

Anti-Slavery Office,

New York, 5 Nov., 1864.

178

My Dear Garrison,

You will remember that, among the charges brought against me at the recent meeting of the Executive Committee by Mr. Phillips, and urged with no little positiveness and vehemence, was this, viz: that I delayed the publication of the call of the Cleveland Convention for two weeks after receiving from ^{him} a request that it might appear, and only printed it at last after Mr. May urged me to do it. He evidently meant to make the impression on the minds of the members of the Committee that I was unwilling to

point the call, and, ^{that,} in the excess or
"malignity" of my partizanship for
Lincoln, I designed to suppress it.

This charge was so unexpected
and so astounding, ^{that,} at the moment,
I was somewhat confused and
therefore unable to recall to mind
the precise facts in the case. I
could only interpose a general de-
nial, which was met by Mr. P. with
a still more earnest affirmation of
the charge.

Since my return to New York,
I have refreshed my memory by refer-
ence to the Standard file and to
Mr. Phillips's letter requesting the
publication of the call; and I ~~had~~
find that, instead of delaying two
weeks, as ~~he~~ he charged, or one week,

as I was at first inclined to admit, I did not delay at all, but printed it in the very first number after receiving his request. The proof of this is complete. In the first place, here is a copy of Mr. Phillips's letter, now lying before me:

"Sunday, May 15.

"Dear Johnson,

"I was surprised on looking through my Standard not to find the ^{Conventions at} call for the Cleveland. ~~Conventions~~ It will be very late to have it this week. But let nothing prevent your finding a place ~~room~~ for it in this week's paper. Let no one have it to say that Abolitionists gave no welcome to an effort for a radical and true politics.

"Yours truly," "Wendell Phillips."

The paper which Mr. P. looked through, surprised at not finding the call, was of course that bearing date the Saturday before he wrote, May 14. He makes no complaint on account of its non-appearance in the previous number, ^{does} nor, he appears to have expected it before the issue of the 14th. Turn now to the file of the Standard, and you will find the call at length, including all the signatures, ^{and a letter from} ~~in~~ the N. P. to Judge Stallo of Cincinnati, in the number for May 21st the first number published after the date of Mr. P.'s letter.

And now as ^{to} the charge, implied if not expressed in so many words by Mr. P., that I was unwilling to publish the call, and in the mood of suppressing it altogether. There is no more truth in this than in what Mr. P. said about

delay. Let me tell you the precise
 facts. The call appeared in the Lib-
 erator of May 13 (anniversary week).
 It first met my attention, as I presume
 it did yours, a week or so before that
 date. I at once cut it out of the
 paper in which I found it, and
 wrote an editorial introduction of a
 few lines, ~~and~~ putting both into my
 copy-box for the next paper—that
 of May 14. But that, you will
 remember, was anniversary week,
 and I undertook, for the first time since
 the Standard was started, to publish
 in full, the same week, the report of our
 Tuesday morning anniversary. Not
 knowing how much room the report
 would occupy, about apprehending
 that it might nearly fill the two
 inside pages, I made an arrangement

with the printer to keep his compositors
at work on Monday ^{as well as Tuesday forenoon} on the Anglo-

African (printed in the same office),
thus reserving the inside space for the
report. It was not till 3 p. m., or later,

on Tuesday, that Gerrinton's copy began to
come in. Meanwhile the printers had only

set up the resolutions, Mr. Quincy's leader,
^{the Washington letter,}

and a ~~little~~ short letter from Mary Grew
giving an account of Mr. Thompson's

lecture in Philadelphia; and there was
standing over from the previous week

a letter from Chattanooga, already two
or three times set aside for other matters.

It was a ~~terrible~~ ^{hard} job for our printers,
short-handed as they were, to get the

whole report in type and correct
it in season to get the paper to press

by Thursday noon. The call and several
other things ^{which I desired to insert} were in my pigeon-hole,

but the printers could not set another

type, and I sent the paper to press, filling the space not occupied by the report with matters previously in type. I confess I did not think the Cleveland call entitled to precedence over Quincy's leader or the Washington letter, even if, like them, it had been in type.

When I got Phillips's letter, I replied promptly and kindly, stating the above circumstances, and expressing my fear ^{what remained of} that the report of our meetings might fill the ~~whole~~ first three pages of the next paper, and that, as the fourth page was already in type (it was ^{then} Monday or Tuesday), I might not be able to print the call in the issue of the 21st. Of course I meant to do it if I could, and I did it, though at some inconvenience. True, Mr. May, having heard Mr. P. complaining in the A. S. Office, wrote to ask me to be sure and print

the call, but his ~~letter~~^{interposition} was quite unnecessary, for it (the call) was already in the printing-office, and probably in type when his letter was received. In replying to Mr. Phillips's letter I did indeed express my dissent from his claim that the Cleveland movement deserved a "welcome" from Abolitionists as "an effort at a radical and true politics;" and it was probably what I said on this point that excited and offended him. But I was not at that time aware how deeply he was involved in that movement, and I fully relied upon his candor to appreciate the reasons I gave for not printing the call May 14th, and the difficulties which might perhaps make it almost impossible to do so May 21st. I certainly presented those reasons and difficulties in good faith, and with every disposi-

two to oblige him. The thought of giving him offence did not even present it itself to my mind.

You will remember that Mr. Phillips made an invidious reference to the publication in the Standard from year to year of the call of the Yearly Meeting of Progressive Friends. The simple truth is, that I should, in any case, have done with that call, in the same circumstances, precisely what I did with the other, left it out. And indeed, ^{though it was in type,} I did leave it out of the very paper in which Mr. P. looked with disappointment for the Cleveland call.

Mr. P.'s recklessness of statement, and his readiness to accuse me of partiganship, are as amazing

to me as they are painful. The
spirit which he exhibits in charging
me with fraud in the course I
have deemed it my duty to pursue,
I must think unworthy of him. But
I hope he may some day come to
a better mind.

Gerrit Smith was here
yesterday, and I told him of
the project for writing the
two papers. He thinks the plan
an excellent one. Wendell, too,
I find, agrees with me.

If you think it worth while,
you may read this letter, or a part
of it, to the Committee at their
next meeting. It may be well
for them to know how little

foundation Mr. P. had for what
he said at the last meeting
about the postponement of
the Cleveland call.

Mary Anne still gains, I
think, in health. She unites with
me in love to you and your
household. I hope Dr. Mann
has commenced his treatment
of Helen before this, and that
it will prove successful.

Yours, always,

River Johnson.

