

Letter from Sarah Bagley to Angelique Martin (Mar. 13, 1848):

Springfield, Mass March 13, 1848

Mrs. Martin

Dear Madam

You will pardon my long delay when I tell you that your arrived in Lowell during my absence from the City to attend the sick bed of our aged father, who I am happy to inform you has, recovered. I would offer an apology for my long silence but be assured that you have given no offence in writing but I have always felt a great interest in your communications. I feel that I am deeply indebted for your generosity and hope you will let me hear often from you. My duties have been very pressing of late, and the business of my office has almost made me ungrateful to my correspondents. I left Lowell about three months since and am in charge of the magnetic telegraph in this place during the present year. I have an aged father and mother to support, to whom my duty is first and greatest. I regret to say to you, that the "Voice of Industry" is quite conservative and must be with its present conductor. The present editor thinks that a middle ground or half and half in our opinions is good policy. He thinks that truth ought to be spoken in such honeyed words that if it hits any one, it shall not affect him unfavorably. He found fault with my communications and I would not remain on the committee of publication with him for editor. He does not want a female department it would conflict with the opinions of the mushroom aristocracy that he seeks to favor, and beside it would not be dignified.

I am sick at heart when I look into the social world and see woman so willingly made a dupe to the beastly selfishness of man. A mere donkey for his use and no right, even to her own person. I most fervently thank Heaven that I have never introduced into existence a being to suffer the privations that I have endured. For instance the man who tended this office before me had four hundred dollars per year I three and still the business has been on the increased all the time. But I am a woman and it is not worth so much to a company for me to write a letter as it would be for a man. Well, the world is quite satisfied with the present arrangement, and we can only protest against such a state of things, and strive to arouse the minds of others to their state of servitude and dependence on the caprice and whims and selfishness of man. I feel as though my labors for the public good are nearly ended. It takes time and that is my only means. It takes money that I can ill afford. My father has had two severe fevers the last year. I am their only dependence and it has called for every shilling I could earn more than my absolute wants. Still I shall toil on with the little in my power until my task on earth is ended which will soon be. Pardon me dear Mrs. Martin for writing so sadly. I feel so, and am only giving expression to my depressed soul.

To labor year after year and have only an ungrateful return from those you are striving to bless, is truly discouragy. But it is the way of the world, and to think a thought that has not been in stereotype for forty years is so ultra that it can be hardly countenanced in refined society. Let us

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trust on and try to leave a little seed on earth that shall bear fruit when we shall pass away. I hope to see Father Owen this spring I am anxious to have some kind word of encouragement from him. Do write some kind word to me on the reception of this, it will be gratefully received. I will not neglect to answer you so long again. I had no time today but sit up an hour later to say to you, that you are kindly remembered.

Accept my best wishes and let me hear from you often.

yours Sarah G. Bagley

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