

Northampton, March 7th 1839.

Dear Caroline:

It is lucky that no very important affairs of state are dependant on the punctuality of our correspondence. My last letter it seems was some months in reaching you; and yours of Nov. 25th came into my hands on Jan. 11th.

I have had a most eager desire to see you. My yearnings to be in Boston have been checked only by a feeling of relief at being distant from the scene of contention. The present state of things is exceedingly painful to my mind. This difficulty is a far more complicated affair than was the Clerical appeal. It is too evident now, that with real enemies of the cause, and half-and-half abolitionists, are mixed up a large class of sincere friends of emancipation, according to their honest but limited views thereof. I watch the aspect of things carefully, according to my circumscribed opportunities; and I am convinced that every word Garrison can make against the Abolitionist re-acts against the Liberator. Friends at a distance will not believe that such men as Stanton and Phelps are plotters against the cause; and, if you prove their narrow sectarianism, nothing is gained, at least for the present; for this seems a virtue in their eyes. I think I may say I do not know of one Garrison abolitionist

here. Moses Breck, the carpenter, is so, when left to his own good sense and spontaneous feeling; but he is very easily influenced by the members of his church. Two individuals here, Mr. Stoddard, (nephew of Arthur Tappan) and Mr. Williston, became responsible for a hundred copies of the Abolitionist. They are both good, conscientious men, but much fettered with sectarian bigotry; especially Mr. S. At the first Monthly Concert after the Anniversary, they gave an account of their visit to Boston. I think their manner of telling the story gave the impression that a very large proportion of the Society felt the need of a new paper, but forbore to urge its being the organ of the Society, because they did not want to make trouble; "all Lynn being there — most of them Quakers, and Mr. Garrison's personal friends." They said 3000 were subscribed for on the spot; but they did not tell that this was effected by 30 individuals' becoming responsible for a hundred each. Garrison was spoken of with respect, and restrained, and I thought constrained praise. I had a sort of suspicion (perhaps entirely unfounded) that the few words of eulogy were uttered to keep us quiet. The friends present were urged to take the new paper, only on the ground that Mr. Garrison could not advise political action consistent with his "new light." In all that was said, there was nothing to contradict, or deny; yet we

both felt that the impression given was not at all the same we received from the delegates when the first arrived from Boston. They then told Mr. Child that the opposition to a new organ of the Society was overwhelming — that only one (Mr. Govey) stood in favor of it; — and this did not seem at all like all Massachusetts' reluctantly yielding to Signe, for the sake of quiet. I don't believe they have many subscribers here; for there is not life enough on the subject to get up an interest of any kind. The abolitionists are honestly, sincerely frightened at the bearing of the Race principles on governments; but more than that, I suspect they dimly perceive that these ideas are shaking a belief in the literal sense of the Old Testament to its very foundations. Everything must be rejected that will not combine with the savage customs of the half-civilized Jews. For eighteen hundred years they have been amalgamating Christianity and Judaism — and a strange compound salt they have made of it! It is marvellous that they do not see that every enormity under the sun may be sanctioned by the literal sense of the Old Testament.

With regard to the Liberator, we let no opportunity slip of talking in its favor, & urging the very few who take it to continue it. I often attack bigotry with "a troop of horse shod with felt"; that is I try to enter the wedge of general principles, letting inferences unfold themselves very gradually. Habitués grates &

creaks harsher and harsher discord in the ears of my soul. If it were the Lord's will, I would I might be out of the hearing of it. It is doubtless performing a great use in the world, or it would not have taken such strong hold of the minds of men. How beautiful it would be to live in a world where it was not needed! I will not say I am trying to be tolerant; for I have learned to abominate that proud, self-sufficient word. What right have I, or any other fallible mortal, to be tolerant of others?

Shirclair's recent "level-operations" bring to my recollection his conversation last summer, when I saw him at the Convention here and in Greenfield. He would not hear anybody praised without disparagement. When we spoke affectionately of Garrison, he told us he had changed very much; that he had grown indolent and self-sufficient— unfit to edit a paper &c. &c. When Johnson was mentioned, he said he was a noisy tin-kettle tied to Garrison— that he was a servile imitator of Garrison— that anything under the heavens that was real, was better than an imitation. We admitted the truth of his maxim, but were not aware that it peculiarly applied to D. J.; he might adopt Garrison's views from the sincerity of conviction. This Shirclair would not admit. He insisted that D. J. thought Garrison a prodigious great man, and was trying to get a little gleam of his fame reflected upon himself. He denied that

Thompson was eloquent—said he could throw up pretty fire-works, but was totally incapable of argument. Some slur was thrown by him upon Stanton; but I forget what. At Greenfield he invited all abolitionists, who were present, to take part in the Convention; and laid a strong emphasis on the word. He afterward told me, at Mr. Parkman's, that he had done it to bring in the women; and he rather reproved me, that I did not act upon the hint. Said he wished women could go to the polls. I told him I thought they had as good a right there as men; but that politics rested on such a thoroughly bad foundation, that I for one, should feel no inclination to use the right. He replied, "Then you are fit to be a slave". He said the Peace Convention had greatly strengthened his predilections in favor of resistance—he was ten times as much a war-man as ever. I expressed my regret; particularly on account of the bearing of such principles on slave-insurrections. I was not willing to harm a hair of the slave-holder's head. He said that was all fudge—that the time would soon come when all the free states would think the negroes had as good a right to fight for freedom as the old Revolutionary fathers had. I told him I hoped it would be so; but I hoped it would be the belief that neither of them had the right. He, however, maintained that if there were a chance of success for the negroes ^{it} would be a duty to help them fight. I was frightened. A great quip seemed to yawp beneath

live to see the blessed results. The brevity of human life furnished one powerful motive to strenuous exertion. He told

arousing them from guilty slumbers — of what I myself owe him, for awakening my conscience, and setting me such an example of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice — I feel ready to say of him, as the Pope did of his minion, "I forgive him all the sins he ever did commit, or ever will commit!" You remember you were all a good deal excited that morning — brother May especially. He welcomed St. Clair into the ranks with great cordiality. In the full joy of his honest heart he expatiated upon the delight he experienced in being a member of the "abolition church" — for his part he desired no more distinctive creed. He enumerated Scott, the Methodist, and Phelps, the Universalist, and Russell, the Baptist: "and yet we are all brothers," said he, "our hearts all beat in unison; for we are all members of the abolition church."

Mr. St. Clair whispered that he had mistaken his tent; for he was a Unitarian. "A Unitarian are you!" exclaimed May, shaking him heartily by the hand — "I'm glad of it, I'm glad there's one more come among us!" Afterward, I had frequent occasion to think

my feet.

Neither of us knew what to make of Sinclair's harsh state of mind; & we could only explain it by supposing him curious.

It seems an age since I have had a line from Mrs Chapman. My best love to her.

Where are the lines I heard you repeat to Maria's baby - "how many in their lovely halls might sigh for one like thee?" or something like that. Are they Wordsworth's? I think not.

Notwithstanding Sinclair's low estimate of Johnson, he insisted that he edited the Liberator much better than Garrison; and held a long argument with Mr. Child to that effect.

Remember me affectionately to Anna and Deborah and Mary Chapman. Oh, how it would refresh my weary soul to have a talk with you!

Good bye Yrs truly,

L. M. Child

P. S. Do you remember that heart-stirring little meeting at 46, where Mr. May paid such an eloquent tribute to the memory of Henry Co. Benson - whose death he thought had been much accelerated by his efforts in the Liberator office? Mr. Sinclair, who was then a stranger among us, made a most vehement, flaming speech in favor of the Liberator. Among other things, he said: "In view of what Mr. Garrison has done and suffered in this righteous cause - of what the nation owes him, for

that Mary's free-hearted and liberal expressions
aroused the foul fiend of sectarianism. At suc-
ceeding meetings, the phrase "abolition Church," was
alluded to with disapprobation. It seemed to
rankle in some minds. Ah, what precious, soul-
refreshing times those were! Dear Ann Chapman
sat by my side, and she was greatly moved.
I love to think of it.

