

Boston, November 11<sup>th</sup> 1847.  
Evening.

My dear Cousin,

Your letter of the 9<sup>th</sup> came to hand this evening, and now I blame myself - almost - that I had not executed my first thought, & written to you immediately after the meeting of the Am. Unit<sup>n</sup> Assoc<sup>n</sup>. The reason I did not do so is to be found alone in the fact that our office business, with the additional cares connected with the Liberator during Mr. G.'s protracted absence, has absolutely cut off all chance to do anything else. But I will give you, now, all I know about late A. U. S. Convs.

The Salem Convention I did not attend; I could not, conveniently; but, still more, I chose to be away. Immediately on the adjournment of that Convention (Thursday, Dec<sup>r</sup> 21<sup>st</sup>), <sup>(I think)</sup> a meeting of the A. U. S. took place in Boston, at Westford Street Vestry, <sup>I attended the meeting.</sup> The main business was to elect a Gen. Secy, in place of W. G. Eliot who declined accepting the office. Pretty punctually to 1 o'clock the meeting was opened - Eliot's letter of declination (if there be such an affected word) was read, and a random talk ensued, lasting till after 2 o'clock, as to the situation of affairs - it appeared that the Magnates had no particular man in their eye to fill the vacancy; some said the Assoc<sup>n</sup> was not ready to act, and no one was bold enough to say they were ready. In this state they adjourned

till 2 1/2 o'clock. - The <sup>23</sup> Session I did not attend, as I was engaged to go to Weymouth to attend, & speak at, an Antislavery Meeting. But, on returning to the city the next morning, and meeting Stephen Fairbanks in the street, I inquired what had been done at the meeting. "No choice" said he "of a Genl. Sec. was made; and the whole subject was referred back to the Executive Committee, with power to appoint a man to the office, whenever they found a suitable one - to hold office till next Annual Meeting. - But," said he "a balloting was held, for persons whose names had been reported, as suitable ones, by a Committee of Nomination; and the vote stood 25 for your Cousin S. J. May, 20 for Chas. Briggs, 4 or 5 for F. J. Gray, some few (I think) for F. A. Farley" - and perhaps others. Among the names, on the list nominated, was that of John Pierpont. He was present, & immediately rose (so S. J. told me) and said it would be impossible for him, at his time of life, ~~even~~ if elected, to accept the office - and must not be voted for.

My own opinion is that the aforesaid Magnates, when they found how matters stood, how strong a disposition existed to elect <sup>to the office of Secy.</sup> a man of progress, reform, & true liberality, <sup>became</sup> ~~were~~ alarmed, and so introduced the motion to refer the whole subject to Exec. Comtee.

I afterwards learned that 28 votes would have put you in a majority. I confess I was surprised, & much encouraged, when I found the A. U. A. nominating for Genl. Sec., among others, such men as J. Pierpont and yourself, and am willing to consider it in the most

hopeful light. But I firmly believe that so long as the  
present Conservative influences in the body are so strong and  
stationary as at present, the progress will be little more  
than an occasional demonstration like the above-mentioned.  
The Exec. Comtee. have been plainly told that your  
appointment w<sup>d</sup>. be most acceptable to a large body  
of Unitarians - probably to a large majority of the denomi-  
nation. And yet I don't believe they will make it, though  
they know you would fill it well, and most usefully.  
When they do appoint you, I shall believe it. - But I

