

Beaver Boxes
R. L. Carpenter
J. Gennett

Boston, Massachusetts,
Tuesday Evng. Dec. 18, 1849.

My dear Sir,

I will not lose the opportunity, which tomorrow's Steamship gives, of writing you a few lines on ~~private~~ matters, in regard to which prompt information, at the very least, is due to you and all our kind & generous Bristol friends. I succeeded last week, after unusual delay & embarrassment, in getting eight cases of goods, from our English, Scotch, & Irish friends, through our Custom House, at recent order, from Zachary Taylor's new administration, positively forbidding any goods to be delivered, which are not accompanied with a full invoice of ~~and~~ the articles, with their cost. As none of our donations were thus fortified, the Collector said he must write to the Head of the Treasury Department at Washington for special instructions. This was done; and we waited, day after day, for the answer. Not a little annoyed at this species of the prompt action of our new Reform!! Government, I went with a friend on Wednesday last, & succeeded in getting from the Assistant Collector an order for the delivery of the box containing Mr. Michell's model; and also a virtual promise that, if nothing was heard from Washington, in two days more, our goods should be got through in some way. I went immediately that day (Wednesday, 12th) & got the box. Its slant roof, & iron handle, and your

well known hand-writing on the direction-card,
at once identified the box to me. The Appraisers
insisted upon opening it; and we could not prevent
them; they did so carefully, and I had the great
pleasure of seeing that the model had come
without probably (apparently) the least injury to
any part. I expected to find it wrapped up in
paper, cotton-battings, &c, but lo! the whole scene
at once presented to our gaze! After a long look,
in which the Custom-house officers seemed to enjoy
as much as we did, the Cover was replaced, and
my father's man bore it away. Since that, we
have removed it from its box, & find only one figure
displaced, ~~it~~ (a small ^{man} ~~one~~), which had rolled under
the board. We found also the plan, with sundry
letters. We are having a glazed frame made for the
model. I am astonished, that it should have come
so well, notwithstanding the ingenious care with which
it was packed; for it was carried from the Ship to
the Customhouse stores by the Customhouse truckmen,
and, I suppose, upon a rough & jolting conveyance.
(The Ship arrived, while I was absent from the city,
on a lecturing tour in Barnstable County.) The
Ladies have determined to adopt the suggestion of charging
a small sum for the sight of the model. I fear that
we shall not be able to get a price for it that will
repay the pains & labour expended in its preparation,
and transmission. But it is so curious & so pretty,
& so well bears a close & long examination, that it will
afford much amusement & excite much interest, I
doubt not. You shall hear more, in due season.

On Friday last, I again went to the Customhouse. Seven boxes had to be opened, examined from top to bottom & appraised (quite favourably). It was ~~then~~ too late, on getting the appraisement, to enter the goods at the Customhouse, & get the permit to ~~take~~ ^{take} them away. This was done early the next day, however, (Saturday last); I had the 7 cases removed forthwith to Faneuil Hall, where some half-dozen ladies were ~~at~~ waiting, in an ante-room, to receive them. The boxes were opened at once, and the work of examination, & marking of prices, ~~we~~ commenced, which lasted till dark and after. 5 P.M., was renewed yesterday, & completed at 2 P.M. this day; advertisements have been prepared for the Liberator, Standard, &c. and a Circular Note to be addressed to persons in the city & neighbourhoods. Our Bazaar ladies are highly gratified by the beauty & value of these donations - truly noble, and giving such indisputable proof of long, assiduous, patient, labourous effort in behalf of the cause of 2 millions American Slaves.

- A violent cold, which I took on Saturday, and which quite disabled me from ~~for~~ active service yesterday, prevented my seeing much of the contents of the boxes, as they were opened. But I heard the ladies admiring the water-colour drawings of Miss Carpenter, & Mr. Herbert Thomas, today. Next week I hope for a full inspection. I have given you all these particulars, knowing that you will feel an interest in them all, & will like to hear of all our proceedings, On Thursday, Friday & Saturday of this week, we expect to be occupied in the decoration & preparation of the Hall, and on Monday the Bazaar will open.

Have the kindness to say to Mr. Armstrong that I received his letter of Nov. 5. on the 5th Dec. It went to Leicester, after we had left L. & closed our houses there for the winter, & come to Boston to spend a few months in my father's family, as we did last winter. Thence it came back to Boston, after I had gone into Barnstable Co., whether it was sent after me. Also please say ^{to him} that I have written to Mr. Gay, of the Standard, respecting the change in the Address of Mr. paper. which I presume will be duly made.

Two or three recent letters (from yourself, Miss Carpenter, &c.) I have probably left in my desk at the Anti-Slavery office, & cannot now particularly acknowledge as to date, &c. Your little note, ^{enclosed to Anne W. Weston} by the Bristol box, is before me - dated Nov. 22. - I had no idea, when writing to you for some ^{Criminal} Statistics, ~~or~~ that I should cause you so much trouble as I am sure I have done. The Tables you speak of, however, must be of great value, and I prize them very highly; they will be of eminent service to me and I think, in that view, you will not grudge the trouble & pains you have expended; but I should not have a the favour, had I anticipated the consequences to you - We have a sad Criminal case now before us - unexampled, I may say, in our community, - the (probable) murder of Dr. George Parkman, brother of Rev. Dr. F. P., physician formerly, a man of large wealth, in a most revolting - & the supposed murderer, Dr. John W. Webster, Professor of Chemistry at Cambridge for nearly years, and long one of the regular Lecturers at the Med. College in this City. The particulars, so far as known, you will find well stated in E. Quincy's letter to the Standard of last week. Our whole community has been agitated in a most painful manner.

I have twice or thrice seen Mr. Repell Carpenter, and had a little conversation with him; for the first time last Friday, P.M. when he called at the Anti-Slavery office; & I met him that evening at Dr. Gannett's house, by appointment, for a little private conversation. We had not much time left to us. I found that some of our Unitarian ministers had not failed to tell him stories - most disingenuously, as I think - to the detriment of the Anti-Slavery cause, & he urged these things against us. The substance of the difficulty was that Mr. Pillsbury had said at Bridgewater (in this State) that the last persons to aid the Anti-Slavery cause, the last persons to whom a fugitive slave would go, are the ministers! Of course Mr. P. meant to state a general fact, & not to deny that there are some exceptions. That it is the fact, in the main, is susceptible of the fullest demonstration. Mr. Carpenter has much to learn of our American Churches & Ministers - I speak not of the Unitarians merely - they are as a drop in the bucket, but still their influence is something, - much for so small a body - & it does not go, in the general & in the main, against Slavery; no! indeed, but against the Abolitionists, & against all means to elevate the Colored people, & give them a chance to rise in the social scale. In Boston, the Colored people are now struggling for equal school rights! for an equal chance at an education in the Common Schools! & they cannot get it!! and amongst their most vehement & determined opposers are the City Ministers. A Unitarian minister, Dr. Andrew Brijlow, (brother-in-law to Abbott Lawrence, now U. S. Minister at your Court) wrote a Report adverse to their rights & wishes, a report in which certain facts, as to the operation of equal schools elsewhere, were grossly perverted, whether through

ignorance or design I know not - either way
the Report dishonors him & the Body, which
adopted it - the Boston School Committee. One
or two ministers, perhaps, have encouraged ^{aided} the
colored people in this movement for their manifest
rights; but the overwhelming majority have looked
on with a chilling indifference, or with positive opposition.
Mr. Carpenter has staid much with Dr. Gannett - and
is now staying with Mr. Ellis at Charleston; from neither
of these gentlemen ~~will~~ will be heard anything favorable
to the Antislavery movement proper; he will very likely
hear some talk of the evils of Slavery - it is too late in the
day to hold Mr. Gannett's quondam opinion that Silence
is the wisdom & duty of the North touching Slavery - but for
any Antislavery sentiment or action, truly hearty & progressing
any action, there will be none of it. I ~~was~~ was glad
to hear him say, today, that he proposes a short visit to
Rev. E. B. Hall of Providence. He will get into a fairer
& better atmosphere in that gentleman's family.

Your letter to Dr. Howe I sent to him at once; but
as yet have nothing from him. Do not, if you please, send
the proposed parcel of Parliamentary documents to N. York,
to Boston, to my father's care, by some ship from Bristol
or Liverpool, will be the best way.

I have also before me now Mrs. Mitchell's letter to
Miss Weston, with your Postscript, which Miss W. lends
me for the aid it would afford in getting the glass-case
made. Mrs. M. may be assured that her best wishes
as to ~~the~~ ^{the} safe transmission of her beautiful model have
been realized; and that it will undoubtedly prove a
great attraction to the Visitors of the Bazaar.

I wish I had time to tell you of an Antislavery
talk I had with Dr. Gannett, 3 or 4 weeks since, when
I had called at his house in search for Mr. Carpenter.
He defended the invitation, extended last Spring, by the
Boston Unitarians, to Rev. Theodore Clapp of New
Orleans, (he who said, "here we see Almighty God
dealing in Slaves") to come to their ^{religious} anniversary;
I said that (though he was opposed to sending any invi-
tations of the kind) he would as soon invite Mr. Clapp
as any minister in the State of New York - meaning that
his Slave-trading sentiments were no barrier to his
reception as a Christian minister & brother; I said he
could readily conceive how a man, brought up as
Mr. C. had been, would take that view of God's re-
lation to Slavery. I was moved to tell Dr. Gannett,
with some earnestness, that I protested against his
sentiments in the name of humanity & religion; I
against the position in which he stood, when he
might (if he pleased) have ^{influenced} affected the whole Unit^{arian}
body to a high & effective antislavery action, and
I warned him (in so many words) to quit that
position. This he seemed to think the height of
audacity on my part - but I told him I was thankful
that I had had the strength given me to speak to him plainly,
for I thought him very guilty. He said some very hard
things to me - personally - which I have repeated to no one,
for he retracted the most offensive; - 5 fine days ago he
wrote me a very polite note, in brotherly terms, inviting me
to take tea at his house with R. L. C. - I care not
what American or English Unitarian ministers may say
- God is on the side of the Antislavery cause; his truth

his commandments, the religion of his Son,
are all pledged to him who contends for the
oppressed, the outcast, the injured, the "man
who has fallen among thieves", and they
are all against the men, no matter how
reverend their titles, who ally themselves with
the oppressors, the unjust, the robbers, the murderers
the slave-traders & the slaveholders. "The public
and the harlots" will learn this, believe it, and
carry it forward to a glorious condemnation
before the Scribes, Pharisees, the Doctors of Divinity
and the great religious authorities of this land
will understand it, or lift a finger to aid. They
are busy in defending their Sabbath-day from desecration
where Jesus on earth now, they would raise the de-
vils shout again, "This man is not of God, because
he keepeth not the Sabbath-day", "Blind leaders of the
blind" they are; Jesus has foretold their fate! -
won't understand me to say there are no exceptions to
But "the exceptions prove the rule"; otherwise, they would
be exceptions.

My children were delighted with the little of
toy which your daughter ^{sent} said; and many old child
have looked at it with much pleasure. Many thanks
to her for her kind attention. 'Tis very pleasant to be
this friendly tie across the great water with you all, and
to feel ^{that} a sympathy exists there for us, too often denied to us
home. - But all shall yet be well. Never despair,
With earnest thanks & respects to all my Friends
friends. I am, Yours, Saml May, Jr.