

Athol April 3-1846

Dear Bradburn,

Why do you not write to us? We have been wanting to hear from you for some time. Now we have a particular reason for wishing you to write. We want to know the truth about Mrs. Sargeant. Has she done any thing for which her friends in Boston blame her? We hear some stories here, which do not sound like truth, when spoken of her—and we are anxious to hear the other side of the story. In such cases there will of necessity be many exaggerations, and we wish to be able to contradict every thing that is not true.

I think I shall be in Boston in the course of six weeks or so. I find that the end of my book is so far distant that I cannot wait to finish the whole before I publish any. I have therefore concluded to publish it in parts—each of which will be about half as large as my slavery. I am now writing a chapter to go in the first part—the most important chapter of the whole. When that is done I shall probably go down, have it published, and see what the world say to it—and I hope get something for it to live on which I write the reminder. Published in parts, which will sell for 25 cents each, it will be likely to get a much greater circulation than if published entire in the first instance.

No news here—The Doctor's folks well as usual.

In haste, Yours truly,

Lysander Spooner

Athol January[?] 19-1846

Dear Bradburn,

Enclosed herewith is a petition to the Massachusetts legislature, for the appointment of a committee to investigate the whole question of the constitutionality of slavery. I see not how they can, with any self-respect, shrink from it, when they have been so insolently, spit upon, and the rights of their own citizens so contemptuously sacrificed by the slave power.

I have supposed it would be necessary, in order to secure a

serious attention to the matter, that an outline of the grounds on which we rely, should be presented in the petition itself. For this purpose I have incorporated in the petition the most of the propositions contained in the resolutions that were offered in the October convention. And I have presented them in the words of those resolutions, with some slight exceptions, for the reason that I have no time to draw them up in any other form, and probably could not materially improve upon them if I were to attempt it.

Now, if you approve the plan, and have leisure to do it, will you not take it upon yourself to get a few of the right kind of names to the petition, and then have it presented to the legislature?

A few names only will be wanted. Their character is much more important than their number. They ought to be such names as are known as intellectual men—men whose judgments on this particular subject are entitled to some respect. Names, whom no one in the legislature will dare to treat with disrespect, as being incompetent to a far consideration of the question.

I think it very important that the petition should be headed by the names of Judge Williams and Judge Allen. I have some hope that they would sign it. Then should follow the names of Sewall, Leavitt, Loring[?], William Jackson, Whittier, Hildreth, Andrews, Pierport[?], Palfrey[?], (if you can get it, as I think you can), Burnitt (Elihu[?]), H.J.[?] Burditch [?], Stanton, Wilson o Natick, (if he is not a member), Amasa Walker, George S. Hillard, Charles Sumner, Wm A. White, and last, not least, George Bradburn.

Mr. Andrews will tell you whether Richard Fletcher's name also could be obtained.

These names would be enough—or at least all that I would ask you to get.

To get Judge Allen's name, your best way would probably be to send the petition to Elihu[?] Burnitt, and ask him to call on the Judge. If you were to send the petition directly to the Judge himself, you would probably never hear from it again—for he is crowded with business, and is besides the most vexatious of procrastinators.

If the petition be presented to the legislature it is important that it be presented by the most fearless and able man that can be found, whose heart will be in it, and who will consent to serve as chairman of the committee.

With these suggestions, I leave the matter in your hands, to be carried forward, or dropped, as your judgment and inclinations may determine.

Yours truly,

Lysander Spooner

P.S. If the petition should be printed, will you not take the trouble to correct the proof, and see that it be correctly printed? The resolutions, in the pamphlet edition of the proceedings of the October convention, contained several errors—one an important one—and others awkward ones. They were printed correctly in the Emancipator of Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have any trouble in reading my manuscript, you can refer to the Emancipator of that date.

[Later in the series is the draft of this letter, which I did not transcribe b/c it contained nothing remarkably different. The following letter, however, is the draft of a letter sent along with this one. Before the letter I have transcribed a note found before these two letters.]

Two letters to George Bradburn—

accompanying a petition to Legislature on Slavery—

January 19—1846

Athol January 19, 1846

Dear Bradburn,

As you do not see sufficient encouragement for starting "the Constitutionalist," and do not fancy a Constitutional Party, I have suggested, in the accompanying letter and petition, another mode of setting the constitutional ball in motion, one which I hope you will approve, and if so, aid in carrying into effect.

I write a separate letter on that subject, because you may possibly wish to show it to some one and in this I wish to say a word on another matter for your own eye only—which is that you need give yourself no weasiness[?] about the conversations at Mrs. S-- -'s. Mrs. H. wishes me to say to you that Mrs. S. told her that she only regretted that the other party was not there to hear it. It is a sad affair. I had only heard of it a few days previous to that conversation. Mrs. H. told me of it—it was because I knew the fact, that I did not join in the conversation until you or Mrs. H. asked my opinion. I thought that as there was no escape from giving a part of my opinion, I might as well give the whole. I had once before given my opinion, in part, in her presence, without knowing any thing of her situation. I hear she is coming up about the first of March-- I hope, if you do not come sooner, you will not fail to come then. Give my best respects to her.

I hope you did not think I would change the name of the Liberty Party to conceal our "sympathy for the niggers"—but only to assert, in their behalf, the principles of the instrument, which our governments are all sworn to carry out, and which the people all acknowledge they must abide by.

If you do not think best, or do not feel inclined to do any thing with the petition, let it go—

Yours sincerely,

Lysander Spooner  
Nantucket, Tuesday evening,

May 5, '46

Dear Spooner:

I rec'd yours of the 1<sup>st</sup>, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, instant. It was almost too good news to be believed, what you tell me of Mrs. Sargeant. I retain [?] on here account, and on his. But my hearts almost bleeds, that they should have committed so great an error. These cases of legalized[?] adultery are most horrible, except where the parties are devils, and then, according to the great Swedenborg[?], they are most natural, and therefore put[?] the things.

I had no expectation of your getting to Boston so soon. I hope to be there next week; but this is doubtful.

I wish you be rewarded for the book you have brought with you to the City.

Those Whig gentlemen had a grand time at tickling[?] each

other's elbows, on occasion of Everett's emancipation. Is "the Gadwith[?] trying to disprove the opinion, that he knows very little of the \_\_\_\_\_ of those Romans? Though probably the least classical of all the speakers on that occasion; I notice he was the only one who offered a sentiment in Latin, and that his speech was inter\_\_\_\_\_ with snotches[?] of the same tongue.

I have not had a line from either Dr. or Mrs. Hoyt, since I left Athol.

Will you give my love to Hildreth & his better half? How I do wish he was in the editorial chair of some Review. We should then have something worth reading. I have read few authors whom I so well like to read as Hildreth, even when I can't accept his sentiments.

I should have mentioned, that I was struck, also, with Everett's uncommon piety, as well as by his twottle[?] about the vast importance, especially to Statesmen, of a knowledge of Greek & Latin. I apprehend the greatness of Webster, to whom he appealed on that point, came nowise thence.

Truly Yours,

Geo. Bradburn