



Child, a noted author of anti-slavery texts, agreed to write a preface to Jacobs's work and edit the manuscript. "I have very little occasion to alter the language, which is wonderfully good..."

Wayland [Massachusetts], Aug. 13<sup>th</sup> 1860

Dear Mrs. Jacobs,

I have been busy with your M.S. ever since I saw you; and have only done one third of it. I have very little occasion to alter the language, which is wonderfully good, for one whose opportunities for education have been so limited. The events are interesting and well told; the remarks are also good, and to the purpose. But I am copying a great deal of it, for the purpose of transposing sentences and pages, so as to bring the story into continuous order, and the remarks into appropriate places. I think you will see that this renders the story much more clear and entertaining.

I should not take so much pains, if I did not consider the book unusually interesting, and likely to do much service to the Anti-Slavery cause. So you need not feel under great personal obligations. You know I would go through fire and water to help give a blow to Slavery. I suppose you will want to see the M.S. after I have exercised my bump of mental order upon it; and I will send it wherever you direct, a fortnight hence.

My object in writing at this time is to ask you to write what you can recollect of the outrages committed on the colored people, in Nat Turner's time. You say the reader would not believe what you saw "inflicted on men, women, and children, without the slightest ground of suspicion against them." What were those inflictions? Were any tortured to make them confess? and how? Where any killed? Please write down some of the most striking particulars, and let me have them to insert.

I think the last Chapter, about John Brown, had better be omitted. It does not naturally come into your story, and the M.S. is already too long. Nothing can be so appropriate to end with, as the death of your grand mother.

Mr. Child desires to be respectfully remembered to you. Very cordially your friend,

L. Maria Child.

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***Citation:***

Autograph letter, signed; Isaac and Amy Post Family Papers, University of Rochester Library.