

Boston June 1839

Mr.

Dear Sir,

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At a meeting in the Marlboro Chapel, Hall No. 1, in this city on the 29th of May, the organization of the "Massachusetts Abolition Society" was completed by the appointment of a list of officers which includes your name as a

The object of this note is to inquire if you will accept of this appointment & permit us to publish your name in connection with our proceedings & address to the public. This document will be ready for the press next Wednesday, June 19th. Your reply previous to that time, or as soon after as may be, will be deemed a special favor. You, of course, will not be responsible for the sentiments of the Address, as it will go forth as the address of the Executive Committee. We desire your name therefore only for the office specified, & for such general & indirect responsibility as grows out of it.

I refer you to the Massachusetts Abolitionist of the 6th inst. for a development of the principles & objects of the society, & the motives that have led to its organization. In addition to the statements there made, it may be well to say, that while the new society admits all "persons" to membership, it differs from the old, in the following particulars—(1) All public meetings of the society are to be for addresses &c. (2) All business of the society is to be transacted in business meetings, & not before a public promiscuous assembly. (3) The business meetings are to be constituted of the officers & agents of the society & such gentlemen as may be sent as delegates from auxiliary societies. (4) Representation from auxiliaries is limited to a definite ratio, all societies being entitled to one delegate for every twenty five members, & to one delegate, whatever their number of members. This arrangement, you perceive, while it admits all to membership, prevents the believers in the doctrine of "Woman's Rights" as it is termed, from embarrassing the society with that question, gives all local societies a fair & equal voice in the management of the society, & leaves no room, as in the old society, for two or three local societies, by a general delegation, to pack its meetings & control & give character to its entire movements—thus legislating for the state!

The new society then, unembarrassed with other questions & an unequal representation, will have but one object—the overthrow of slavery, by the means specified in its constitution. Its prospects thus far are cheering. In the hope that you will rejoice to cooperate with it, in the capacity above referred to,

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, in behalf of the slave,

A. A. Phelps

Rec. Secy.

