

In answer to this Circular, many letters were received from all parts of the country, signifying either an intention or a desire to be present at the gathering; and sometimes containing photographs, genealogical, or personal items of great interest. A few of these letters we here present, together with several of the many received since the holding of the meeting.

## V.

## LETTERS RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO THE INVITATION.

The following letter is from the Hon. Joseph Howe, in reply to one from Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, inviting him to be present and deliver an oration at the Howe Family Gathering:

OTTAWA, May 8, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR,—Few things would give me more pleasure than to attend the proposed gathering of the Howes, and I will come if I possibly can. At present I know of nothing to prevent me.

I do not know what to say about the Oration, but will think of it, and will let you know in time, should anything occur to prevent my attendance.

With kind regards to Mrs. Howe and all your circle,

Believe me, ever truly yours,

JOSEPH HOWE.

Dr. Howe, Boston.

The following characteristic letters are from the Hon. Timothy O. Howe, U. S. Senator, Wisconsin:

WASHINGTON, May 29, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have delayed answering your invitation to the Howe Gathering at South Framingham on the 22d proximo. I did hope I could accept it. I would be glad to see a gathering of the clans. I don't know but little about them. The only Howes I ever heard of, for whom I cherished a real admiration, were that Jennima Howe who was captured by the Indians, and that Samuel G. Howe who was captured by Julia Ward.

I admire Jennima because she escaped; and I admire Dr. Samuel G. because he didn't escape.

I suspect I ought to add to this number your namesake, who worked out the problem of the sewing-machine; but all forms of mechanism are such a profound mystery to me, that I never like to allude to the subject. I am always afraid of making some such mistake as an innocent townsman of my own made once when I was a child.

I saw an umbrella for the first time, and he timidly expressed a wish to have the proprietor "play a tune on it!"

But I regret to say I cannot come to Framingham next month. I have been kept here much longer than I expected. Engagements made long since in Wisconsin wait performance, and I must go there.

But I wish you the very jolliest of meetings. I hope you will discover that you are all brothers and sisters.

I beg you to remember that I claim you all for first cousins, and if any one disputes the claim let him disprove it if he can.

Very truly yours,

TIMOTHY O. HOWE.

Ellas Howe, Esq.

GREEN BAY, Aug. 9, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR,—I shall not be able to meet with my cousins at Harmony Grove on the 31st.

There are several considerations which forbid it, the most peremptory of which are a State Convention, to assemble on the 30th; and a wedding in the

family of a brother, advertised for "about the 1st of September."

Thanking you for the compliment conveyed in your invitation, I am,

Very truly yours,

TIMOTHY O. HOWE.

Ellas Howe, Esq.

The next letter is from John F. Howe, President of the Pin Manufacturing Co. of Birmingham, Ct. He was present with his family on the occasion.

BIRMINGHAM (DERBY), Ct., July 19, 1871.

ELIAS HOWE, Esq., Sec'y:

DEAR SIR,—Your circular addressed to the Howe Manufacturing Co. was duly received by me. I write this to request the favor of you to send one of them to my brother, "William" Howe, North Salom, New York." It is our purpose to attend the Gathering unless prevented by circumstances which we cannot now foresee.

Respectfully yours,

JOHN F. HOWE.

In response to an invitation to be present, Mr. Henry W. Longfellow, the poet, sent the following note:

NAHANT, Aug. 29, 1871.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have this morning had the pleasure of receiving your very friendly and flattering letter, and hasten to thank you for your most kind invitation, which I am sorry to say it will not be in my power to accept. My engagements here render it impossible. I can only send you my thanks and regrets, and my best wishes for a pleasant day in the groves of Framingham.

I am, my dear sir, yours truly,

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Ellas Howe, Esq.

The letter below very pleasantly plays upon the name Howe, and indicates the promptitude with which the Howes supply material for the "Register of the Howe Family." If every one will do the same, the work will soon be finished.

TERRE HAUTE, Ind., Aug. 26, 1871.

ELIAS HOWE, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—I regret exceedingly that I shall not be able to attend the gathering of the Howe Family next week. If an excuse were needed from so humble a member of the great family, I am sure that I should be more than forgiven, even commended, if it were known that my absence is due to an effort to add to the number, and the glory of this illustrious race of the inquisitive patronymic, which effort will probably be crowned with success about that time. May the interrogative branch of the human family (we monopolize this honor, for who ever heard of the *What* family, or the *Where* or *When* families?) have a jolly good time, and demonstrate to the world that they have been asking "How" to such a good purpose, that they are able to show all the other branches of the human family "How" better than anybody else. While your antiquaries will look after the "previous question," and these should be respectfully disposed of, yet let them not "move the previous question" to the exclusion of present and coming ones. I have sent a complete family record of my branch to my brother, who, after filling some blanks, will forward the same to you. Let me know of all that is done, so far as reported by the press, and assess me for expenses.

Long may these human interrogation points stand on the earth, and at the end may each prove that he has learned *How* to go up higher.

Yours fraternally,

E. FRANK HOWE.

It is hoped that the "six-foot sapling of twenty-four summers," who represents the family in the region of Petroleum, and writes