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A D D R E S S

OF THE

MACEDON CONVENTION,

BY

WILLIAM GOODELL;

AND

LETTERS

OF

G E R R I T S M I T H .

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# ADDRESS

Of the National Nominating Convention, assembled at Macedon Lock, Wayne county, in the State of New-York, June 8th, 9th, and 10th, 1847.

## INTRODUCTION.

*To the Friends of Liberty, Justice, and Good Government in the United States:*

We take the liberty to address you in respect to the objects we have in view, in convening together and nominating candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States. Those objects are not *partisan* in the ordinary acceptation of that term. We have no interests to promote distinct from the interests of each and all of our fellow-citizens. We espouse no other principles of government than those which our entire nation has declared to be self-evident. We only ask that the rights of all shall be equally and impartially protected—that the fundamental and acknowledged principles of civil government shall be, at all times, on all occasions, every where, and in every direction, applied and carried out into consistent and undeviating practice. If there are some who solicit your aid in protecting the rights of the *white man*—and if there are others who ask you to assist them in protecting the rights of the *colored man*, we agree with them both, and we differ from them both, in desiring you to co-operate with us in securing the equal protection of the rights of ALL MEN. If there are some who wish to enlist you in a political contest against *one* form of injustice and oppression—if there are others who would have you combine against another form of injustice and of oppression, or another, or yet another, we agree with them all, and we differ from them all, in asking you to assist us in securing an administration of government that shall protect all its subjects alike, from all forms of injustice and oppression, so far as civil government can apply the remedy, in the appropriate exercise of its characteristic powers.

In the "Declaration" connected with the Call for the assembling of this Convention, our principles and measures, with the special occasions for our present action, are set forth in detail, and we refer to that paper for a more full statement of them than we have room here to repeat. A brief outline of them, we will, however, sketch, preparatory to some further statements of the considerations by which our course has been determined.

Civil Government we understand to be that degree and description of authoritative control which the Common Father of all men has committed to society, to be exercised, in accordance with equity and justice, over each one of its members, for the protection of all and of each, in the safe possession and full enjoyment and use of all their original and heaven-conferred rights unimpaired; forbidding nothing but the infringement of those rights, and requiring and enforcing nothing but what is requisite for their protection and enjoyment.

Assuming, as it does, the essential equality of all, and being committed to all, it imposes equal restraints upon all, and affords equal and impartial protection for all. It recognizes no caste. It knows no distinction of birth, property, nativity, avocation, condition or color. It punishes nothing but crime. It infringes no original, natural rights. It permits no such infringement. It recognizes no man's right to infringe the equal rights of his neighbor. It creates and allows no monopolies. It confers no exclusive privileges. It has no power to frame a valid and binding law that violates any original right, or conflicts with natural equity and justice. And all its courts, magistrates and jurors are bound to consider all legislative enactments or judicial precedents or usages, which are contrary to natural justice, null and void.

We hold slavery to be illegal and unconstitutional, and that the Federal Government is bound to secure its

abolition by the guaranty, to every State in this Union, of a republican form of government. If the South demurs, let her, peacefully, withdraw from the Union.

We demand, for the injured aborigines of this country, the same protection, mercy and justice that we demand for the injured slave.

We go for the repeal of all tariffs, whether for protection or revenue, the support of the government by direct taxes, the consequent diminution of the revenue, the re-renchment of expenses, the reduction of salaries, the abolition of unnecessary offices, and of the whole naval and military establishment, the prompt abandonment of the present wicked war with Mexico, the restoration of her conquered territory, including Texas, and ample remuneration for the wrongs we have inflicted upon her.

Along with the abolition of all other monopolies, we would restrict within reasonable bounds, the extent to which individuals, corporations, or the government, should hold property in land, providing an opportunity for all to become possessors of the soil, and thus enjoy (without its being contested) the original right of every human being to occupy a portion of the earth's surface, and breathe its free air. To this end, we would also have the public lands thrown open to actual settlers, free of cost, and every man's homestead held inalienable, except with his own consent, not being liable to seizure and sale for debt.

We would abolish the Post Office monopoly, allowing citizens to exercise the original right of transporting letters and newspapers, as well as other freight. If the government cannot compete with them, let it discontinue the business, or if it chooses to run mails at the public expense, let all who use the mail pay equally at a cheap rate, for its use, without privilege of franking.

We would confer office on no slaveholders or members of pro-slavery bodies, political or ecclesiastical—on no vendors of strong drink or advocates for the license of that traffic—on no members of secret societies—and on no persons known to be immoral, unjust, dishonest, or (by position or principle) in a state of hostility to the essential elements and conditions of civil, political and religious freedom.

## APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES A DUTY.

It is now nearly two years since this general outline of political principles and measures was definitely proposed by some of us, as a basis of associated political action, believing as we then did and still do, that the Liberty party, to which we belonged, was not only pledged to those general principles, but was also pledged, by its own original and oft-repeated promises, to apply those principles to all public questions, as the appropriate occasions should arise for their application. During the period that has intervened, although strong exceptions have been taken, and determined opposition manifested, to the course we had proposed, we have found no antagonists who have been willing to join issue with us on the *moral* question involved, whether the action proposed is, or is not, in accordance with the *right and the true in the abstract*. No one offers to show us, and few, if any, are prepared to affirm, that our principles and our measures are not **RIGHT, EQUITABLE AND JUST**. Our principles are the professed creed of the nation. They are loudly insisted on by Abolitionists in general, and by Liberty party men in particular. And not the first man among them has attempted to prove that the measures we propose are not legitimate deductions from those principles; that our application of them is not appropriate and proper, or that there is not occasion, in consequence of existing wrongs, that a remedy should be applied. It is almost universally ad-

mitted by them, as well as by a large portion of the community in general, that the wrongs we have enumerated are evils, and that it is desirable that they should be removed. Abolitionists in general, and Liberty party men in particular, have been accustomed to maintain, moreover, that it is always safe to do right, and safe as well as obligatory to do right at the present time—that it is morally wrong to defer doing right,—and that it is holding the truth in unrighteousness to acknowledge a truth in the abstract, and yet decline, on prudential considerations, reducing that truth to practice. On this ground it is, that Abolitionists persist in applying the epithet *PRO-SLAVERY* to that portion of the community, who, while they acknowledge the moral wrong of slavery, excuse themselves on the ground of expediency, from reducing their convictions to practice, in the bestowment of their votes.

We cannot perceive why we are not bound to reason in the same manner and to act in accordance with the same considerations in respect to all other moral evils within the admitted sphere and province of political action. Admitting that chattel slavery is the greatest moral and political evil upheld and sanctioned by the government, (though the moral and political evils of intemperance are scarcely less,) we cannot feel ourselves, as moral and accountable beings, at liberty to undertake the measurement and gauging of the moral and political evils upheld by the government, with a view of ascertaining which is greatest, and thus determining which moral evil we will select as our antagonist, and which we will enter into a truce with, at present, and virtually support, by not making opposition to it a test, in the bestowment of our votes. If those who wish to oppose, at the ballot-box, the licensing of the sale of intoxicating liquors, or the enactment of certain unjust and wicked laws which oppress the poor white man, may not for such objects, without moral wrong, and without becoming justly obnoxious to the charge of being pro-slavery, hold in abeyance their anti-slavery convictions and sympathies, bestowing their votes on pro-slavery law-makers, for the sake of preventing rum licenses and the enactment of unjust laws for oppressing poor white men, then we cannot see how, without moral wrong, we can hold in abeyance our temperance principles, or our convictions of the moral wrongfulness of corn laws, cloth laws, and other legislative devices for grinding the face of the poor, in order to bestow our votes on the opposers of chattel enslavement. Nor do we see the necessity, or the good policy of so doing. The most trustworthy opponents of chattel enslavement—indeed the only really trustworthy ones—are those whose opposition is founded on fixed moral principle, and impelled by simple-hearted benevolence and good will to mankind—men who are opposed to chattel enslavement, because it is morally wrong and inhuman, who are therefore opposed to rum-licenses, and to all other wicked and unjust acts of legislation, because they too are morally wrong and inhuman—men who will not stifle, nor compromise, nor hold in abeyance their moral convictions, either in the one case or in the other. To do otherwise would be choosing between the least of two moral evils, consenting to the one, but opposing the other, which we hold to be morally wrong, whether we select one or the other of the two moral evils for our antagonist.

To co-operate with a political party that refuses to array itself against any of the wicked and unjust acts of the government except chattel slavery, would be choosing the least of two moral evils. And we can perceive nothing more sagacious or more Christian like, in this process of choosing the least of two moral evils, than in the similar process of those whose political action, in their own apprehension, might be directed to the removal of all unjust and wicked legislation, *except* the legalizing of slavery. On the one hand, it might be pleaded that slavery is only one evil, and impossible, at present to be removed, so long as other similar and numerous evils are left to support it, while these are not too inveterate to be removed in detail, in the first place, thus preparing the way for the accomplishing of the more difficult task afterwards. On the other hand it might be pleaded, as indeed it is, that slavery is the greatest evil, the promoter, if not the source of all the rest; that it is the dictate of wisdom to unite our energies against this in the first place, and leave the rest to be attended to afterwards. It concerns us not to say which of these rival methods is marked with the greatest degree of falsehood and error. In neither of them can we discover the marks of true wisdom. Both meth-

ods we reject as contrary to true philosophy, sound morals, and practical good sense. The proclamation of neutrality in respect to one or more moral evils, amounting to a truce with them, and a co-operation with their supporters, is but a lame preparation for an onset with another moral evil, admitting it to be the parent and chief support of all the others. Such a policy resembles too closely—may, is it not in substance, a proposition to enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive, with ALL the lesser devils of the pit, in the hope of deceiving them into a successful campaign against the Prince and Father of them all? The friends of temperance were thus seduced, for a time, to hold a truce with the lesser demons of inebriation, the wine, the beer, and the cider, while they concentrated their energies against the Giant Fiend, Distilled Spirit. The result proved that a truce with the subalterns and privates of the army of intemperance, was a truce with the Commander-in-Chief of that army himself, and the World's history fails to furnish us with any other instance of better success in the attempt to cast out the Prince of the Devils by a truce or co-operation with his legions.

#### LAW OF FREE TRADE AND INALIENABLE HOMESTEAD, A MORAL LAW.

It is an easy and cheap mode of argument to assume, as is sometimes done, the main point in debate, or rather, to assume as *true*, what is commonly admitted, in reality, on both sides, to be false. It is easy to represent, and take for granted, that whereas the slave question is a great MORAL question, all the other great questions before the nation, are mere questions of *policy*, involving no moral principles at all. On the ground of this assumption, it is easy to represent those who occupy the position we have chosen, as lowering down or throwing into the shade, a great moral question, for the sake of settling mere questions of finance, of profit and loss, of pecuniary advantage or disadvantage. The questions of free trade, of monopolies, of the public lands, &c., are treated as being of this character. But there is no solid ground for this representation. It stands contradicted by the almost universal sentiment that the law of free trade is an original law of nature, and consequently, a law of God, founded on the original and inalienable right of every man to the products of his own labor, including the right to dispose of the same, wherever he can find a brother man to become the free purchaser. All writers of any note on moral and political science and on political economy, who have treated of the subject, have assumed this as an axiom. Not a work of the kind can be found in our Colleges and Seminaries, in which the point is not conceded or assumed. It is as self-evident as the right of self-ownership, of which it is an essential part. And the intelligent advocates of commercial restrictions always concede this truth, and admit that free trade is right "in the abstract." Their pleas for international tariffs are all founded on the supposed pecuniary advantages to the country, or to particular portions of its citizens under existing circumstances, to be derived from certain departures from this law of nature and of God, this law of original and "abstract right," especially while other nations persist in departing from it. In a word, the plea for human chattelhood and for restrictions on the right of human beings to the free interchange of their products (an essential feature of self-ownership) rest on the same basis, viz: the utility of impairing man's essential humanity, or crippling its exercise; the utility of counteracting the original and heaven-established laws of man's social existence and moral freedom, under the present circumstances of the case.

If laws sustaining the claim of human chattelhood are sinful, because they violate the original law of man's nature; then laws restricting the free interchange of the lawful products of human industry are likewise sinful, for the same reason.

Similar remarks might be made concerning man's right to occupy a portion of the earth's surface, and the consequent unrighteousness of the legislation and the arrangements by which that original and fundamental law of nature and of nature's God, is contemptuously set aside. To talk of man's inalienable right to self-ownership, without the right to the products of his own skill and industry—to talk of his right to those products without the right to exchange or sell them, wherever he can find the best market—to talk of a man's right to SELF-OWNERSHIP without a right to an inch of the earth's soil, without a right to be in the world



where he was born, is to talk self-contradiction and nonsense; for the right of self-ownership includes or implies the right of existence, of soil, and of free intercourse. Whoever succeeds in proving that the legal sanction of an unlimited land monopoly, and that commercial restrictions, are morally right, will have done more than the slaveholders and their apologists have ever yet been able to do, towards proving that chattel enslavement is not essentially and inherently wicked. That man's claim to the right of self-ownership must be in a sad predicament, who has neither a right to be nor to do—to exercise his *faculties* or to occupy *space*! The principle of illimitable land ownership, if admitted, covers the one predicament—the principle of commercial restrictions the other. If one white man, or if fifty, or if two hundred, may own all the soil of the slave States, what becomes of the colored man's right to freedom in the land of his birth, for which Abolitionists have so long contended? And if, in addition to this, the government may restrict commercial intercourse by a tariff, (if it has this right, it has it, at discretion and without bounds,) then it may prohibit, and not merely cripple, the commercial intercourse of the laboring population with the rest of the world, and render labor unavailing for its great ends. The mockery of a nominal self-ownership is all that then stands between them and their re-enslavement, in case they had been previously enfranchised. This very position, according to the most reliable information, is already coming to be recognized as the present lot of the lately emancipated slaves in the British West Indies.

#### THE BIBLE vs. CLASS LEGISLATION.

Those who draw nice moral distinctions between different *modes* of oppression—who insist that no *moral* question is involved in any of the class legislations and monopolies of modern times, except chattel enslavement, and who therefore insist on our confining our political action to that one form of oppression alone, proclaiming our neutrality in respect to all others, must find some other code of morals than that found in **THE BIBLE**, for the guidance of their conduct, some other directory for the adjustment of their measures. They must leave off citing the requirements and the denunciations of that Sacred Book as freely as they have been accustomed to do, as appropriate to the position they occupy. Very little of what is there said against oppression, against oppressive governments, of the duty of the people and of their rulers to execute judgment and deliver the spoiled out of the hands of the oppressor, to cry aloud and spare not, to undo the heavy burdens;—very little of all this language was originally uttered in direct reference to chattel enslavement, in any modern sense of the term. It was directed against minor oppressions, such as those that we are now invited to pass over without noticing, to be neutral about, nay, to support, by the bestowment of our votes upon their apologists and advocates! When our Saviour upbraided the Pharisees with binding heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, laying them on men's shoulders, and not touching them with one of their fingers, he made no direct and immediate allusion to chattel enslavement. Of that degree of barbarity they could not be charged, for they held no slaves, and voted for no slaveholders. Such a climax of impiety they never reached. They only devoured the *houses* of the widows, not the *widows themselves*. They resembled those who, according to some of our modern teachers, *only* take away their clothing from the poor, depriving them of comfortable shelter from the cold, and who therefore, are to be let alone, in consideration of the fact that the "cloak is of less value than the man;" and under the motto of "the man first and the cloak afterwards!" Was there, therefore, no moral principle involved? Are we indeed to proclaim impunity to the plunderers of cloaks, the stealers of sheep, and the mere robbers of the poor, because there are men-thieves yet in the land? Or shall we not rather claim "the man and his cloak!—the cloak because of the man that must suffer without it?" The humanity that begins by yielding up to the robber the poor man's cloak as a price of the robber's co-operation against the man-stealer, will be likely to end in a compromise with the man-thief himself, for a *fleece of wool*. The experiment has proved it so in our own land. He only who is faithful in the *LEAST* can be trusted in *MUCH*; while he who, when he saw a *cloak-thief*, consented with him, is in a fair way to become an accomplice of *man-thieves*, in the end.

The terrible overthrow of Pharaoh and his hosts in

the Red Sea, was not for the sin of chattel enslavement. The Hebrews were never held as chattels. They were never forbidden to marry or to read. Their families were never separated by sale, like brute beasts. Yet they were grievously oppressed. A land monopoly had perpetuated the right of the soil in the royal family of the reigning dynasty. An onerous tax upon the province of Goshen, payable in brick (and for "revenue purposes" and "internal improvements" doubtless) had been imposed and levied, about as burdensome, we may suppose, as that similar tax, payable in coffee (the almost entire product of the island) which the Dutch Government of India now levies upon the natives of Java—a mere financial measure," of course! [A "mere question of dollars and cents!" as the slave question is with the slaveholders!] To this was added at length, a prohibition (by tariff or otherwise) of the necessary supplies of straw for the brick-makers! The whole effect of these measures combined, including the limited and temporary slaughter of the Hebrew male children, must have been less terrible than the oppressions of the British Government in famishing Ireland; for, at the termination of their bondage, the Hebrews, so far from being in a starving condition, like the people of Ireland, or penniless, like the tariff-scourged operatives of Manchester, Birmingham, and some districts already, even of our own country, were rich in the possession of flocks and herds!

But, in the oppression of the Hebrews in Egypt, was there "no moral principle involved" because it was "a mere measure of political economy and of finance?" So Moses and Aaron, as well as Pharaoh and his statesmen, might have concluded, had they been privileged to listen confidently, to our modern teachers, who could have instructed them that the heaven-imposed duty of delivering the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor was all comprised in the "one idea" of securing them from chattel enslavement! The mystery of Pharaoh's hardening his heart, were readily solved, might we suppose him to have listened to such teachings! The terrible overthrow of that great financier and political economist, with the deluded people who supported him, the Bible regards as a striking specimen of the Divine displeasure against oppressive governments, and those who voluntarily support them in their oppressions. The "one idea" it inculcates in respect to this subject is "total abstinence" from all forms of oppression; the immediate abolition of all enactments sustaining them.

#### ALL DUTIES ALIKE OBLIGATORY.

This notion that men have a moral right to select one field of moral, religious or benevolent effort, and on the ground of their activity in that department, withdraw themselves from open public sympathy and co-operation in *other* fields of moral, religious, or benevolent effort—that they may be neutral in respect to the existence of one class of moral evils, because they have concluded it best to expend all their energies against another class of moral evils, is one of the most subtle, delusive and mischievous of all the devices of the Arch Tempter. All men imagine they are discharging some of their duties, and most men think they are very faithful in the discharge of the duties they have selected as the most incumbent upon them, in the position they occupy. To take care of himself and his family, is the grand idea of duty with the sordid worldling. When other duties to God and mankind, growing out of other relations, are urged upon his attention, he is too much engrossed with his "one idea," to give heed. One man is very earnest against prodigality—that is his "one idea,"—do not ask him to beware of penuriousness. Another is absorbed with the "one idea" of generosity—do not expect the virtue of frugality in him. He is occupied with his *beau ideal* of moral excellence. One man is strongly opposed to intemperance, and has he not a right to be neutral in respect to the vice of gambling? Highway robbers have plumed themselves on their almsgiving; and the man that bolts his door upon the houseless, thanks God that he has never defrauded any one. The very worst of men have selected something good, in which they may glory, and few are so abandoned as not to congratulate themselves that they are not so bad as some others. Precisely upon this principle the slaveholder claims the praise of hospitality and other kindred virtues, and bids defiance to the reprovers of his injustice.

Very much on the same principle do men of high professions in morality and religion, excuse their manifest delinquencies. The Missionary Board is absorbed in its "one idea" of sending the gospel to the heathen; the Bible Society with supplying the world with Bibles;

—each has staked out his ground. Do not ask them to consider what the gospel is, or how or by whom it is to be taught—nor where the heathen are to be found—nor whether slaves are to be furnished with Bibles or no. The Moral Reform Society is occupied with the seventh commandment; do not ask its attention to the eighth—nor point its lecturers and writers to the great national broil of slavery. It cannot turn aside from its great “one idea” of moral purity, to inquire how it is violated. The man who devotes his time to the Temperance Society, in like manner, imagines it will not do for him to espouse the cause of the enslaved, lest he should forfeit his influence in the temperance cause. The Ministry must “know nothing but Christ and him crucified,” do not inquire of them what was Christ’s mission on the earth, nor how he fulfilled it—how he treated oppressors, or how he was treated by them. The Church must promote religion, and cannot stop to define what pure and undefiled religion is. All this comes of an imaginary devotedness to some great “one idea,” without understanding distinctly and fully what that idea is—how much it includes, and with what it is indissolubly allied. Political activity follows in the same track, and builds, unceasingly, and every where, its forever unbuild edifice, by laying its “stones of emptiness” and “stretching out upon it the line of confusion.” One party has its “one idea” of this measure—another of that—but none of them embracing the “one idea” of a just government. One has its one idea of white men’s liberty, another its one idea of colored men’s enfranchisement—some are for removing one evil and another another, but none are for removing all, and, consequently, all continue to receive the support of the majority, and none are removed!

#### INEFFICIENCY OF VOLUNTARY, OR “ONE IDEA” SOCIETIES.

It may be admitted that *voluntary societies*, selecting one distinct object, have been productive of some benefits. We do not allege that it is morally wrong to organize such societies, for the man that co-operates with one of them for the promotion of one good object, may at the same time, co-operate with another of them for another, and thus discharge in one, the obligations not discharged in the other. In supporting one of these societies, while its affairs are properly conducted, we do not necessarily neglect, much less oppose, any other good object. The case differs when, in attempting the promotion of one good object, a society loses sight of those moral affinities that bind together all good enterprises, and violates one class of obligations for the sake of discharging another. Thus a society that sanctions caste, in order to circulate Bibles, or that lends its sanction to slavery, in order to extend missions—or that thinks to convert the world without opposing all the world’s vices—or that, in attempting to oppose licentiousness, is careful to take no notice of its strongest and deepest and most wide-spread entrenchments,—such societies, very evidently, while thus conducted, not only become the opponents of other good objects, but fail of fidelity to their own special trusts. An abolitionist that should content himself with that one department of benevolent or reformatory effort—an Anti-Slavery Society that should violate one class of moral obligations, in order to discharge another class—that should lead its members into a truce with other vices, and especially with other forms of oppression, as a means of abolishing chattel slavery, would become equally reprehensible, and undeserving of the public confidence.

We call attention to these plain considerations, in order to meet an objection against the course we propose, founded on the supposed teachings of experience in the use of our modern voluntary associations. We are admonished to take them as our models, and are particularly referred to the supposed secret of their efficiency, in the strictness with which they have confined themselves exclusively to one definite and distinct object; and because the Temperance Societies have done good by confining their attention to one distinct thing, we are told that a political party, to be efficient, must pursue a similar course.

To this argument we answer, in the first place, that the experiment of these voluntary associations falls far short of justifying the conclusion that they have always been conducted in the best manner, and that their success would not have been greater, had they taken more comprehensive views of the evils they undertook to remove. The Temperance enterprise, as already noticed, has suffered severely from the attempt to limit attention and effort within narrower bounds than the case demanded. The Missionary Society, too, in the same

manner, has made still worse shipwreck, by too limited and technical a definition of its object. Scarcely a voluntary association can be mentioned, that has not fallen more or less into the same error, the present effect of which is sufficiently visible in their mutual rivalries and recriminations, and still more, in their all coming to a dead stand. The most experienced and observing men connected with those enterprises, to a great extent, are coming to look upon them as having passed their meridian, at least in their present shape, and partly because each one of them finds its wheels blocked by obstacles which the original plan of the society does not permit it to touch or to remove, and any thing like co-operation or mutual assistance, is, of course, out of the question, for the same reason. The Bible Society cannot assist the Abolitionists in giving Bibles to the slaves, because the Bible Society cannot go beyond its “one idea,” as it would do, should it commit itself on the slave question. The Moral Reform Society, for the same reason, must make little or no allusion to the system of southern prostitution. The Temperance Society can have nothing to say of the theatres, gambling houses, and brothels, and licentious fashionable literature, that lead so many thousands to intemperance. And the Anti-Slavery Society can say nothing of any of the numerous systems of despotism and oppression by which the slave system is supported, and which it wields at pleasure, because each one of these falls short of “chattel” enslavement, and is not embraced in its “one idea.” And not a few of these obstacles in the way of all our benevolent and reformatory societies have no particular society devoted to their eradication. We have no anti-gambling societies, nor free trade societies, and it would be a hopeless task to attempt organizing distinct societies for the removal of all such evils. The Churches, evidently, for the most part, take little cognizance of any of them, and the car of reformation stands waiting for some unknown power to remove the stumbling-blocks out of the way.

The boasted potency of the “one idea,” as commonly understood and applied, has evidently no adaptation to supply the remedy most needed now. The difficulties to be removed have arisen from too rigid an adherence to that policy, and whatever may have been its benefits in the first instance, it is too late in the day, now, after its workings have been tested, to offer it as the universal panacea for all social evils. For a certain time, and to a certain extent, the experiment may have been a shrewd one. But as it has its limits, so also it has its date. It may be well, doubtless it is, at the first onset upon any grave abuse or monstrous system of wickedness, to isolate it from every thing else, and make it stand out to view, till all its characteristic features and full proportions are seen and understood, as well as *that* mode of exhibition can show them. But before any such abuse or system can be fully seen as it is, and especially before its props and supports can be detected and taken away, it must be considered in its connections and its affinities—it must be traced to its strong holds of entrenchment; these, too, must be assaulted, and its supplies seized upon and cut off, before it can be finally overcome. “Practical men” (as our opponents consider themselves) ought to understand this. We may venture to predict that before *alcoholic* intemperance can be overcome, some attention must be paid to its connection with other forms and other agents of intemperance; that before chattel enslavement can be successfully terminated, other forms of oppression that cluster around and support it, must be taken into the account, and included in the effort.

Thus much, in respect to the workings of the voluntary associations, for benevolent, moral and religious purposes, we may venture to say, since their example, without qualification, and in respect to their most questionable characteristics, is held up to us as the unerring standard, from which it were presumptuous in us, for a single inch, to diverge.

But we have a still further answer to the argument thus urged upon us. Had the example of the voluntary associations been never so faultless—had their success been never so satisfactory—had their interpretation and use of the “one idea” policy betrayed them into none of the inconsistencies, delinquencies and disasters which now, in many instances, mar their history, and cripple their energies, and disgrace their character, we have to submit that in stepping into the arena of *political* life, and thus attempting the discharge of the duties growing out of our relations to civil government, we pass altogether beyond the precincts of the *mere* voluntary association, and its maxims, though never so fault-

less within their legitimate field of application, are incompetent here, to guide us. The "one idea" of the seventh commandment may answer for the Moral Reform Society, but it does not follow that nothing else is requisite for the basis of a Christian Church. So the "one idea" of abolishing chattel slavery may suffice for the Anti-Slavery Society, but we must beg to be excused from admitting the inference that all the functions of civil government are exercised, and all its obligations discharged, by the simple abolition of chattel slavery, without the redress of any of its other abuses, the repeal of any other of its own unjust acts, the repression of any other species of crime. Because its penal code should prohibit and punish man-stealing, it does not follow that it should prohibit and punish nothing else. And just as broad and comprehensive as are the functions and duties of civil government, just so broad and comprehensive are the duties of free citizens and voters in their participation in the acts of the government. And just so broad and comprehensive, likewise, are the duties of any political association of voters and citizens uniting together in the nomination and support of all the officers by whom the government is to be administered.

Civil government is not a mere voluntary association of individuals, at liberty to enter into the engagement or not at their pleasure, and giving it a wider or a narrower scope at their option. And of course, political associations as above described, commonly called political parties, are not mere voluntary associations, at liberty to embrace within their objects, as much or as little as they think proper.

#### DIVINE AUTHORITY OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Civil government has its foundation in the nature, the character, and the necessities of man. Its definition and its limits are fixed in the nature of the case, and men cannot alter them. Hence civil government has its fundamental and fixed principles, the knowledge of which is recognized as a science, just as the knowledge of the first principles of chemistry and of astronomy are sciences. Man may learn and apply these principles, but he cannot alter, enlarge, or abridge them, (by "voluntary associations" or otherwise,) and it is at the peril of all that is precious, beneficial or sacred, in civil government, that any body of men permit themselves to tamper with the laws of political science, which are God's laws, by any unauthorized and capricious experiments of the kind.

"In forming the Liberty party," it is said, "we only organized for the sole and simple purpose of abolishing chattel slavery. We never pledged ourselves to the work of general political reform." The statement happens to stand contradicted, most explicitly, by all the early documents and doings of the Liberty party. But supposing it to have been otherwise: what then? In that case the Liberty party did not correspond, in its structure, with the foundation principles of civil government; and its organization, however intended, was a virtual conspiracy against the immutable laws of political science, as impious as it was futile, and its prompt abandonment becomes as plain a duty as in the case of any other course of wrong-doing. The case is not altered, if the Liberty party, originally organized (as we claim it to have been) for carrying out, impartially, all the proper objects of civil government, has abandoned that platform for a narrower one, and will not return to its first position, and redeem the pledges it then gave.

Is it too strong language to say that there is impiety in the effort to obtain the administration of civil government, that we may wield it solely for the promotion of one single interest, the redress of only one particular wrong, the removal of only one form of oppression? Whose institution is civil government? By whose authority does it exist, and by whom are its powers ordained? What is the design of that authority, and what the scope of those powers?

"He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."—"Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes, and they shall judge the people with just judgment."—"Execute judgment between a man and his neighbor."—"Deliver the spoiled out of the hands of the oppressor."—"Execute judgment in the morning," i. e., timely, early, without delay.—"Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor."—"Take heed and do it, for

there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."

Thus reads the charter—God's constitution of civil government!—His definition of the platform and objects of a political party. "How readest thou?" Does it look like a permission to do justice to some and withhold justice from others? To single out either the rich or the poor, or "the poorest of the poor"—"the great interest of the country" or its minor interests, either for protection, or for neglect, or for compromise? Does it look like doing justice to one class of the people first, "in the morning," and leaving it for future decision whether justice shall be done at all to the others, afterwards? Like providing just judges for some sections of the county, and leaving other sections to get along as they can?

#### MORALITY OF "ONE IDEALISM."

It is appalling to witness the inroads made upon the consciences and moral sensibilities of men, by the operation of the "one idea" theory, as it is commonly understood and applied. "As a Missionary Board," it seems, we can take no cognizance of God's commandments, out of the area that we have staked out for ourselves and occupied!—"As Temperance men," we can look no farther than "our pledge," whatever it may be, in avoiding and opposing intemperance!—"To our "Anti-Slavery platform," we must welcome every body that cries out lustily against chattel slavery, word-wise, tho', at the very next opportunity, the orator may cast his vote for a slaveholder, or for a slaveholder's advocate, and may lend his aid to any other system of oppression, without forfeiting his reputation for a "great moral reformer."—As "Liberty party men," we have no right to inquire further concerning a proposed candidate for civil office than whether he can pronounce the shibboleth of "immediate emancipation."—Whatever moral duty or divine precept is urged upon our attention, we have only to ensconce ourselves within the narrow limits of our "one idea," whatever it may be— we have only to say that the distinctive object of our favorite society or organization, or political party, did not include that particular duty or precept, and we make a merit of casting it to the winds! Just as though we expected to be judged, at the last final award, as members of a Missionary Board, or of a Temperance Society, or of an Anti-Slavery society, or of a Liberty party, and not rather AS MEN, with all the relations, responsibilities and duties of MEN, attaching to us, not in virtue of our own compacts, and pledges, and organizations, and platforms, all of our own devising, but in consequence of our moral natures, and of the relations which, so long as we remain men, we are obliged, whether we desire it or not, to sustain!

If it be said that the duties inappropriate to one, or another, or to each and to all of these associations, may nevertheless be discharged by us, as individuals, in addition to the duties we discharge in our several associations; we answer, that this remark cannot be true in respect to the political party we support, if that party proposes any thing short of the discharge of all our political obligations. We might indeed discharge many (though not all) of our duties concerning intemperance in our co-operation with a Temperance Society, provided its basis were sufficiently broad for the purpose. We might then, perhaps, step into the Anti-slavery society and do up a part, though not the whole, of our anti-slavery work, there. But we cannot co-operate with an anti-slavery political party confined to the one object of abolishing chattel slavery, and reserve to ourselves the possibility of discharging, in any other manner, the rest of our important and heaven-imposed political duties. We have only one vote to bestow, and can belong to only one political party. Having deposited our vote for the anti-slavery candidate, there is not, and cannot be, another political party into which we may step and deposit our vote for the temperance candidate; and another into which we may enter and vote against the iniquities and oppressions of a combined revenue and protective tariff, and so on. And even if we could, we might only be voting for a tariff in the one party, and against it in the other; for slavery in the one party and against it in the other; for temperance in the one party and intemperance in the other; thus dividing ourselves against ourselves, and nullifying our own votes. When we vote for a man to hold a civil office, we have to vote for the whole man, so far at least as his general character and public acts are concerned. In voting for a pro-slavery man we

cast a pro-slavery vote, though our object in voting may be something else; and in voting for a tariff man, we vote for a tariff, though our object be something else. If slavery and if tariffs are morally wrong, we can do neither of these things without committing an immoral act. That portion of the Liberty party in the State of New-York, who insist that the Liberty party is not, and must not become, a party for other purposes than the simple abolition of chattel slavery, have been compelled, by their own sense of their political responsibilities, on other subjects, to step occasionally out of the Liberty party and vote for the pro-slavery candidates of the pro-slavery parties, in reference to those other objects. Thus in attempting to discharge one political obligation, they have violated another. With all their devotion to the "one idea" of abolishing chattel slavery, and in the very moment of repudiating the solicitude of Abolitionists for "other and minor objects," they have actually been driven into the position of casting pro-slavery votes, for the accomplishment of those "other and minor objects." So that fidelity to the cause of the slave is found to require an anti-slavery political party that will provide for the discharge of all our political obligations.

#### A POLITICAL PARTY—ITS OBLIGATIONS.

Let not our position be misunderstood—or mis-stated, as it has been. We do not say that our political party must provide for, or furnish an arena, for the discharge of all our moral duties. We only say that it must cover the ground of all of them that are appropriately political. This is only saying that all our political duties must be discharged.—We do not look to a political party, nor to political action, nor to civil government, to remove all moral and social evils. Far from it. We only look to them to do their proper work, along with other appropriate moral influences, for securing to all men, their original and essential rights. The field, tho' not without well-defined limits, is too broad for any one single political measure—any one legislative enactment. The most strenuous advocate for the narrow construction of our "one idea" would hardly venture to affirm, in so many words, that all the moral obligations resting upon our government could be discharged and fulfilled by the simple enactment of a statute abolishing chattel slavery.—But if the moral responsibilities of the government extend further than that limit, how can it be made to appear that the moral responsibilities of those who vote and who nominate the officers of the government do not extend farther?

Will it be said (it has been said) that a political party and an administration abolishing chattel slavery may be trusted, without further inquiry, to execute justice in all other respects? As well might it be affirmed that a man guiltless of burglary might therefore be safely entrusted with the reins of the government—that because a man had never robbed on the highway, he was therefore upright enough for a judge, that whoever assists in rescuing a child from the flames, or a drowning man from the river, is entitled to implicit confidence as an arbiter between man and man! Let "practical men" inquire after the facts. The British Government that abolished chattel slavery in the West Indies is starving the people of Ireland, is crushing the operatives of Birmingham, is enforcing upon dissenters in England the payment of church tithes, is excluding large masses of the people from the right of suffrage, is building up a bloated aristocracy, is grinding the faces of the poor, is consenting to the oppression, by tariffs, of the lately emancipated West India negroes, is lending its aid to the importation of East India coolies to compete with them, and reduce still lower their wages, entailing hopeless destitution upon both negroes and coolies, thus reviving, though without chattelhood, the closest possible resemblance to the slave trade!

If the opponents of chattel slavery in America are more comprehensive in their views of human rights, let it be shown by their promptly coming up to the position to which we invite them! If they are opposed to all other oppression as well as the oppression of human chattelhood, and if they are ready to act against both the one and the other, let them say so, and show their sincerity by their deeds. But if they *refuse* to do this when invited to do it—if they persist in claiming the privilege of bestowing their votes for the known supporters of the tariffs, monopolies, and class legislations, that are grinding the faces of the poor in our midst, for the ennoblement of the rich, let them cease urging the claim that the simple fact of opposition to chattel enslavement is proof positive that they may be

safely entrusted with the protection of human rights. The merit of mere opposition to chattel slavery is becoming cheaper than it has been, and will be much cheaper still. The time hastens when, (by the elevation of a higher moral standard in politics than had before been attempted,) politicians of all parties, the most sordid and selfish, will be forced to come up, at least, as high as the level furnished by the Anti-Slavery Societies. This they will be glad to do, as a cover to their delinquencies in other respects. But the covering will become too narrow to hide them, and then, the mere merit of being anti-slavery, will avail a political party about as much as would, at the present time, the boast of legislation against sheep-stealing, or the glory of selecting candidates unsuspected of robbing hen-roosts. Those who rightly estimate and properly feel the inexpressible meanness and moral turpitude of baby-stealing, should be the last to claim for themselves and associates, any high degrees of humanity, moral discernment, regard to human rights, or competency to the task of defining and protecting them, on the mere ground of their readiness to treat baby stealing as a penal offence—their capacity to distinguish a man from a beast! High time were it for American citizens and their political parties to set up a higher standard of political trustworthiness than that which the oppressive British Government may claim.

When called upon to define the "one idea" to which we would render homage, we say that the great, all-comprehensive idea, with us, is the idea of pursuing, steadfastly and unflinchingly, wherever they are revealed to us, the TRUE and the RIGHT. In the department of Civil Government and of political responsibility, it takes the form of "THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS." This one idea we would honor by the prompt, impartial, and uniform application of it, to all classes of men, and the redress of all the wrongs of which Civil Government may take cognizance. With MORAL PRINCIPLE for our foundation and our polar star, we hope to shape our measures in accordance with them, desiring no other policy than adherence to the right.

#### PARTIAL REFORMS, BAD POLICY—CASE OF BRITISH ABOLITIONISTS.

Having thus explained and vindicated our *moral* position, and disclaimed any other policy than morality, we might venture to pause. Nevertheless, there are objections to our course, predicated on the current notions of policy, which we shall be expected to notice.

It is objected that only a few will be found ready to unite on so many objects, whereas, by selecting one, and that the most prominent, we may secure numbers, sufficient to accomplish the object. Then, if we please, we may select another, and so on. In confirmation of this policy, we are cited not only to the course of British abolitionists, but of the anti-corn-law league, free suffrage movement, anti-state church agitation, &c. &c. The leaders of all these movements, it is said, were, to a great extent, the same persons, but they had the sagacity to take one thing at a time, and not load one object with the unpopularity (with many persons) of the other.

To this we might interpose, as indeed we must do, our settled conviction of the immorality of postponement, in cases of this kind, where moral principle is involved, where postponement implies assent to continued wrong-doing, and, (through our votes) the active support of it, involving a confederacy with one moral wrong as an expedient for uprooting another. Admitting an overruling Providence, and the necessary operation of moral causes and effects, the policy of such a course becomes too shallow for a moment's scrutiny. Unless by a cunning combination of wrongs we can transmute them into right, or get out of them, (in despite of the laws of nature and the intentions of nature's God) the beneficial effects of the right, all such expedients must fail us, substantially, and in the long run. Apparent, temporary and partial benefits are all that we can reasonably expect, if there be any thing deserving the names of moral and political science. An alchemist of the middle ages might blunder upon a favorable experiment. But as there was no science to guide him, so there could be no skill in his process, and no sagacity in his success.

But let us examine the results of the sagacity so confidently propounded to us. Which of the desired objects have been accomplished? Is free suffrage secured? No. After an expensive agitation, without perceptible progress, the enterprise seems either abandoned, or,

for the present, suspended, to be resumed, if ever, under the disadvantage of the precedent of the recent failure and relinquishment. Is the Union of Church and State overthrown? No. *That* is the present topic of agitation. The discussion is apparently doing some good. Whether the present mode of operation will come to any thing more than to convince those concerned in it of the necessity of a better one, remains to be seen. Recent action in Parliament shows that the administration do not fear it. They expect it to follow the fate of the free suffrage movement, and their journalists amuse themselves with speculations as to what temporary agitation will come up next. The leaders of the anti-state church movement are evidently looking for no very speedy success. But the corn-laws are repealed. Yes! The potato rot, and Irish starvation did that, with little if any assistance from the "league." But neither the one nor the other has restored the right of free trade. Slavery, (that is, chattelhood,) is abolished in the Colonies. Yes. Let the Abolitionists have due credit for that. The Government deserve little, of course. But let us take a nearer view, and see whether British abolitionists would not have been *more* sagacious, if they had looked further than they did. They stipulated *only* for the abolition of chattelhood. Further than that they asked nothing. The emancipated peasantry were thrown upon the mercy of the Colonial Legislatures, with no Parliamentary restrictions upon their *class legislations*. And now for the result. The compromise by which the planters received an unrighteous compensation of 20 millions of pounds sterling, wrung from the oppressed poor of England, tended to sear the chafed consciences of the recipients, and render them more independent of their freed laborers. By their land monopoly they hold the rod of terror over them, ejecting them at pleasure. By their high tariff on the provisions, implements, lumber for building, &c., which the laborers chiefly need, they throw upon them nearly all the enormous expenses of the government, and determine whether they shall have houses to live in or no—or food to keep them from starving, taking care to hold them at the lowest living point. In order to reduce, by competition, their wages, they import coolies from the East Indies, who live upon almost nothing and go naked, subjecting these new comers to disabilities almost equivalent to chattelhood. Then come "vagrant laws" to prevent the coolies and the negroes, landless as they mostly are, from changing their locations. And at length, the actual aid of the British Government is procured, to assist the planters in the importation of more coolies! The result is, that the emancipated negroes, rising so rapidly at first to the dignity of men, are again deeply depressed, and a little more "tariff protection," at the good pleasure of the planters, either drives them from the Islands, if they can get away, or shuts them up to a starvation, at no distant day, and inevitable upon the slightest failure of crops, equal to that of the poor Irish. Already the "failure of the West India experiment of negro freedom" is chronicled upon the basis of statistics too appalling to be trifled with:—the sentiment gains currency—and their *own* petition for re-enslavement, in protection from starvation, becomes matter of confident prediction. Such is the picture presented to us. It may be overdrawn. Heaven grant it may be so. But it comes to us through the columns of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter, with evident tokens of editorial alarm! Whatever the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society may have once thought of the "one idea" of security from chattel slavery, it evidently has no place, practically, in their creed, now. For a long time past, the spectacle, in them, has been witnessed, of an Anti-Slavery Society devoting its attention, its funds, its publications, its memorials to the cabinet, its petitions to the Queen and to Parliament, almost exclusively, to *other* topics than those connected with chattel slavery. Land monopolies, vagrant acts, low prices of free labor, excessive and fraudulent importations of more laborers, and above all, iniquitous and murderous TARIFFS, these, with British abolitionists, are the topics of agitation, to-day, and the question is felt to be nothing less than whether or no, much, if anything, was gained by an act of emancipation that did not provide against land monopolies and tariffs. These are the facts. Let those examine and ponder them who will:—and having done so, let them shrink back again into their nut-shell contractions of the "one idea," if it affords room for their accommodation, and if they can. Others may laud the immaculate wisdom of British abolitionists, and follow in the steps they have been

compelled, with so much trepidation, to retrace. Without reproaching them for not seeing what, to them was yet unrevealed, we shall take care not to commit the same error over again, in the light of their dear-bought experience. To pay £20,000,000 sterling, beside the costs of the public agitation, to buy off the planters from mere *chattel* enslavement, and yet leave them at liberty to accomplish very nearly all the ends of chattelhood, by land monopolies and tariffs, was rather a hard bargain for honest John Bull. Brother Jonathan, it is to be hoped, will learn better than to be caught in a similar trap. "Abstractionists," as we are thought to be, we shall try to be better "practical business men" than to transact our business at such loose ends. If any one still asks of us whether it would not be better to abolish chattel slavery *first*, and leave tariffs and land monopolies to be settled *afterwards*, we refer them to the "sober second thought" of our British brethren, whose sagacity is commended to us, for their deliberative answer. Bought wit may be peculiarly valuable, but when already bought, at a vast price, before our own eyes, and offered to us for nothing, it seems a pity to spurn it, for the sake of buying it over again. It is hard teaching mankind true wisdom, even by man's experience, and if our English friends really think they were sagacious, (or if any of the lookers-on imagine so,) in doing their work up in such a manner as to have it to do over again, we can only say, there is no disputing with men's prejudices, any more than with their tastes. We shall venture to dissent. And, with all our supposed forgetfulness of the colored man, or under estimate of the slave question, in our attention to "*other matters*," we hope to settle that question on a better basis, and provide for the colored man of this country a nobler freedom than the exchange of chattel slavery for the least eligible form of serfdom, which, instead of giving to the laborer, (as the feudal system did,) a sort of subordinate yet inalienable interest in the land, dis-severs him not only from the land, but from the means of *possessing* land, that wrests even his slave-hut from him, and forbids, by means of tariffs, his constructing a hut of his own, that wreath him landless and reduces his wages to the lowest point above absolute starvation, and then fetters him with "vagrant acts," thus tempting him to sell back again, as a mockery, his birthright of nominal freedom for the mess of pottage that might save his life! Our "one idea" runs somewhat *beyond* the glorification of ourselves as philanthropists for the merit of shutting up our colored brother to the wretchedness of *such* a condition, under the abused and misunderstood names of emancipation and freedom. We venture to be so "imtractable and visionary" as to insist that it is not so much the name, the shape, the hue, or the construction of the yoke or the manacle, that excites our mingled commiseration and abhorrence, as the fact that inalienable *rights* are cloven down, that *humanity* bleeds, that *justice* is trampled in the mire, that *mercy* is exiled from among men, that the civil government that should protect the defenceless is made the iron instrument of the devourer. It is not words we ask for, but things:—precious, solid benefits, for our abused brethren;—not the mere empty names of them. We dare not dismiss them with an idle "Be ye warned, and be ye clothed"—nor ask them to cover their backs and fill their stomachs with the mere parchment of a nominal but deceptive emancipation. For *such* "abstractions"—abstruse as we are, we have not yet formed the taste. Nor does our hatred of chattelhood at all reconcile us to the alternative of seeing our brethren financially starved according to the methods of the latest and most fashionable school of "political economy."

#### "TOO MANY OBJECTS AT A TIME."

But to return to our argument. "Only a few will be found ready to unite on so many objects." How do you know that? When was the experiment tried? When was the question of abolishing all forms of oppression ever distinctly propounded to a free people? By what political party and when? But another answer is at hand. "So many objects?" How many! What do we propose but the simple restoration and protection of human rights? Another answer still. How comes it to pass that it is difficult to unite large numbers in the impartial and equal administration of justice? Whose fault is it that the number is so small? Rests there no responsibility on the promulgators of the miserable doctrine of the superior wisdom and merit of redressing only *one* class of wrongs and letting all the rest go unredressed? Suppose we try the effects of a more philosophical and Christian-like

course of teaching, and then see what men will do. Still further. To say that only a few will unite in the equal administration of justice to all men, is but saying that only a few are prepared to do right—that most men seek their own things, and not the things of others also—intoxicating and befooled with the great and forever “impracticable” “ONE IDEA” of “taking care of number one,” and of number one’s special favorites, whether white or colored, and letting every body else take care of themselves! This is a manifest and flagrant evil—a prejudice—a sin! And how is it to be cured? By the Colonizationist’s medicine for color-phobia? By gratification and participation? By declaring the prejudice forever invincible, even by Christianity herself? By baptizing the “one idea” of partiality with the specious name of heavenly wisdom? Is Leviathan to be thus tamed, and the world’s wrongs thus righted?

One answer more, for the special benefit of “practical business men!” Only a few, you say, will unite in so many measures of reform. Be it so. But how many will unite steadily and perseveringly, in only any one of them? What says the history of this country?—the history of Great Britain?—the history of the world? Our “mechanics and working men” at various times and under various names, have attempted to obtain a redress of their own wrongs, taking special care not to be so “visionary” as to start a “crusade for universal reform;” particularly to breach nothing unpopular—to make no mention of slavery or of the colored man. They have had conventions—organized parties—nominated candidates; but how many ever joined them? and what has been the result of their “one idea” sagacity? To ask the question is to answer it. What had others to do with the mere business of the “mechanics and working men?” “Landless men,” too, have had their agitations—“free renters”—“free suffrage” men—but how many have ever enrolled under their banners? “Anti-masons” with their “one idea”—what has become of them? Last, not least, the Abolitionists—the Liberty party—understood by the community, (notwithstanding their early protestations) and at last understood by perhaps a majority of themselves, to be a party of the “one idea” of the colored man’s emancipation from chattel slavery. Some said that the colored man’s right of suffrage was not included in it. The people of Rhode Island learned, at least, that the white man’s right of suffrage was not. And have large numbers joined the Abolitionists or the Liberty party? Is there the prospect of the speedy enrolment of the majority of the people in a party of only ONE MEASURE, and that measure touching, DIRECTLY, only upon a minority of the people?

And how has the ONE MEASURE policy succeeded elsewhere? The workings of it in England we have seen. And what is the history of this wide world’s perpetual oppressions, and unredressed wrongs? Is it not a history of the isolated, and hence ineffectual struggles of different clans and classes of men for redress? Was there ever a time when the united efforts of all whose rights were in any manner violated, in a particular nation, might not have procured universal relief? Never! it may well be presumed. But general relief is never obtained. And why? For no other reason but because men’s selfishness and narrow-mindedness prevents them from seeing that the violation of ONE man’s rights is the violation, prospectively, of ALL men’s rights. Each man, or narrow circle or class of men, adopts therefore, the very same sagacious “one idea” that is now commended to us, of minding only ONE class or description of rights, and letting all others take care of themselves! Each class or clan struggles on, by itself, and for itself, and never secures the common sympathies of other classes otherwise wronged. Thus it is ever, that the crafty few are enabled to control and oppress the disservered and deluded many. Just so far as the narrow “one idea” of isolated, partial, specific opposition to particular forms and instances of oppression and wrong is displaced by the all-comprehensive, generalized idea of opposition to ALL oppression and crime of all forms, and whoever may be the victim, just so far and no farther, do barbarism, anarchy and despotism give way to civilization, free government, equal laws, and the general security of all classes. And nothing, scarcely, is wanting, to complete the civilization, security, freedom, and equality of men so far at least as the action of civil government can either carry forward or indicate human progress, but the entire and final explosion of the wretched policy of attempting the redress of any men’s wrongs or

oppressions by any other process than that of redressing the wrongs of ALL the oppressed.

Just so far, then, as any people are from being ready to co-operate in a political association for the correction of ALL abuses in the government, for the repeal of ALL unjust laws, and for the equal and impartial protection of ALL MEN, just so far are they, of course, from being in a position in which the security of their rights can be possible.

The number of men, more or less, that are ready for such a co-operation, is the number of those who are in a position to maintain civil and religious freedom.

It might be useful, just at this point, to ask the advocates of the “one” measure policy, what ultimate end is to be secured, even by the success, such as it would be, of carrying into effect, even if it could be done, the ONE measure they are so intent on securing as to waive every thing else, for the sake of it? Some of them wish to secure one measure—some are intent on another, and so on; while they are not prepared to unite on them all. Let us see how the policy works and to what it amounts.

One little clique are intent on obtaining an abolition of the land monopoly. This is their “one idea,” and they will know nothing else. Who then are to co-operate with them, and how is their point to be gained? But we waive this. Suppose this obstacle overcome, and the measure secured—is the ultimate object gained? What was that object? What could it be? Anything short of security to civil and political freedom, with all the particular benefits of landholding? Nothing less. Well then. You have your land. But the unlimited power of tariff is over your heads, and whether you shall make the products of your land available, depends upon the good pleasure of the tariff mongers. Chattel slavery, too, is in the land, degrading free industry, and threatening to reduce all the laboring population to chattelhood. There is no security for liberty, here.

Let us vary the supposition. Instead of the success of the land agitation we have the success of the free-traders, with the land monopoly and human chattelhood unheeked. Where are we then? We could sell the products of lands, if we had them, and until McDuffie chattelhood could lay hold of us.

Vary the supposition again. Abolish chattel slavery and leave every thing else as it is. How much have we gained? The British West Indies tell the future story of our colored brethren. The condition of England, of Ireland, perhaps, or the map of continental Europe, might soon tell the story of the white northern man.

#### PARTIAL REFORMS AGAIN.

Or look into the movement of the reform car in England—lumbering along, and dragging heavily, one wheel at a time. Free trade first—free suffrage next—then free religion. Suppose either one of those points gained, without the rest—where were civil and political liberty, then?

If freedom—if security—if humanity—if justice—if mercy—be the grand objects to be secured, we gain little or nothing in the end by mere partial and disjointed reforms. We only exchange evils, in many cases, or vary their names—or lay down an old, worn-out, inefficient fetter, for a new and strong one. Like the fox in the fable, we only get rid of one swarm of flies that another and a more hungry swarm may succeed, and drink the last drop of blood in our veins. This is sober history, and not fiction. The African slave trade had its origin in the mistaken “one idea” of the good Las Casas in attempting to relieve the native Charibs—and now the coolie immigration (heaven only knows its future results) comes in, in like manner, as the successor of negro chattelhood! A world’s history of successive, ever changing, but never eradicated woes and outrages, is one running commentary, written in human sweat, tears and blood, upon the shallow philosophy of redressing one wrong at a time, leaving other wrongs to grow up in their places by the time the old has disappeared. Nothing short of unceasing watchfulness against all the incipient encroachments of despotism, in all its Protean shapes and Chameleon hues, can ever preserve, much less restore, the liberties of a people. What tyro in the school of politics has not learned by rote that time-tested maxim? And are we now to be trained, at this late day, in the tactics of withdrawing our attention, and the attention of the rising generation, from all the ten thousand devices and stealthy invasions of arbitrary power *except one*? And that one, too, so strongly entrenched behind the rest that not an arrow can reach it that is not sent through all of them?

Is the ever wakeful and inventive genius of aristocratic encroachment, crouching, spider-like, behind its ever weaving and changing webs of slimy deception and entanglement, to be even advertised before-hand that it is only against one particular and duly specified *form and texture* of his nets that we shall take any pains to arm and defend ourselves?—that it is not so much the fetter itself that we abominate, as the mere name, color or shape of it?—that American freemen do not object so much, after all, to a surrendry of their liberties, as to the terms, technicalities, and phrases in which the legal instrument of their degradation shall be couched?—that the pilot that shall only steer our bark clear from the rock of Scylla, on the one hand, has our hearty leave to wreck it among the shoals of Charybdis, on the other? Is this the much-vaunted wisdom of “practical men,” to which we are invited to listen? And can we, stumbling over the tomb-stones of all former republics, thus eagerly and thus early bury our own in the same cemetery with them? What free nation ever lost its liberties but under the miserable delusion that there was only *one* source of danger, which, duly provided against, all would be safe? By what means were the liberties of a free people ever subverted, but those from which their eyes were thus averted, putting them off their guard? “Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.” The demon of despotism never asked more than that the eye of its intended victims should be diverted from any one of its ten thousand entanglements! As the Arch Tempter was sure of his prey when he could but entrap our first parents into *one* transgression, so his bloody sway over the *political* world is perpetuated from age to age by the same device of gaining assent to but one form of oppression. One enemy admitted into the citadel (so Parley the Porter instructs even our children) all the rest are admitted by him at pleasure.

But, afraid all the hundred topics of political and legislative attention that press upon us, yearly, a political party, we are gravely told, can never master so many as the *twenty* that we have now presented to the public attention! A marvellous objection, truly, in a country where hundreds of new enactments are passed, every year, and all of them supposed to originate in the popular will, and to repose upon its pleasure! The people are incapable, are they? in such a country, to express their minds on twenty of the simplest and plainest of all political propositions,—unable to vote against twenty of the enormous legislative abuses that have been fastened upon them? We shall see whether they are! If their representatives in the National and State Legislatures can unite in the support of slavery, pro-slavery wars, land monopolies, bank monopolies, monopolies of all sorts—tariffs—post office extortions—army and navy establishments, and so on, what hinders that the people should unite in letting them know what they think of these wicked measures—these enormous exactions?

If a political party when in power, finds no difficulty in *acting* upon all these interminable and formidable twenty questions, and ten times twenty more on the top of them, what should hinder the party, if its leaders are honest men, from telling the people frankly beforehand, in respect to twenty prominent topics in which the first principles of civil government and the liberties of the people are vitally involved, what are their sentiments and intentions? Is it thought most prudent for a political party to “keep dark,” till after election, for fear the people should withhold their votes? Different politicians and different parties will answer this question in practice according to the objects they have in view. And whether the people will vote with a party that *avows* its objects, better than with one that *conceals* them, the event will prove, after the experiment has once been tried; and the result may depend very much upon whether the party avowing its intentions, reveals, by its specifications, its honest and intelligent desire to relieve the oppressions and secure the liberties of the people.

Nevertheless, it will be repeated that no party with twenty avowed objects inscribed on its banner, and *such* radical ones too, ever yet *did* succeed. This is true: for no such party before ever existed. And another thing is also true. No political party in this country, nor in Great Britain, nor on the continent of Europe, that we know of, ever yet *did* succeed. What is “success?”

Whigs and Tories, Radicals and Chartists, Jacobins and Royalists, Federalists, Democrats, National Republicans and modern Whigs—which of them was ever yet

known to *SUCCEED*? And where are the monuments of their success? Each in turn has held the offices, and rioted upon the spoils. But is this to be called success? Which of them have done up the *proper work* of a political party? Which of them have executed justice—relieved the oppressed—and secured the equal, inalienable rights of the people? *SUCCESS!* Look at France, under the Bourbons—under the Revolutionists—under Napoleon—and again under the Bourbons. Look at England, under her successive partizan administrations—“one idea” statesmen, all of them—and what is their success? Ask famishing Ireland—and fettered Scotland, and tithe-ridden England—ask groaning Manchester, and fainting Birmingham—ask mocked and cheated Jamaica and Antigua! Look at our own country, with its loud republican pretensions—with its unparalleled and gory despotisms!—its cotton-lords of the South—its cotton-lords of the East—its bank-lords of the cities—its soil-lords of the interior, and of the far west,—the slave-driver’s lash over the whole, and the slave’s chain connecting them all! And this is the “*SUCCESS*”—is it—of your sagacious political parties, with only “one” item in their creeds! All because the people—the dear people—are incompetent to understand and embrace more than one public measure at a time, or, at best but two or three! High time were it for the people to try what their capacities are—and whether the arithmetic, by which they examine the list of their grievances, can enable them to master the enumeration of twenty items! High time were it for our wizard political economists, with their tables and statistics, and “monthly prognostications,” to stretch their mathematical powers, and see whether they can grapple with the numeral twenty.

#### “DIVIDE AND CONQUER.”

And yet, the thrice-refuted fallacy, in a new guise, re-appears again, and asks, as sanctimoniously as ever, whether it is not the part of practical wisdom, to conquer one enemy at a time. To “divide and conquer,” say our advisers, is ever the maxim of victors. Yes! of victors whose triumphs are over virtue and freedom, but of none others. “Divide and conquer” is indeed the successful stratagem of the Grand Usurper, and he divides, that he may conquer his victims, by bidding each little, feeble, isolated squad of them that he can detach from their fellow-sufferers, persist in remaining men of “one idea,” and “take care of number one!” Thus he picks them up, one by one, and binds them fast in his toils. This “divide and conquer” maxim belongs, and always is at home, on the side of the wrong-doer—the Destroyer! But when did ever the Great Deliverer and Redeemer of men bid his good soldiers “divide and conquer” the powers of darkness, by warring with only one vice at a time? When did he ever set an example of such tactics? In what part of his manual of discipline do we find such a direction? Whoever would wage war with human virtue and freedom must attack one detachment at a time, but whoever would assail human vices and despotisms must put on the whole armor, and give battle to the whole of them at once.

“Divide and conquer” the elements of aristocracy, usurpation and oppression in our land! How are you going at work to divide them? You may point your guns at only one of them, if you please; but can you, by that process, divide the one from the other? Has not the experiment been sufficiently tried? Was not the Slave Power singled out fourteen years ago, as the distinct and sole object of attack? Did any of us then dream of the connection between it and all the other aristocracies of the country, whether in Church or State, as that fact now stands revealed? But, was the first broadside poured into the enemy we had selected, without rousing instantly to its succor whatever in commercial, political and ecclesiastical life is susceptible of the most latent affinity to despotism? Have we not, to the present moment, with few exceptions, persisted in the same policy of letting them all *one*, and concentrating our forces against nothing but slavery itself? And what is the result? *Have* we divided and conquered? Is there the least sign or prospect of a *division* between the Slave Power and the aristocracies supporting it? Is not the alliance between them growing closer, and more systematic continually? Has there ever been a time in which all the minor aristocracies of the country were more efficient in the service of the Slave Power, more perfectly under its control, than at present? On this point, we cite the testimony of those among us who seem least inclined to give up the ex-

periment of an isolated warfare. Of them we ask, what is the present aspect of things in this respect? Let Leavitt's veteran Emancipator tell the story of New England's Webster traversing the whole South to draw still closer the alliance between the Giant Aristocracy of the country and one of the next powerful ones. And on whose errand has the mighty "expounder" gone that pilgrimage to the land of fetters? Ask the same truthful witness, and mark the response! Has Massachusetts deputed her gifted Senator to bow down thus basely to the kidnapper of her free citizens—the expulsionist of her ambassadors, sent for redress? No! For thus deposes the witness! Not Massachusetts, but her "CORROX LORDS," who appoint her Senators, and who control them at pleasure, and see that they do their royal bidding—the "cotton lords of Massachusetts" have bound Massachusetts herself, and her once free sons, hand and foot, and cast them, an ignoble offering, at the feet of the Slave Power! It is *thus* that we "divide" to conquer, under the workings of our "great one idea,"—the "idea" of fighting the Slave Power out of the reach of our rifles, with our handstied by our own "cotton lords" in the employ of the Slave Power—our "cotton lords" with whom we are to dwell amicably at home on our own soil, where we might reach them if we would—but must not, because "the Liberty party was organized for only one distinct object," and our "one idea" of fighting the Slave Power does not include the idea of breaking from our own wrists the green withes which our "cotton lords," at the bidding of slavery, have seen fit to put upon our hands!—our "cotton lords" enthroned upon "THE TARIFF AS IT IS" which our "one idea" forbids us to disturb—nay, stranger still, impels us to support! If such be the wisdom of "practical business men, who take the world as it is," (aye, and leave it as they find it!) may we not venture, by way of experiment, to vary the monotony, by trying the "impracticable abstractionists," who are "visionary" enough to believe in the connection between moral causes and their effects—the necessity of adhering to fundamental principles in order to secure beneficial practical results—who are "fanatical" enough to believe in moral and political science, and that no political action can be better than sheer quackery, that does not implicitly and undeviatingly follow and reduce to universal practice, its foundation *truths*?

"Divide": the combined elements of aristocratic arrogance and misrule, as they are exhibited in the manifold monopolies and class legislations of this country, all instinctively and of absolute moral necessity clinging round the footstool of the Slave Power, as inseparable from it as the various organs of the human body are from the man himself—wielded by it as surely and as instinctively as the heart sends out its supplies of blood, or as the nerves or muscles move the arms! Sooner think of "dividing" asunder the elements of the earth's atmosphere, or separating the light of the sun from its warmth! The thing cannot be. There is not an aristocratic element, arrangement, or organization in the land, that is not, in a sense, part and parcel of the slave system. Of this fact our "one idea" brethren seem to be partly aware, when they tell us, as they sometimes do, that if chattel slavery were but first removed, all other usurpations and abuses would fall to the ground. The "IF" is the formidable part of the statement. The problem is, how to get at the citadel of slavery without disturbing its entrenchments. After all, it is not true that the removal of one abuse, even the greatest of them, ensures the removal of all the others. This we have already shown, and that when the effort is not directed to the overthrow of ALL oppressions, a new abuse, stepping into the place of the old, inherits its power. In all countries, some ONE master despotism embraces within its folds all the minor ones. In ours chattel slavery has the supremacy, and while it lives all the others are its subalterns. Every effective blow struck at either of them, weakens all the rest, and a state of *neutrality* towards the subordinate disqualifies from an assault upon the centre. Common sense and experience, no less than sound philosophy and Christian ethics, assure us of the fallacy of attempting the removal of any great, systematic and comprehensive form of oppression, without coming in collision with the minor oppressions, whether few or many, connected with it and supporting it. A political party, commissioned to the task of abolishing American slavery, yet restricted by its own terms of organization from abolishing the tariff from which the slave system derives its revenue, or from touching any of the other connected forms of aristocracy and oppression wielded by it, must be in a posi-

tion like that of Shakspeare's Jew Shylock, fully authorized to cut out his pound of flesh, according to the bond, from any part of the body of the merchant of Venice he pleased, but most rigorously prohibited, at the same time, under the severest penalties, from shedding a single drop of his blood! It is like an invading army, entering the territory of the enemy, fully pledged to bear meekly in silence all the volleys of musketry or heavier ordnance that may be poured upon it from "minor" detachments, and mere *allies* of the hostile monarch, without returning upon them a single shot, until, in the use of these tactics, it can first reach the distant capital of the Emperor himself, and storm his imperial palace; fully consoled with the assurance that "IF" the reigning monarch can thus be first captured, and the royal dynasty changed, all the remote portions of the empire and its minor forts and detachments will be conquered of course. When even "practical" men indulge in such day dreams and employ such rhetoric, it is time to question whether wisdom shall die with them, and whether we may not, without arrogance, open our own eyes, and use our own intellects. And if we cannot make our minds to give battle to as many as *twenty* confederated battalions, or *fifty* if need be, in order to accomplish our object—it might be as well to retire. To commence a campaign against an enemy of such varied resources, and numerous and powerful allies, *without counting the cost*, and proportioning our efforts and plans to our task, is to invite speedy discomfiture and defeat.

The policy we repudiate might have been pardonable, because plausible, at first sight, a few years ago, when we hoped to grapple at once and directly with the Slave Power, and decide the contest in a single battle—in our ignorance, at that time, of the extent of his territory and the amount and disposition of his forces. But since the ground has been surveyed, and we are acquainted with his fortified posts, it is worse than folly to persist in acting and arguing as though we were ignorant of the facts. We do know, we cannot help knowing, that all the aristocracies in the land are the strong holds of American Slavery! How far short, then, is it, of treason to liberty and the slave, to persist in our stupid neutrality in respect to them? When we put our finger upon its "bulwarks," whether in Church or State, and yet spare them, nay, even support and cling to them—is it not high time either to change our *tactics*, or relinquish our *professions*? And is it not time for us to speak out the whole truth plainly to one another and to the world? If Abolitionists and if Liberty party men love their wool tariffs, their monopolies, their class legislations, their sects and their parties, too well to abandon them for the sake of liberty and the slave, let them frankly confess the fact and retire, leaving the tide of aristocratic encroachment to roll over them, and bequeathing golden fetters to their sons. But let them not think to win the inheritance of liberty without paying the just price—nor to repel the insidious despot while drinking of his cups and fingering his bribes. And let them not imagine that posterity and the world will be ignorant—though they may hide it from themselves—that they wanted the magnanimity, the self-denial, the heroism, the consistency, the integrity, the singleness of purpose, to carry out successfully the noble purposes they had conceived.

Are we severe in saying this? How can we say less—at least to those among us who admit (and who can help knowing it?) that the Slave power entrenches *itself* in the strongholds we have designated, and yet refuse to assail him there?—that the objects we propose are right and just in themselves, in accordance with the principles they have espoused, with natural and divinely established laws and yet decline giving them their support? The class of persons now described (and it is a numerous one) cannot plead, whatever others do, their ignorance or their scruples, in respect to the justice of our cause.

#### TIME FOR DEFINITIVE ACTION.

To those who profess a full agreement with our views, but who think the time for definitive action, in the present shape, has not yet arrived, we have a word further to say. If our principles are sound—if our measures growing out of them be just, when, if not now, is the time for reducing them to practice? Half the nation, perhaps, would admit them to be right "in the abstract." Is it not holding the truth in unrighteousness? to do as they do? And how much should we differ from them, if we longer deferred? Have we not given due notice two years ago, of our convictions and intentions? Have we not done what we could while in that position, to disseminate our views? Is not the time long enough to reflect—to re-examine—to invite a discussion of our proposed measures—



to see if any good reasons could be produced against them—to ask our associates to go along with us? If we longer deferred, how could we be true to our professions? To go into a Presidential nomination with those a majority of whom we knew were not prepared to take the only course that could satisfy our consciences, would be to give up our principles, to smother our convictions, to do violence to our sense of the right. Could we have gained access, with our views, to the entire Liberty Party, through their presses, our position might have been different, but the discussion, to any extent, has not appeared in them. So far from being precipitate, we have erred in being too tardy. Considerable numbers, in other States, who early espoused our views, have inferred, from our long waiting, that we had waived our scruples, and given up our measures. To defer longer would be to justify such conclusions. The present state of all the parties, the Liberty party in particular, indicates a crisis admitting of no further delay. We have not moved without good counsel. The deliberate and truly sagacious, and ever trusty statesman, JAMES G. BIRNEY, was among the first, if not the very first, to suggest the necessity of this present Convention, at this crisis.

Whether few or many will go with us at present, we do not stop to inquire. Very few were ready to go into a Liberty party when the movement first commenced. We know that large and increasing numbers sympathise more or less with us, and are waiting for us to move. It will be found to be no local sentiment, and no temporary one. We have learned to estimate the value of political parties less by their numbers, than by the purity of their intentions, the nobility of their objects, the soundness of their principles, the comprehensiveness yet discrimination of their views, the deliberative wisdom and righteousness of their measures, the inflexibility of their purpose, and the integrity of their action. Give us these, and we are content. Give us seven thousand men in this great nation, who will hold up, by their votes and their teachings, the great fundamental principles and objects of civil government, as God and nature have established them, and we are fully persuaded that it will be the most powerful political party in the nation or in the world. It will be a great teacher of the long neglected but vitally important sciences of civil government, of political morality, of political economy. The growth of such a party might not be rapid, but it would be sound. It would insensibly mould other parties into an approximation towards its standard, not simply nor chiefly by the base motives of fear and rivalry, but more by the nobler force of conscientious conviction. If it never elected a candidate (and how many has the Liberty party elected?) its control over the other parties might abolish slavery and other monopolies. If the Liberty party has done any thing (and who doubts it?) it has been chiefly in this way. When "Wilmot provisos," and similar indications marked the approach of the community at large to the Liberty party's actual standard, the true wisdom of that party and its leaders would have been—instead of half inviting a compromise, dividing the difference between them—to have elevated and more clearly defined its own standard, in accordance with its professed principles—its early promises, and the standard of IMMUTABLE RIGHT. Had she manifested the disposition to do this, this present convention would not have been needed. As it is, whatever the Liberty party may do, we must assume the responsibility for ourselves and for those who may cooperate with us, of erecting that standard. EXCELSIOR (higher—still higher) is our motto. We beckon not only the Liberty party, but the "Wilmot proviso" men, and all other seekers after truth, to come up and stand with us on a higher, a broader, a firmer foundation.

#### CONCLUSION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES—ESPECIALLY OF THE NON-SLAVEHOLDING STATES:—We have shaped the preceding argument and appeal more directly for our coadjutors, hitherto, in the Liberty party, but we design it, substantially, for you all. We have no interest distinct from yours—and, as already expressed, we seek no other political object than the equal protection of the equal rights of all. The greater part of you, hitherto, have not co-operated in the measures we have employed, for the removal of American slavery. But you, as well as we, have been gaining important information within the last fourteen years. You have disputed—and on various grounds—the wisdom of our anti-slavery measures. We claim not to have been infallible. This document shows that we are not averse to making improvements upon our plans of operation, when we can discover a good reason for so doing. So many measures for abolish-

ing slavery have been suggested, that some of them ought to succeed. We offer you, in some particulars, a new platform, to-day. We do not lower down any of our anti-slavery demands. We repeat them still more distinctly, and call for still stronger measures. We began with asking Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. We now demand its abolition throughout the United States, in conformity with the constitutional guaranty of a republican government to every State in this Union! The demands of Abolitionists rise higher and higher, and must be trumpeted louder and louder, till the nuisance is abated. Of the abominations and cruelties of the system—of its daring impieties—of its encroachments upon republican liberty—of its heavy exactions upon the free States—of its foul blot on our national character—of its arrogant and insatiable demands—we cannot stop to speak on the present occasion, nor is it needful. The community at large are coming to understand all this, now, better than Abolitionists themselves did, when they commenced agitating the subject. The North is brought to a position of reflection and deliberation. To tell you that your liberties are not safe while the slave system continues, is to tell you what most of you already know. We have a right to take it for granted that you have pondered these things. Let us inquire of you, then, whether you are not ready to act, in some way—and if so, whether the plan we propose is not the right and the feasible one.

While we do not lower down, but elevate our standard of anti-slavery political action, as hitherto urged by the Liberty party, we take the additional and important step of defining our position, (in strict accordance with our principles) on all the prominent political questions of the day. We offer you a connected and consistent system of political economy—of political action. Though we have said that we will not wait for numbers—that we value numbers less than truth and integrity—that a small party adhering to the whole truth, is more powerful for good than a great party, affirming but half the truth, or listening to unrighteous compromise—we nevertheless earnestly solicit the co-operation of all men, in that which we firmly believe to be in accordance with the right and the true. And we cherish strong hopes that when our principles and measures come to be understood, we shall become a party, strong in numbers as well as strong in the truth. Why should it not be so? Are we not in the midst of a republican people? Or have we mistaken the republican and progressive tendencies of the age?

We count it no arrogance to say, then, that we offer to you the privilege of co-operation in the only true, thorough, consistent, whole souled and even footed democratic party in the country, or in the world—the only party distinctly and definitely proposing, as a practical reality, the equal and impartial protection of the equal rights of all men—the opponent of all oppression, the vindicator of all the wronged—the only party that is opposed to all the monopolies, class legislations and aristocracies now existing or that may exist.

In asking you to assist us in vindicating the claims of the oppressed colored man, whose wrongs, being most grievous, demand a commensurate prominence, we do not ask you to stand neutral or non-committal, in your political activity, and in your votes, in respect to the wrongs, greater or smaller, of any other class of men. We ask your sympathy with the colored man, not for his color, but because he is a man, and your special sympathy because his incomparable wrongs demand proportionate sympathy and aid. We commend to you no cutaneous democracy, vociferous for the liberty of white men, and forging fetters for colored men. On the other hand, we ask not your co-operation in any Federal, or National Republican, or Whig party, the aristocratic instincts of whose leaders are best concealed or atoned for, by profuse professions of philanthropy for the colored man. In the hands of such a democracy the liberties of the white man are not safer than those of the colored man. In the hands of their antagonists, of various names, the liberties of the colored man are equally insecure. Time, that tests all things, has sufficiently recorded these facts.

As a political party, we will hold no truce with a Northern Aristocracy for the purpose of checkmating the Southern one. We will take no shelter under the wing of a Southern aristocracy, from the spreading branches of a Northern one. Whether they choose to measure swords with each other, as rivals, as they sometimes do—or mutually court and strengthen each other, as at present inclining to do,—we will wage an uncompromising and exterminating warfare with each, so long as either of them show their heads in the field, not forget-

ting to watch after them, if they retire. So far from dreading their open alliance with each other, and therefore attempting to conciliate, or avoid provoking either, we hurl open defiance at both of them—"the cotton lords" of the South, "the cotton lords of the North," and all the other incipient aristocracies of the country, few in numbers as we now are, nothing doubting and most earnestly desiring their visible and organized co-operation together, at no distant day. When all the elements of aristocracy on the one hand, and of true democracy on the other, shall thus find their latent affinities and marshal their forces, we shall have "an open field and fair play," and we ask nothing more. Instead of staving off the crisis, we will hasten it, if we can.

To those of our fellow-citizens who seek the redress of specific wrongs, we offer co-operation, on the basis we have laid down. Our assistance they *have*, of course, in the very principles of action we have espoused. To *avail* themselves of our aid, they have only to follow the golden rule of doing to others as they would have others do to them—protecting other men's rights, as they would have other men to protect theirs.

And—let us be distinctly understood. To no men, or class of men, upon any unprincipled basis of "log rolling," have we any offers to make—nor can we receive any. But to all men, and to all classes of men, who have any real wrongs to be redressed, or threatened rights to be secured, we tender, now, and henceforward, what ver of open handed and honest aid we can impart. We ask not who they are that are wronged—how few, how many—how popular, how unpopular—how rich, how poor—how black, how white—how orthodox, how heterodox—whether they vote with our party or vote against it, or not at all, but simply *whether* they are wronged, what redress *justice* requires—what *security* the case needs.

Are we taunted with our *twenty* proposed measures—mistaken for so many items of our one creed of equal rights? We answer, we are ready to swell the twenty to two hundred, whenever so many forms of oppression may need redress—equally ready to reduce them to two, or to none at all, when the occasion shall cease. Show us, at any time, which of our measures is wrong, and we will abandon it. Show us any other measure that justice requires, and we will add it. We trust to our immutable principles to give us *STABILITY*, by our adherence to them. The ever onward occurrences and exigencies of human society, upon which our principles of equality and rectitude are to operate, will furnish us with all we want, of *adaptation and progress*.

With this statement—fellow citizens—of our principles—our measures and our objects, we invite your co-operation. Having organized with a view to the *benefit* of all, we ask for the *assistance* of all. Even those whose present course and position obliges us to oppose them, have no other security for their *own* rights, for the rights of their children, than the establishment and perpetuity of a just government. Our opposition to their *measures* involves no hostility to their *persons*. As a party for the whole, we seek to become the party of the whole—to merge *all* party in the common support by all, of the *rights* of all—that each may feel himself secure because he sees all others secure.

If any other exposition of our principles and our views of national policy are needed, we can furnish it in the announcement of the names of the candidates we have selected to stand at the head of the Federal Government. We nominate GERRIT SMITH, of the State of New-York, for President, and ELIHU BURRITT, of Massachusetts, for Vice President, of the United States.

## GERRIT SMITH AND THE PRESIDENCY.

PETERBORO, May 8, 1847.

To the Albany Patriot:

I am receiving letters, which ask me to consent to be a candidate for the Presidency of the United States. Liberty party newspapers are canvassing my merits for the office. From all directions, I am remonstrated with for declining to take evil office.

To save my own time, and the time of others, let me say in this public manner, once for all, that I have never held office: have never been in circumstances to hold it: and am not now in circumstances to hold it.

A few words of explanation may have the effect to correct and prevent misapprehensions; and to shelter me from the charge of being unreasonable, self-indulgent, stubborn, in my unwillingness to take office.

I had scarcely come to manhood, ere the care of my father's very large landed property devolved on me. Much still remains for me to do, before I shall be entirely released from this burden; and, if ever I shall be in circumstances to take office, it will not be until after such release. Moreover, I am not, and it is, now, too late for me ever to be qualified for the post of a statesman. So absorbed have I been with the cares of property, and so seldom have my thoughts been allowed to travel beyond the range of these cares, that the information, which I have picked up, is quite too scanty and piecemeal to serve me in situations, which call for the systematic studies and extensive knowledge of the statesman. Again, I have, the present spring, completed the fiftieth year of my life. Hence, my habits—the habits of a private and quite secluded life—are too fixed to make it easy, or perhaps even possible, so far to overcome their repugnance to public life, as to admit of my being at all contented, or at all useful in it.

I need say no more to justify my conclusion, that it is not my duty to go into public life. Were I, however, qualified for the chief magistracy of the nation; and were I the only person, in whose nomination to it, the friends of freedom could agree; I admit, that the Liberty party, my circumstances to the contrary notwithstanding, would be guilty, neither of great unreasonableness, nor of great unkindness, should it make me its candidate. But, inasmuch, as these suppositions are not founded in truth—inasmuch, as I am not fit for the office, and inasmuch as the Liberty party can unite upon any one of the dozen noble men, who are fit for it—it follows, that it

would be neither kindness to myself, nor justice and advantage to its cause, for the Liberty party to put me in nomination. Perhaps, however, there are persons who, notwithstanding what I have here written, will think, that I should be the Liberty party candidate for the presidency. Some of them may say, that my nomination, since it would not result in my getting one vote in thirty, much less in my election, would be a mere matter of form, and liable to none of my objections to taking office. My reply to them would be, that a person has no right to accept a nomination to office, unless he is willing to accept the office also; for, in the most improbable case, the nomination may, *possibly*, result in election. Others of them may say, that the reasons which I avow for declining the nomination in question, are insufficient. But, if, in addition to these reasons, it should be foreseen, that a considerable share of the members of the Liberty party would refuse to vote for me, who of its members would, in such case, desire my nomination? Now there is no doubt, that many of this party would strenuously oppose my nomination, were they to know to what uses I would, if elected, put the office, and the influence of the office, of President of the United States. Candor requires me to acknowledge some of the offensive things, which I would do, or attempt to do, were I, this day, made President of the United States. Happily, all these things are not offensive to the Liberty party. Happily, a considerable portion of it agrees with me in all these things. Happily, too, one or two of these things are welcome to a majority of the American people. Nevertheless, to every one of them there is determined and implacable opposition. When I shall have acknowledged what these offensive things are, even those members of the Liberty party, who are now most partial to my nomination, will no longer urge the expediency of making it.

1st. I would, so far as I had the power, put an immediate end to our war with Mexico. This is the most diabolical of all wars. It is a war against a weak, ignorant, distracted, unoffending people, whom it is the special duty of this nation to help and cherish—not to crush and destroy. It is, moreover, a war, springing, directly and confessedly, from our national policy of extending slavery. I would have the American people fall upon their knees to seek from God and from Mexico, forgiveness for murdering her men, women and children. I would have them amply remunerate Mexico for their destruc-

tion of her property. I would have them take none of her territory, unless obtained by fair purchase and free cession. Texas, of which we so basely and lyingly robbed Mexico, I would have returned to her, or her price for it fully and cheerfully paid.

2d. I would have our army, navy, and whole military system, broken up; and, by an example, so impressive and controlling, have all nations persuaded, that it is high time for men to cease to be wolves and tigers; and high time for them to spread over this blood-stained earth the peace of Heaven, in exchange for the wars of hell.

3d. I would have all restrictions on commercial intercourse abolished. I would listen to no calculations of their tendency to enrich and strengthen us. It would be enough to determine my duty in respect to them, to know, that they alienate nation from nation; break up the oneness of the human family; and make enemies and strangers to each other of those, who should recognize friends and brothers in each other.

4th. I would have the government sustained by direct taxation: for, never, shall we have either an honest or a frugal government, until its expenditures are drawn directly from the pockets of the people. Our present war would never have been, had the people been required to make direct payment for the cost of it. Again, to support government by a tariff, is to favor and exempt the rich, at the expense of wronging and oppressing the poor. I close, under this head, with the remark, that the motive for continuing American slavery would be much weakened by the substitution of direct for indirect taxation.

5th. Instead of the yearly and wicked waste of many millions upon fortifications, vessels of war, and other means of human slaughter, I would have government make the most liberal expenditures on light-houses, harbors, navigable streams, and in all other constitutional ways for protecting life, and promoting the interests of commerce.

6th. Although opposed to wars, I would have government prompt to put down and punish mobs and insurrections. In those cases, where the insurrections consist in the rising of oppressors to, conquer the every-where rightful attempt of the oppressed to regain their liberty, I would have the punishment of the insurgents so signal and effectual, that, instead of being disposed to repeat their crime, they would be glad to let the oppressed go free.

7th. The guaranties for slavery in the federal Constitution, which are so much talked of, I do not see. In my eye, that instrument is clearly anti-slavery; and I would have it brought into the widest, sternest, deadliest war against slavery.

8th. Land monopoly, whether on the part of the government or of individuals, I would disfavor. Hence, I would have the public lands thrown open to actual settlers, free of cost. I would add, under this head, that every man's home should be inalienable, except with his own consent.

9th. I would have no sympathy with the policy, which would exclude foreign-born citizens from the ballot-box, for I hold political rights to be natural and absolute rights. I admit, that our foreign-born citizens generally vote wrong. This, however, is the effect of bad example. Did our native-born citizens vote right, the foreigners, who make our country their home, would also vote right. Had our native-born citizens voted for "Birney the Just," instead of for man-thieves, our foreign-born citizens would have done likewise.

10th. I would regard no man as fit to hold office under a republican government, who is so ignorant, or so contemptuous of the great distinctive fundamental principle of such government, as to make a man's right to vote turn on the amount or kind of his property, or on the color of his skin.

11th. I would give office to a slaveholder, no sooner than to any other pirate. Again, I would give office to the person, who would give office to a slaveholder, no sooner than I would give it to the person, who would give it to any other pirate. Slaveholding would soon cease to be reputable—would soon cease to be—were slaveholders excluded from civil office. It is no wonder, that it is now reputable. Were we to make civil rulers of sheep-thieves and horse-thieves, as freely as we do of man-thieves, sheep-stealing and horse-stealing would be as reputable among us, as man-stealing.

12th. I would give office to no persons, who are in favor of licensing the traffic in intoxicating drinks. I would sooner consent to give it to persons, who are in favor of licensing gaming-houses and brothels; for the gaming-houses and brothels of a country are, compared with its

drinking-houses and dram-shops, harmless. All governments owe it to their subjects to protect them from the wide-spread wretchedness and unutterable ruin inflicted by drinking-houses and dram-shops;—and republican governments must, as they would protect themselves—as they would save their very existence, suppress these nuisances. A despotic government may exist, notwithstanding the prevalence of drunkenness among its subjects. It may, even, be the safer, the greater such prevalence. But, it is not so with a republic. That falls, as its subjects fall from virtue and sobriety. The people of this land are not permitted to choose Rum and a Republic. Their choice must be Rum or a Republic.

In the towns of this State, as you are aware, the supervisor and the justices of the peace compose the board of excise. It is among my most pleasant reflections, that I never voted for a person for supervisor or for justice of the peace, without first ascertaining, that he was opposed to licensing the sale of intoxicating drinks.

13th. There are many wise and good men in secret societies. I should be sorry to refuse them office. Once, I would not have done so. But now I would. Concealment and darkness are congenial to a despotic government; but the genius of republicanism demands openness and light. The man, who is entitled to office, under a republican government, must let himself be known—must, to use a low phrase, "show his hand." But, emphatically true is it, that the man, who belongs to a secret society, is a man, who, to use another low phrase, "keeps dark." We cannot know him. We cannot determine, whether he is for or against us—for or against the interests of his nation and his race—for we are ignorant to what the oaths of his secret society have bound him.

Finally, were I President of the United States, I would act upon the never-to-be-shaken conviction, that "RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION;" and that this nation, now in a "galloping consumption;" because of its unrighteousness, can be saved only by its speedy return to righteousness. The profane, unprincipled, and base, I would, therefore, to my utmost ability, thrust out, and keep out, of places of power and trust.

May God hasten that truly "good time," when the chief magistrate of every nation shall have a heart to say, in the words of the chief magistrate of Israel:

"I WILL NOT KNOW A WICKED PERSON. MINE EYE SHALL BE UPON THE FAITHFUL OF THE LAND, THAT THEY MAY DWELL WITH ME; HE THAT WALKETH IN A PERFECT WAY, HE SHALL SERVE ME."

GERRIT SMITH.

PETERBORO, July 3d, 1847.

To the Editor of the Liberty Press:

On the right hand and on the left, I am urged "to decline the nomination," with which the Macedon Convention has honored me. Can you inform me what are the specific things which they, who thus urge me, would have me do?

1st. Am I to say, that people shall not vote for me? But would not people be very apt to do as they please, even though I should be arrogant and haughty enough to say, that they shall not?

2d. Am I to say, that I disapprove of the nomination? But, I said so in advance of the nomination, and of the holding of the Convention—said so, most emphatically—and yet, it availed nothing. The Convention were fully aware of my strong dislike to taking civil office. Moreover, the causes of this dislike, and my reasons why they should not put me in nomination, were spread out in printed detail before them. Nevertheless, they put me in nomination; and, in doing so, took upon themselves all, and left upon me none, of the responsibility and blame of what they did.

3d. Am I to say, that, if elected, I would not accept the office? But, this I cannot say: for, I would accept it. No objections on the score of tastes and habits—no private considerations, whatever—would induce me to forego such an opportunity to promote the honor of God and the good of my fellow men. It was not, however, for the purpose of electing me, that I was put in nomination. The party which put me in nomination, will, doubtless, exceed its highest anticipations of its growing numbers, &c. among the millions of votes cast for President, it shall be able to cast twenty, or even ten thousand.

4th. Am I to scorn the nomination, because it was not a Convention of the Liberty party from which it came? But that would be a piece of unreasonableness, intolerance, and littleness, of which I could not permit myself to be guilty. A member of the Liberty party should welcome, and, if he have the soul of his high calling

will welcome, a nomination at the hands of any other party more than at the hands of his own. If allowed to see even the Whigs and Democrats take their candidates from his party, he should and will rejoice with all his heart.

5th. Am I to turn contemptuously from the nomination, because the new party, which gave it to me, is made up, in part, of seceders from the Liberty party? I answer, that members of the Liberty party have the right to withdraw from it—as good right as the members of other parties have to withdraw from their parties; and, that I trust, there is no element of tyranny or popery in the Liberty party to forbid the exercise of this right. Emphatically true is it, that members of a party have the right to secede from it, when the object of the secession is to form a better party than that they left. Now, much as I love the Liberty party, and tenaciously as I cling to it, I am obliged to confess, that the "Liberty League" is a better one; and that it is your and my duty to labor to bring up the Liberty party to the high, everywhere open, and honorable ground occupied by this new party. To imitate this new party—not to disparage and condemn it—is the appropriate work of the Liberty party. And such is my persuasion of the discernment and integrity of the Liberty party, that, I believe, it will promptly enter upon this work—will promptly yield to the demands of developing truth. By so doing, it will effectually call back those, who have left it; and they will return, accompanied by thousands of anti-slavery free-trade men, peace men, land reformers, &c., who will precede, by only a little space, tens, and, perhaps, hundreds of thousands of persons of like faith. The Liberty party, if it shall be so true to itself, as to carry out, in all justly called for directions, its great one idea of the equal rights of all men, will be no loser, but on the contrary, a great gainer by the organization of the Liberty League. Thus true to itself, it would quickly absorb this bold and honest little pioneer. Thus true to itself, the nominations made by the Liberty League would get no votes; and those to be made by the Liberty party would get double the number of votes ever yet obtained by Liberty party candidates. The Liberty party has the power to turn to its own candidates every vote which now tends to Elihu Burritt and myself. Happy, thrice happy, if it shall be so wise, as to avail itself of this power. Even Brother Burritt and I, clean shorn of our honors, as we should thereby be, would, nevertheless, be quite too joyful in the *cause* of our loss, to make the loss itself the subject of very deep or protracted sorrows.

But, I shall be told, that the Liberty party was organi-

zed for only one purpose—that of contributing to overthrow chattel slavery. I admit it. I always contend for this interpretation. At the same time, I yield to the claims of candor, and admit, that they, who take opposite ground, find no little authority for it in several, and among them, the earliest National Conventions of the Liberty party. I admit, I say, that the Liberty party was organized for nothing else than to war on chattel slavery. It is, however, but justice to me, for those, who quote this admission, to couple with it, as I so frequently do, the declaration, that the principle, in the light of which the Liberty party was organized, and by the force of which it undertook to accomplish its object, is THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF ALL MEN. But who can doubt, that this principle points to free trade, land limitation, &c., &c., as well as to exemption from chattel slavery? And why should not the Liberty party follow all these pointings? There was reason why it should not, so long as it regarded itself as a temporary party, and believed that, ere long, the great political parties would supersede it by inscribing the abolition of chattel slavery upon their banners. But, for years now, the Liberty party has seen, that these parties are past all cure, all hope, and that it must regard itself as a permanent party. How then can it act rationally, whilst it fails to qualify itself for the intelligent administration of government, and the proper discharge of all the duties of government? And how can it become thus qualified, if it refuse to give its attention to, and to pass upon the merits of the various interests which either come within, or seek to come within, the circle of governmental care?

That the equal rights of all men has, from the first, been the avowed principle of action of the Liberty party, is not to be denied. This is its standing boast. This is expressed in its addresses and resolutions, and newspapers, every year and every month. This is not the principle of action with British Abolitionists. But, it is with American. British Abolitionists can cherish some forms of oppression, whilst they war upon others—can deliver some victims of oppression, and be pitiless toward others. But American Abolitionists go for abolishing all the forms and delivering all the subjects of oppression.

A word for those, who think, that the Liberty party should never change its action, and I have done. The party, which refuses to respect the changes in its circumstances, and to obey the law of progress, may excel all other parties in pride of consistency and in stupidity—but it will excel them in nothing more valuable.

GERRIT SMITH.

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