hateful spirit, and personally the determined enemies of the old organization and myself. All of them, like poor Knapp, ("Birds of a feather flock together,") were out of employment, and hoped to feather their nest in case he could obtain the control of the paper — one by acting as a travelling agent, another by being the book-keeper, and the third by acting as editor, if they should succeed in inducing me to retire; for, even while he was negotiating with the Committee, he repeatedly said

that the Liberator would do much better without the aid of me. Thus, "coming events cast their shadows before," and we profited by the warnings thus given. — Now these are the persons who have got out "Knapp Liberator," (you will observe that Knapp says nothing on his own responsibility, but is a mere tool in the hands,) and filled its columns with the vilest insinuations and the most venomous slanders, in order to prove — first, how shamefully Mr. Knapp has been swindled out of his property! — secondly, with what perfect disinterestedness they have acted in this matter and thirdly, how selfish and sordid have been the Liberator Committee and its editor!!! You will marvel, my dear friend, that we have refused to notice their scurrility, and to dignify them by a passionate controversy. No reply was received in Massachusetts — nor, indeed, in any part of this country. The whole affair has proved an abortion — the vile conspiracy has resulted in nothing but infamy to those who formed it. Now, only to think of the eagerness of Capt. Sturges to blast my moral character by circulating "Knapp Liberator" abroad! Vainly, he knows not what he do — Your grateful friend, Wm Lloyd Garrison