

1500 1/2
Mrs. Book
Charlotte



Scammon's Building

Friday 3 o'clock P. M.

Washington Hall

See Mr. Moore

18 1/2 Cooper Street

W. F. Moore

Write Mrs. Book

W. F. Moore

Book

W. F. Moore

PAID

1/34

8th. Gerrit Smith is seeking for office at our hands.

And what, pray, would be more honorable both to yourselves and him, than that he should get it? There are many men, who get office from you, by flattering you in your wickedness; and, surely, office which is so obtained is honorable neither to the giver nor the getter. But if, notwithstanding my faithful reproofs of your wickedness—of your treason to God and the slave—to christianity and republicanism—I shall obtain office from you, both the giving and the getting, in that case, will assuredly be among the most honorable things which this corrupt world has ever seen. I must, however, beg you not to give me office, until I shall apply for it. When I shall make the application, is uncertain. It will be several years first, however. Yet awhile, if my life and health are spared, I must continue to tell you wholesome truths, which the demagogues and time-serving priests, whom you suffer to rule you, keep back from you; and, to tell you these, and simultaneously discharge the functions of the office you might give me, would be more than I should have time for.

Respectfully, yours,

GERRIT SMITH.

Dear Br. Phelps

I am by the Liberator, that the family of our good brother Eliza Wright have been distressed by a recent fire. I am poor - but not so poor, as they are - & hence I enclose my D.V. to W. Wright for \$5. A trifle may be of service when in her present troubles.

You see by this sheet that I am again "preaching politics," as the enemies of our cause call it.

We are anticipating a great meeting at Rochester 12th, 13th & 14th June. We want to see a hundred there from Massachusetts -

Brother May 22 1844 -

Your friend & brother
Gerrit Smith

My object, in the contemplated meetings, will be what it was in my Sunday meetings, last Summer and Fall,—to convince my hearers, that proslavery voting is a deep sin against God and man—a horrid violation of the principles of humanity and religion.

I can anticipate some of your objections to your attending these meetings.

1st. *Your religion would be hurt by such a use of Sunday.*

A tender regard for one's religion is, certainly, commendable. But, I think you would be secure from the harm which you apprehend. You may feel well nigh certain, that a religion which permits you to cast proslavery votes, is made of such stuff that scarcely anything can hurt it.

2d. *Your attendance on these meetings would hinder your being in that serious and solemn frame of mind which you desire to be in on Sunday.*

In reply to this objection, I have but to say, that, if you do not find yourselves serious and solemn in these meetings, it will be, because you have so hardened yourselves in the great sin of proslavery voting, that the setting of it before you produces no disturbance—no guilt—in your debauched consciences.

3d. *Clergymen are the proper persons to tell the people of their sins.*

But if clergymen will not, laymen must: and since a large majority of the clergymen of Madison County have not the honesty and courage to rebuke your Heaven-daring sin of trampling on Heaven's poor, laymen must do it.

4th. *Why confine your Addresses to the sin of proslavery voting? There are many other sins.*

Among the many answers which might be given to this objection, is the sufficient one, that, if you will not repent of this sin, you will not repent of any other. If you will persevere in voting, from year to year, the renewal and perpetuity of the slave's bondage—in voting the bible out of his hands, and the lash upon his back, and the tearing asunder, by the traffic in human flesh, of husband and wife, parent and child—then it will be idle to talk to you of any other sin. In voting as you do, you as virtually take the ground that there is no sin, as the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church does, in its refusal, from time to time, to say that slavery is sin. How disgusting the hypocrisy—how broad the farce—of that exceedingly wicked Body, when, having refused to say that the system which forbids marriage and the reading of the bible, and markets men as beasts, and violates the whole decalogue, is sinful; it puts on again its sanctimonious face, and resolves, that moving the feet to music, drinking a glass of wine, or some other specification, is a heinous sin!

5th. *But the clergymen of the County are against Gerrit Smith: and, at a Convention of them, held last Winter, a Resolution was passed, which refers to his Sunday Addresses as mere "political harangues."*

I am well aware, that most of the clergymen of the County have no sympathy with my efforts for the deliverance of the enslaved: but, they, surely, would have, were their own children among the enslaved. There is not a clergyman—nay, not a man—in the whole County, who, were his own child wearing the yoke of slavery, would think my antislavery zeal excessive—who, were that the deep and ever bleeding wound of his heart, would think my Sunday meetings a profanation of holy time. In that case, he would esteem no day too holy to be used in pleading for the slave.

I have read the resolution referred to; and all I have now to say of it is, that I fully believe, that, when the Convention classed my Sunday Addresses with the selfish and unprincipled appeals which fall under the name of "political harangues," they committed a crime against the cause of liberty and truth and righteousness, which some, if not all of its members, will yet look back upon with penitence.

I cannot refrain from saying in this connection, that there are, here and there, in different parts of this County, faithful ministers of the true gospel, who, at whatever hazard to their reputation, or means of living, plead boldly in behalf of the Savior's trodden-down poor. May God bless them. He does bless them. Their faithfulness returns a rich blessing into their own bosoms. Would that there were the required number of such men! One of the smallest benefits to result from it would be, that I, who so greatly need the rest and instructions of the Sabbath, would not feel it to be my duty to repeat, the present season, the labors, which I found, the last season, so severe a tax on my strength and health.

6th. *Perhaps, Gerrit Smith will not tell us the truth; for Professor Eaton says (see the Professor's last Fall's famous communications) that Gerrit Smith is not "the man of truth."*

But, when Professor Eaton says this, you no more believe him, than he believes himself. You cannot, therefore, be allowed to frame, out of the silly and wicked attacks which the poor hard-pressed Professor has made on my veracity, an excuse for not attending my meetings.

7th. *Gerrit Smith wants to get us to vote for his party.*

I shall not ask you to vote for any party. I shall not ask you to be as good as the Samaritan. He helped his brother, who "fell among thieves." All I shall ask of you is but to be no worse than the Priest and Levite. If they did not help, neither did they harm, the wounded man. They left him, as they found him, and did not hurt a hair of his head. Refuse to vote for the poor slave, if you can find it in your hearts to refuse to vote for him. All I shall ask of you, is, that you do not vote against him. Lie in bed, if you will, the whole of Election-day. Only do not rise from it to vote against the slave. Indeed, you had better never rise from it than repeat that crime. If you will not help the slave; at all events do not harm him. If you will not help break his chains; at least forbear to help rivet them. Refuse, if you will, to join the Liberty Party. I shall ask you but to quit your proslavery parties.

Gerrit Smith, May 22, 1844

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PETERBORO, April 20, 1844.

To the Proslavery Voters of the County of Madison :

You are, perhaps, indignant at this appellation. You do well to be indignant, if the appellation is unmerited. But, if it is merited, your indignation is but deception and bluster.

You say, that the slavery in the Southern States is none of your concern; and that those States must be left to abolish their own slavery. Very well: but that is no reason why you should not help abolish your own slavery—the national parts of slavery—the slavery which you and others have set up, and kept up, in the District of Columbia, in the Territory of Florida, and elsewhere. Besides, were the National parts of slavery abolished, the slavery in the Southern States would soon be nobody's concern:—for, deprived, as it then would be, of the countenance of our National example, and the protection of our National power, it would quickly die.

You say, that your object, in voting for slaveholders and proslavery men, is not to uphold slavery. Nor is blood the object of the highwayman, who commits murder. He is after the money—not the life—of his victim: and his excuse for his murder is quite as good as yours for casting proslavery votes—votes, which, in their effect, are as much worse than murder, as slavery is worse than death. If you may plead, that Banks, and Tariffs, and Independent Treasuries, and Free Trade, and other good things, will come from your voting against the slave; so too may he plead, that he also is tempted by the prospect of good things, when he resorts to his pistol or dagger.

You will say, that this is extraordinary language to address to respectable men: and I, in turn, will say, that it is an extraordinary crime of which these respectable men are guilty. Considering the light of civilization and christianity, under which it is committed, the crime of crushing millions of God's unoffending, helpless poor, in this land, is unmatched, the world over. And this crime, with all the cruelty and meanness which pre-eminently characterize it, your proslavery votes, at every returning Election, fully indorse, and make your own. Of all the iniquities, which cry for the vengeance of Heaven, this, in which you are voluntary partners, is the most diabolical.

You say, that your proslavery voting is your own, not the abolitionists' business. But they answer, that it is theirs, as well as yours; and that to deny it is as absurd as for the miscreants, who are scuttling one end of the ship, to tell the affrighted men and women at the other, that each party must see to its own end, and not concern itself with the doings at the other. There is an important sense in which antislavery and proslavery persons are in the same ship, and must sink or swim together.

You say, that your proslavery voting is none of our concern. And is it, for instance, none of our concern, if Texas is annexed to this Nation, with the purpose of thereby eternizing American slavery? The probability is, that it will be so annexed, during the present session of Congress. But, had the Legislature of only our own State spoken out against the annexation, there would have been no such probability of this calamitous and guilty event, nor, indeed, any approach to it: and had a majority of the voters of only one of the Counties of this State refused to vote against the slave, last Fall; the present Legislature of our State, composed chiefly, as Legislatures are apt to be, of mere weather-cocks, would not have dared to countenance, as they have countenanced, this infamous project for bolstering up the tottering system of American slavery. If it may be said, as it never should be, that the effect of proslavery voting on the slave is none of our business; nevertheless, who is so brazen as to deny, that, in the light of its threatened destruction to our nation and to ourselves, it is, and most emphatically is, our business?

You have, suddenly, become great admirers of Cassius M. Clay: and, what is very amusing, you are boasting of your agreement with him; likening yourselves to him; and attempting to justify by his, your own, intended proslavery vote. But, an ugly man, whose face is covered with warts, has no right to claim resemblance to a handsome man, whose face wears only one of these blemishes. Another reason why you should not presume to claim resemblance to Mr. Clay, is the assurance you have from his own pen, that, at the close of the next Autumn, he will tear away, root and branch, his only wart. And still another reason, why you should not degrade Mr. Clay into a likeness to yourselves, is that he has but recently discovered, that his wart is not a beauty spot. He has but just now begun to see himself in the antislavery looking-glass, which the abolitionists have been holding up, these ten years, before your all-over-warty faces. Long ago, you had had time enough, and knowledge enough, to get your faces entirely smooth; and had you then set the good example, Cassius M. Clay would not now be wanting a six months', nor even a one month's, reprieve for his solitary wart: he would not now be prizing the privilege of voting, once more, against the bleeding slave.

But, I took up my pen to apprise you of my purpose to appoint a few meetings, in different parts of this County, and to invite you to attend them. They will all begin at half-past 10 A. M.; and will all be held on the first day of the week. I select this day for the two-fold reason, that my congregations will be larger, and that, on all the other days of the week, I am burdened with my private business. I am aware, that it suits Professor Eaton's purpose to represent me to be a man of leisure, and one of the class of "gentlemen at large." Nevertheless, it is probable, that I work as hard as any other man in the County from Monday morning 'till Saturday night.

The first in the proposed series of meetings will, Providence permitting, be held in the neighborhood of Ridgeville, the third Sunday in May (19th,) or the next succeeding Sunday (26th,) should the third prove to be quite rainy or cold. (I depend on the people of Ridgeville and its vicinity to fit up a grove for the meeting. There are thousands of men and women dwelling in the parts of Sullivan and Lenox between the Turnpike and the Lake. Shall I not have the happiness of seeing a large share of them in the Ridgeville meeting? Will the intervening Lake be suffered to prevent an attendance from the County of Oswego? That County and our own compose a Congressional District. I should prize very highly the opportunity of reminding the voters of both, how merciless and wicked would be their election, next Fall, of a proslavery member of Congress.)