

Boston Jany 4, 1848

Dear Bradburn,

I rec'd yours of the 26<sup>th</sup> ult, yesterday. In it, I see that the degree of freedom you are to enjoy is somewhat a matter of inference--for you say, "I inferred, from Robinson's knowledge of myself and Glaff's assurance that the paper is to remain 'a free' one, that the former would not permit his non-resistance notions to interfere with my freedom."

Still, you acknowledge your doubts whether you will have all the freedom you will desire.

Last evening I was in at Hildreth's--we spoke of your coming here--and of the freedom you would have in the paper. Hildreth said Glaff told him, to this effect--that you were not to make it a Liberty Party paper--but that it was to be confined principally to such topics as were now discussed in it--that they were going to have a more full understanding with you after you arrived here--and that they had offered to pay your expenses on in case they did not offer you such terms as you could accept--(at my request to be permitted to communicate these remarks of Glaff's to you, Hildreth said he had no objection.)

Now it seems to me, from all these circumstances, that you and Robinson do not understand each other--and that there is danger that negotiation will fail for the want of an understanding, which you might have, and which would give you substantially all the freedom you desire.

1. \_\_\_ does not want it made a "Liberty Party paper," says Glaff. This indicates that they think you are with the Liberty Party, in its present position. Whereas you are not--and, I suppose, would be glad to expose its inconsistencies and treasons. Robinson would of course have no objection to this.

2. There is not likely to be organized, (in Massachusetts certainly) any Liberty Party that you will join (however much you may desire that there should be such an one) until after the next presidential election--and if not until after that election, then not for some years, if ever. Your anti-slavery articles, then, will be, for the present "abstractions," rather than partisan cries. None the less efficient, however, on that account. On this ground, then, there need be no difficulty between you--at least, for the present.

3. Will he give you perfect freedom to argue the doctrine that slavery is unconstitutional? Why should he not? The paper is a reform paper, free to attack every thing that needs reformation.

What objection can he consistently have to your showing up the usurpations and corruptions of the government in the matter of slavery? And what better proof of those usurpations and corruptions can be given, than their perversions of the constitution for the support of slavery? If \_\_\_ doubts that slavery is unconstitutional, make him read my book. And by way of inducing him to read it, tell him to read Rogers' review of it, which I see is published in French's collection of his writings. True, Rogers was not entirely satisfied that slavery had no legal existence to be sanctioned, at the time the constitution was adopted. I think he says so in his review. At any rate, he told me himself that he thought I had established that point triumphantly. Besides, is there any doubt that he would agree with me in the rest, if he had read my second part? You can judge on this point.

4. Will not Robinson like my notions of law? And will he not see that a reform in men's notions of law, is the most important of all reforms?

5. It will be no objection, in Robinson's mind, to your arguing these topics, that it will bring you in collision with the Liberator.

The constitution is the surest point with Garrison, Phillips, Quincy, etc., though not so sure as it was, I think. I imagine they are beginning to feel that they have got to come to our doctrine at last. I had a friendly conversation with Francis Jackson at the fair the other night. He said he had read my book, but did not consider himself competent to decide between me and Phillips. Appeared very candid and reasonable. But Garrison, Phillips, and Quincy need to be drubbed into honesty and decency on this subject. And I apprehend it would take but very little genuine drubbing to make perfect spaniels of them. I do not see how Robinson could object to your giving them their deserts on this head.

6. Glaff[?] you know has heretofore taken the liberty to speak well of the intentions of the Liberty Party, as anti-slavery men. Why should you not be allowed some liberty of the same kind?

I do not see, then, on the whole, why there need be any obstacle in the way of Robinson's giving you substantially all the freedom you desire, if he can have a fair understanding of your present position. I hope, however, you will give them a negative answer, unless you can have all reasonable liberty—for it would injure your reputation and usefulness very much to take the paper without such liberty.

Yours truly,

L. Spooner

Weather warm as April almost.

I think Wright said it was a Mr. Curtis (John Curtis), who told him that you were going to Lynn. Perhaps I am mistaken in the name. I see that Whittier announces the fact in the last Era.

I was satisfied, before showing the letter to Wright, that it contained nothing which you would object to have seen by him.

Did you see Wright's spicy assaults on the Emancipator, and the Buffalo convention, a week or two ago?

[Margin: You do not inform me whether Sherlock J. Andrews has ever read my book--]