By the widespread havoc produced in our township, the waste of health, time and property, the perversion of industry, enterprize and public spirit, by the burdens imposed upon the community by recklessness, prodigality, pauperism, disease and crime caused by the use of intoxicating drinks—by the degradation of character and the corruption of morals—the hope blighted, minds paralysed, consciences seared and hearts broken—the wives widowed in our midst, children made fatherless and grey hairs brought in sorrow to the grave by this terrific destroyer—we do respectfully and importantly conjure your Honorable Body to withdraw from such an inhuman vocation, the sanction of your names, office and influence.

[Endorsed:] Written by Angelina and circulated by both Sisters canvassing together the township from house to house in the spring of 1842. T. D. W.

Sarah M. Grimké to Elizabeth Pease


Dear friend

How I should delight to transport thee into the midst of our little family that thou mightest see how that precious commodity—time is occupied and thus know why I so seldom avail myself of the privilege of thy correspondence. Verily I suppose many persons would smile at the idea of two little children so engrossing the time and attention of two women that they find it difficult to snatch a few hours to write letters; it is nevertheless true with us, because we are not willing to employ strangers to do what we believe God designs we should do ourselves. We have thus far been unable to find a servant to whose care we could conscientiously entrust the bodies and minds of our dear babes; we take it by turns to tend them, and are thus at liberty to do other things the half of each day, but in a family liable to a great deal of company and keeping but one servant there are a thousand things to occupy time. Our little Charles Stuart and Theodore Grimké are progressing in wisdom and stature, and furnish us every day with food for reflection and reasons to stimulate to fresh exertions to attain that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. My heart blesses him every day that he has cast my lot with little children. Angelina is quite well and sends thee much love. I have been thinking how it was that you have ceased to correspond. Our beloved Theodore has been in Washington for the last six weeks. He was urgently requested to go there by the abolition members of Congress, that he might be ready when the subject of slavery was introduced to aid them with his researches and advice. Perhaps no man in the anti-slavery ranks possesses so much information on all points connected with this subject as Theodore, no one has by patient research and close investigation and deep thinking possessed themselves of so many facts, and such a knowledge of the philosophy of slavery. Thou hast no doubt seen enough of what has been going on in Congress to know the position in which J. Q. Adams has been placed. In speaking of the case T. remarks—"The effect on the slaveholders has been perfectly confounding. They have resorted to every artifice and device to put him down, threats and fury, questions of order, motions to lay on the table, refusals to adjourn in order to tire him out, starting up with explanations and under pretext of explaining going into harangues, invectives and accusations against him, etc., but all in vain. The old Nestor has cast all their counsels headlong, turned all their guns against themselves, smiting the whole host with dismay and discomfiture. The slaveholders feel that their end draweth nigh. The almost universal bankruptcy that now whels the south, the low price of their only great staple cotton, and the certainty that the price cannot rise on account of the supply rushing in to the European markets from immense regions open to the culture of the east—added to this the necessity of resorting to direct taxation for the support of the national government, the existing difficulties with G. B. portending war at no great distance, and the certainty that in such a case the first demonstration would be made upon the southern coast, and the standard of freedom to the slave unfurled every where; all these things and divers others brought by God's providence in point blank range, the combustible train all laid into the very centre of the magazine and the blazing brand waving over them, fills them with rage and consternation." At the close of his letter he says, "Mr. Adams case has just been disposed of by laying the whole subject on the table forever. Thus the resolutions of Gilmer of Va. and Marshall of Ky. to inflict censure upon Mr. A. have been signally defeated; the triumph of Mr. A. is complete. This is the first victory over the slaveholders in a body ever yet achieved since the foundation of the government, and from

1 Addressed: Darlington, England.
this time their downfall takes its date, it will be as certain as that
doctrine of Haman". It is impossible to look at the southern portion of our
country without deep anguish of heart. They seem to be filling up
the measure of their iniquities and thus preparing themselves for
the signal judgments of God, when he will arise to make inquisition
for blood. If Texas is annexed to the union as it is contemplated
by some of the southern statesmen, it will cap the climax of our
national transgressions.

The Creole case has struck terror into the slaveholders, and if
England sustains her free institutions and refuses to regard human
beings as property, this circumstance will do much towards furthering
emancipation.

If I understood Charles Stuarts mission to England, it was to re-
establish female anti-slavery societies, but I forget whether especially
in reference to slavery in America. How does he succeed and how
is the A. S. cause in America now regarded? I trust the energy and
interest of English philanthropists will not cease until every chain
is broken.

With regard to the rights of women, I am persuaded that the
more thou examinest this important subject the more thou wilt
find in it to interest thee, and the more thou wilt see that our rights
are the same as men's, altho' circumstances may render our status
different. It is plainly the right of all human beings to cultivate the
powers which God has given us; it is plainly the duty of woman
to nurse her offspring; it cannot be the duty of man because God
has not furnished him with the nourishment necessary for the in-
fant. That the London Committee had no right to reject the female
delegates is perfectly clear. I think it was an unwarrantable assump-
tion of power, and when they better understand the rights of
women as human beings, they will see that they are co-equal with
their own.

I cannot see my dear friend that the public expression of my
opinion on the subject of the rights of women would at all tend to
set at rest the strife and animosity of the parties in the anti slavery
cause. I am persuaded that before this question came up the seeds
of discord were already sown, the clergy and their adherents were
looking with a jealous eye at the anti sectarian spirit, which rose up
under the fostering care of humanity, and overlooking the mere
differences of opinion kept its eye steadily fixed on the great prin-
ciples of liberty. When the woman question came up it only caused
the seed to send forth shoots; and if this had not been brought
up, something else would doubtless have produced the same effect.
But even allowing that the woman question had originated the
dispute, what demonstration can we give that our opinions have
not changed, which would be likely to satisfy those who insist upon
public action as the only satisfactory evidence, while we believe
that God calls now to other duties, to the living out of our anti
slavery principles in every day life, to assert our unchanged opinions
as to the equality of the sexes at the family altar, around the social
board and on all the occasions which may and do arise in domestic
life? Had those who have been engaged in the controversy, pro-
fessedly on the woman question, been contending only for the great
principles which lie at the bottom of this question, they would
have manifested a different spirit from that which has been mani-
fested; they could not have descended to the low abuse and re-
crimination and endeavors to prove that true men were false, which
has characterized their writings and speeches and conversation even
more than those of their opponents. They seem to me to have identi-
fied self with the principles they were defending and hence there
has been so much pride of opinion and such bitterness against
those who differed from them. Whenever any occasion comes up
on which we can express our sentiments, or act them out, we do
it as Angelina did lately in a letter in reply to an invitation to
attend the annual Mtg. of the Penn. A. S. So. As I did last summer
at a temperance meeting. When the lecturer closed his remarks, I
rose and stated that I wished to add some corroborative testimony.
No objection was raised and I made the statements I wished. Believe
me dear Elizabeth it is not so much a want of knowledge as a want
of right state of heart which induced the contention existing in the
A. S. ranks. Oh how unworthy abolitionists have shown themselves
of being used by God to overthrow the blood stained temple of
slavery. But blessed be God it will be overthrown. Charles Stuart
took much pains to ascertain the real cause of the dissension in our
ranks. I know not what conclusions he arrived at but perhaps he
might help thee to form a correct judgment. If thou seest him tell
him Theodore is still in Washington and is in excellent health. . .

The letters of our dear friend Joseph Sturge did not appear to us
calculated to influence the society of Friends; they are stagnant as
the dead sea, and it will require some terrible explosion to move
them, settled down in the firm conviction that they are right. There
is no way of getting at them; their thoughts are bounded by the narrow circle of their own society; that is their idol and this incapacitates them from looking over the theatre of the world and seeing the horrible tragedies which are exhibited. They have lost the realizing sense of that solemn truth that to tell a starving brother to be warmed and filled, without furnishing the means, is mockery of his woes and an insult to God. Hence in their annual epistles they express sympathy for the slave, but do not lift their fingers to break his chains. The very constitution and doctrine of the society on the subject of infallibility in elders, ministers, etc., crushes the freedom of the mind, and almost inevitably leads to a surrender of the conscience into the keeping of those to whom we are taught to look as the viceregents of God; this is the state of the society in this country, this was the effect produced on my own mind by membership and contact with Friends. I have been told by some of the most spiritual and valuable members, that I might think differently from the society but never give utterance to my convictions. There are a few who are not enslaved, but they are rare exceptions.

I entirely agree with thee respecting William Bassett.

There are some things about non-resistance which seem to me so utterly inconsistent with the character of God as an unchangeable being that I cannot receive them; one is the rejection of the old testament as a rule of faith and practice; they insist that Christ was disannulling the moral law of the old testament in his sermon on the mount, instead of which he was drawing a comparison between the traditions of the scribes, etc., and what was in reality the essence and spirit of the law which God had given the Jews. See a chapter in Caroline Fry’s “Example of Christ” on this subject.

Many thanks for thy details about E[ast] I[ndian] affairs and the condition of the people of England; does it not seem as tho’ some signal judgments would ere long be poured out on En. and Am.? Farewell— Please offer our respects to thy father— Affly, thine
Sarah M. Grimké

Weld to Angelina G. Weld and Sarah Grimké


My dearly beloved wife and sister

Thursday evening— As I have an engagement to meet Mr. Adams this evening on the subject of movements to counteract the project now started again for the Annexation of Texas, and also my friend Andrews of Ohio respecting the petitions of Colored seamen praying for protection against imprisonment in southern ports, I fear I shall not have time to write a long letter, but will keep on as long as I can. . . .

Nothing special has occur[r]ed in Congress since I last wrote. We are every day expecting a battle about the annexation of Texas, but the weapons yet hang in air. I have been quite busy for a short time about that, and with reference to the rights of colored seamen visiting southern ports, also the rights of citizenship of Colored persons under the United States Constitution. Three of the five slaveholders appointed upon the Committee of Foreign relations to fill the vacancies have resigned, and the speaker I suppose has just appointed others. Mr. Adams told me yesterday that he had just received a preamble and resolutions of the Citizens of Rochester N. Y. strongly approving of his course during the late great debate.

He has replied to their note of thanks and given his views on the right of petition and the indiscriminate slaughter of Northern rights by the slave power. Meetings are being called in various parts of the free states to thank him for his indomitable resistance to the aggressions of the southern Nabobocracy. Every day reveals more new symptoms of alarm and shift of position among the slaveholders here, but though they feel their foundation shaking they will strive to sustain it with perfect desperation. Satan never retreats without a death struggle, and even when cast out by power omnipotent, it is not without the prostration of his victims. Like those of Old they wallow foaming, and though cast into the fire and into the water he hardly departeth from them even then. That slavery has begun to fall is plain, but that its fall will be resisted by those who cling to it, with energy and desperation and fury such as only fiends can summon when they know their hour has come, the end will be slow. Woe to abolitionists if they dream that their work is well nigh done. What vigilance will be demanded for future crises! What zeal, fortitude, daring, patience of hope, and labors of love. The Infinite abolitionist must do the work. And He has begun it on a scale as broad as the world and He will so accomplish the work that other mighty revolutions will flow in its wake if not indeed ride upon its foremost waves. It has for some time impressed me with more than usual power that mighty delivering providences marshalled by God, wait and are striving for the start, delaying only