

Buckington
17 October 1853
John L. O'Sullivan
Care of Fowler
Putnam's,
New York

No announcement can be
made at present. - Particulars
are by mail. The draft
is excellent, but can
wait.

Averiguado

To ~~W. L. Bennett Esq.~~ the Editor of the Herald.

Sir,

I notice only so much of Mr. C. Edwards Lester's publication as contains an erroneous statement respecting Mr. Cushing, and I do that only because some persons might possibly accept as ^{correct} ~~acknowledged~~ what was not connected.

Having seen in the Herald an assertion that Mr. Cushing was the author of two recent articles ~~for~~ respecting Mr. Lester, the one in the Washington Union, the other in the Boston Post, and having seen that assertion accompanied with an intimation that Mr. Lester would make a retaliatory publication of some "naïve" private ~~correspondence~~ ^{correspondence} ~~between him and a former friend with Mr. Cushing~~, I felt confident that there was no foundation for the former statement, ^{as well as indignant} ~~and~~ ^{such a} ~~surprised~~ at the threatened publication of unguarded confidential letters. With no other interest in the matter than that of a friend, I felt some desire to be positively informed on the one point, and then to prevent the other by removing the ^{misapprehension} ~~erroneous~~ impression ^{the circulation of} under which Mr. Lester appeared to be about to commit the threatened indecency. ~~Had I known then that there was nothing in the correspondence that alluded to him as a former friend, he could certainly have not had the slightest concern in the subject.~~ A letter from Mr. Cushing fully confirmed what had been already my own conviction; and ^{I thought it worth while to take the trouble of} ~~in~~ reading to Mr. Lester a ~~passage from it~~ the following passage from it:

"My personal acquaintance with Mr. Lester began in Boston last winter. Without having any exact knowledge of his antecedents, I felt interest in him simply from regard to a cultivator of literature, and that interest continued

to be felt in good faith, until I heard of his attacks on the President in the London Times. I have never seen the letters in the Times, but from what I have heard of them I could not fail of course to regret and condemn them, and I had no participation in the publications in question, and saw them for the first time in print. The Herald speaks of Mr. Lester having naive letters from Mr. Marcy & myself. I believe, in answer to a letter of request to me from Mr. L. I did write to him a brief letter while in Boston, as one gentleman writes to another, commending the latter to be a man of honor. Any person may give annoyance by publishing private letters, but I think the case of the letters published by Mr. MacKenzie proves that every such act injures the betrayer more than the betrayed, whatever the character of the letters. If Mr. L. has any letters of mine, I know there is nothing in it which might not have been properly said; and his publication of it under any circumstances would go far to establish the accusations against him put forth in the Post and the Union.

~~From this extract~~ ^{the} ~~relating to Mr. Lester,~~ ^{relating to Mr. Lester,} ~~I thought it proper~~ ^{I thought it proper} to read to him; ~~and this is the simple circumstance~~ ^{and this is the simple circumstance} which ~~has~~ ^{been} converted into a ^{conciliatory} mission to him from the Cabinet. ~~For the purpose of~~ ^{For the purpose of} I was particular to mention that ~~Mr. Cushing would certainly not do any thing to~~ ^{Mr. Cushing would certainly not do any thing to} deprecate any man's threatened hostility or attacks, ^{myself} I thought it proper, as a personal ^{of that gentleman, thus} friend to correct his error on the point of fact. ^{referred to. He} ~~of the accompanying conversation~~ ^{of the accompanying conversation} (which I certainly laid out ~~in great~~ ^{in great} at the time to be destined for the newspapers) I will say no more than that Mr. Lester denied that he had ever ~~imagined~~ ^{imagined} Mr. Cushing to have ~~the same~~ ^{the same} that it would be ~~disparaging~~ ^{disparaging} to himself.

3/ been the writer of the ~~art~~ article, in ~~the Union and Boston Post~~,
but said ~~that~~ he knew that Mr. C. had ~~the~~ ~~written~~ ~~it~~ within
a few days, talked about him to several persons to similar
purport. I will only add that having ^{been} ~~had~~ subsequently ~~called~~
^{called} to Washington on business, I ^{took occasion to} make further inquiry on this
point variation of the former statement, and was told that
^{like the other,} it too, was totally unfounded. It would thus seem that Mr.
Lester was determined to publish ~~the~~ ~~Cushing's~~ private letter, which
a request of his own had elicited from Mr. Cushing, ^{on one ground of}
^{palliating invitation given or another.} ~~It~~ ^{happens,} however, to turn out that ~~the~~ ^{it} letter contained nothing which
could make its author care a straw whether it were published
or not.

I confine my notice of Mr. Lester's publication to this single
point; ~~which~~ ^{I repeat it,} and then, simply, as a duty to Mr. Cushing. If
Mr. Lester, ^{(after, being himself} ^{in the day of our excitement on that subject} ^{in regard} ^{to} ^{Mr. Cushing.} ^{of}
^{on that point} ~~who was~~ a speaker at free-soil meetings, ^{in 1848} objects
to me as an "abolitionist"; and ^{as a "liberalist"} ^{within a few months tended to} ~~offer~~ me the columns
of the London Times to ^{astound} ~~convey~~ to the English & European mind ~~my~~
^{in my ignorance of my} ~~well known~~ news about Cuba, so far as he could venture to
go in leading the opinions of the Times that way, ~~the duty to me~~
^{as a "liberalist"} I can only say that I regard it as not more
worth while ^{in me} to have any sort of public dispute with him, than
he has proved it to be safe for any gentleman to hold an
uninterrupted conversation with him, or ~~to~~ to get led into writing
him a private letter. Neither of those impudences is likely to be hereafter
committed by any one who may ^{Remember the Horatian warn-}
^{ing -} Tantum habet in cornu; hunc
tu, Romane, Caveto.

Respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. L. O'Sullivan