

Reflections on London Women's P.M. 1826

dear Friend

London 5th mo: 31st 1826.

Mary Fox¹

I am desirous before leaving this place of addressing thee a few lines, hoping it may find thee and all belonging to thee well. The Letter thou kindly wrote to me some Months ago was very gratifying which I should have long ago acknowledged had I felt that I had any thing to communicate worthy thy attention. but I have been generally very low and poor. though I think favoured to discern something of a division between the Night and the day and sometimes a little grain of patience to wait in the former Season.

It has been a considerable effort for me to get up to attend this yearly Meeting but I believe it has been a Season of instruction to me. Various and large have been the testimonies of our Ministers, none more Striking than the labours of Sarah Grubb this morning, on the necessity of our being instant in prayer, at Grace Church Street, where was, I think, as large an Assembly as the House would contain. From better Qualified pens than mine thou wilt I believe receive an account of the transactions of this very large Meeting so I will not attempt going into them, beyond a remark or two perhaps.

The incessant rain which has fallen almost ever since the Meeting began, and the confusion of carriages and umbrellas and wet Cloaks and Clogs consequent, has been indescribable as they Strike a Stranger, tho' I expect to thee they would pass without Notice as things of course. I cannot but remark the beauty of numbers of our younger Sisters, many are indeed as to the outward polished after the similitude of a Palace as to the formation of their bodies, nor would I reflect without a feeling of regret, on the Characters a farther intercourse with the World and its leavening effects may impress on those lovely countenances/ yet unmarked by the lineaments of Sin and Sorrow/ that say the hand that made us is Divine.

I have been diligent in attending the Committees which have been interesting to me; much excellent Matter is contained in the 5 American Epistles,² but there is a certain

Phraseology adopted throughout all, to which I think Strength and plainness of expression has been Sacrificed. They are beautiful to read, abound with choice passages of Scripture well wrought in, but considering the variety of States and the Numbers who will hear them who have had little opportunity of Spiritual or Civil Education, I wish they had been more practical and more homely in expression. To a remark I made I was answered, Such and Such will not pass the general Committee ; we must give up So and so or we Shall perhaps lose much that we might otherwise preserve, and so I found, for as far as I am capable of judging, there is too much of a Critical Spirit and both our own Strength and that of the Epistles much weakened in searching for Niceties of Verbal expression which will hardly be rightly appreciated if understood by the remote inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere. on this subject Margaret Benson's³ sentiments and mine are in perfect unison.

I expect thou would hear of the decease of John Bludwick.⁴ Sister Phebe Chorley⁵ had been some time assisting to nurse him and was with him to the last, of his peaceful close she gave an interesting account. Elizabeth⁴ very feeble, awaiting her own as near at hand. I was informed a day or two ago from Mary Cropper⁶ that they had a Notification that Willet Hicks⁷ was coming to Liverpool ; if it should be the case I think we shall claim the sympathy of our friends for many were much oppressed in their minds by his frequent and long public communications before, the Savour of which remains yet with us. I wish he would make Bristol his Port this time. I am willing to believe we have had our Share of his company.

6th day morning 2^d 6th Mo. The general Yearly Meeting closed last evening and in the very, very Short period of silence with which we were favored a precious and Solemn covering was felt, and I believe it would have been profitable if we had Sought more to this in this Y.M. and likewise that the feeling raised by reading many excellent Testimonies had been abode with and not immediately spread before the Meeting in long verbal communications.

Martha Smith⁸ is very hoarse from Cold. I thought she looked very well until yesterday but an attack in her head during the Night had left great Sallowness/ if there is such a word/ in her visage.

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I expect we Shall leave London for Warwickshire this Evening. Your names are often mentioned by your Friends in Liverpool and my Husband and myself desire a place in your remembrance and in united love to thee and thy dear Husband.

I remain thy affectionate Friend

MARGARET CROSFIELD.⁹

We are pretty soon intending to remove our abode to no. 1 Erskine Street, Islington. M.C.

Addressed :

Sylvanus Fox,
Wellington,
Mary Fox. *Somersetshire.*

NOTES

¹ Sylvanus Fox (1792-1851) and Mary Fox, *form.* Sanderson (1788-1846), of Wellington, Som., were noted Ministers locally and nationally. From letters sent to **D** by Margaret W. Fox, of Wellington, it is evident that their labours were much appreciated. Mary Sanderson was the first to accompany Elizabeth J. Fry to Newgate. Sylvanus Fox, when at Bath on health account as a young man, found an engagement to address a fashionable crowd in the Pump Room. (*Jnl.* x. 17, 104.)

For S. and M. Fox, see *Annual Monitor*, 1848, 1852; *Jnl.* xiv.-xvi.

² That is, epistles addressed to American Y.Ms.

³ Margaret Benson, probably related to Robert Benson of Liverpool, whose house often received American Ministers on their arrival from across the sea.

⁴ John Bludwick (d. 1826.85) and Elizabeth (d. 1828.80) were Friends of Warrington. The husband was in the station of Elder, and the wife was a Minister for some thirty years.

⁵ Phebe Chorley (d. 1857.64) was a sister of Margaret (Chorley) Crosfield.

⁶ Mary Cropper was probably the wife of James Cropper (1773-1840), of Liverpool. She died in 1831, aged 72.

⁷ Willet Hicks was an American Minister, who had been in Europe before, in 1820. He was an adherent to the Hicksite party. See *Jnl.* xix. 2.

⁸ This may have been the Minister of that name, of Doncaster, *form.* Ecroyd (1763-1832). There was a Martha Smith, of Liverpool, who died in 1844, aged 79.

⁹ Margaret Crosfield (*form.* Chorley, c. 1787-1855) was the wife of George Crosfield (1785-1847), an Elder, of Liverpool Meeting. G.C. edited the *Letters of William Thompson* (d. 1817.23) in 1818, and the *Memoirs of Samuel Fothergill* in 1843. M. Crosfield was a Friend of decided opinions—in a meeting for worship, 1 vi. 1828, she “gave a few words of advice to young men, advising them to sit still in meeting, etc.” (ms. Journal of Elizabeth Robson, Junr., in **D**) and in 1835 we are told that her “severe remarks” were recorded in the *Christian Advocate* (*Jnl.* xvi. 131).