

Brooklyn, Nov. 27, 1835.

My dear sister Mary:

Yesterday we kept Thanksgiving, in company with the good and bad people of Connecticut, to the extermination of sundry chickens, pies and puddings, with the usual accompaniments of nuts, apples, &c. &c. It is, to be sure, quite an absurdity, that we should mourn or rejoice — fast or gluttonise, at the appointment of a civil officer of State: but so we do. This is one of our modes of being religious — of manifesting our obedience, if not to God, at least to the Governor; and thus we tread closely in the footsteps of the ancient Jews. We agree to fast once a year, and to be thankful once a year, whenever March or November arrives; provided a Proclamation comes forth from head quarters — not otherwise; and what amount of food we lose by our fasting, we are quite sure to recover by our thanksgiving. These are ancient customs, and will not readily be abandoned: but they are just as obligatory as the call of a town-crier to an auction. What then? Is it not good to fast? Certainly, when the body needs it, and the soul assents to it; and body and soul must determine upon the proper time and the best mode — not the Chief Magistrate of the State. Ought we not to be thankful? Most assuredly. But when? Late in November, or early in December? Nay, but at all times and all seasons. But when the harvest is gathered in, ought we not to be especially thankful. I think not. I think our hearts should respond to the language of Habakkuk: "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and

there shall be no lord in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." There is great danger that if we are thankful only when we are full or prosperous, ours is merely the gratitude of selfishness. Patient Job could exclaim, in the hour of utter calamity - "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

It would be treason, you know, and perhaps contrary to the constitution, (!) to utter these sentiments aloud, respecting these time-honored observances; so, mind - they are only privately whispered into your ear, to be used very discreetly!

Two weeks more will complete my thirtieth year. My past labors, I trust, have not been wholly useless to my country and the world; yet they are sadly deficient in amount and value. You know my antipathy to the pen, and my want of method and despatch. I am plundered constantly by that most artful and destructive of all thieves, the thief Procrastination. However, if my health be spared this winter, and I remain located in Brooklyn, away from intrusion and household care, I hope to write more, and write better, than I have yet done in any one season. Much as my mind is absorbed in the anti-slavery cause, there are other great subjects that frequently occupy my thoughts, upon which much light remains to be thrown, and which are of the utmost importance to the temporal and eternal welfare of man. As to the Peace question, I am more and more convinced, that it is the duty of the followers of Christ to suffer themselves to be defrauded, calumniated and barbarously treated, without resorting either to their own physical energies, or to the force of human law, for restitution or punishment. It is a difficult lesson to learn.

As you are now moving among the Friends, I hope you will be instrumental in stirring up their zeal and sympathy in behalf of the crushed and perishing slaves. They are a body whose great leading, fundamental principles are more in harmony with mine than those of any other; and therefore I feel peculiarly desirous that they should meet the opposing hosts of oppressors in this country, as did their brethren in Great Britain. Certainly, it is not enough that we are not slaveholders, or that we have emancipated our slaves, or that we occasionally hear the testimony of a few words against so awful and heathenish a system of bondage as we ^{are} now witnessing in our midst. In the days of John Woolman and Anthony Benezet, the Friends were wonderfully alive to the sufferings of the poor guiltless slaves, when these victims were comparatively few in number. Truly, now that from thousands they have increased to millions, and their oppressors grow more and more cruel and obstinate, the Friends ought not to let the example of their ancient predecessors be lost upon them. There are many devout and resolute spirits, I rejoice to know, who feel and act with pristine boldness and vigor among them: but my prayer is, that not one, or ten, or a hundred, but all be quickened in this benevolent work.

Garritt Smith has sacrificed his prejudices and objections, and openly joined himself to the Anti-Slavery Society. He has chosen the darkest and most perilous hour in which to give in his adhesion, and thus manifested great christian manliness and a truly self-sacrificing spirit.

Harriet Martineau, the distinguished authoress from England, has also shown true moral courage in attending the meeting of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, and avowing her approval of its principles.

Ms. A. 1. 1. p. 25
A. 1. 1. p. 1

When you see our venerable friend Moses Brown--

"Who stands with all his shining garments on,
Dress'd for the flight, and ready to be gone"--

convey to him the expressions of my sincere affection and high respect. Truly, not in vain has he lived: he has done much by his example and efforts to repair the moral ruins of a sin-destroy'd world. I could hope, submissively, that he might be permitted to live to see the year of jubilee in this country for the whole slave population, which, I trust, is not far distant.

Mary Benson,

Providence,

P. S.

Ms. A. 1. 1. p. 25

The state of your father's health is comfortable: the rest of the family are well and happy. Brooklyn, at present, presents a dreary aspect; for the transition of Nature's countenance in winter is as repulsive, as it is glorious in spring and summer. However I am far, very far from being homesick. My dear Helen would make any spot agreeable to me; but, aside from her company, to be surrounded by such kind parents and sisters is happiness enough. The cold weather sensibly affects us all—but it cannot chill the affections of
Your friend and brother,
Wm Lloyd Garrison.