

Edgartown, June 19th. 1839.

Rev. James H. Thomas. (accept)

Dear Sir,

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I received your letter last evening, & proceed immediately to answer it. I feel it to be a privilege to be instrument-
al in doing good, & whenever & wherever a door is opened for me to give my influence in favor of immediate emancipation, I hope & pray that I may never shrink from the duty. A want of moral courage, generated by selfishness, which is extremely short sighted, has greatly retarded this benevolent enterprise. A few noble spirits have been compelled to stand alone, but I trust many will be soon found who will feel it to be a privilege to sustain them in their magnanimous benevolence.

Sir, The appointment you have given me, I cheerfully accept as an honor worthy of a far better man than I am. If my name will do the slave any good, if my influence will do any thing towards expediting his immediate emancipation, or if any thing I can say or do will free the down ridden slave holder, (for he is himself in fetters & knows it not) you have them all. I do pity the oppressed sons & daughters of Africa. We are only partially acquainted with their miseries, & yet we have learned enough from the lips & writings of the slave driven himself, to sicken any man of the whole iniquitous system. Mighty efforts are now making to place a gag in the mouth of politicians to induce the belief that abolitionism is altogether a religious & moral enterprise, & therefore it never ought to be introduced into the ballot box.

Alas! Alas! (multitudes cry) what is our country coming to! Politicians, Yeas, multitudes of voters, are beginning to feel we must have some new legislators, even legislators that will recognize colored men, as men, & as descending from the same common parent, & entitled to the treatment of rational & intelligent creatures; & legislators who will make laws that will be in accordance with the distinguishing principles of genuine republicanism, & the system of revealed truth! I do feel that our cause is a political as well as a moral & religious one, & demands the immediate interference of every member of our beloved republic, all must

put their shoulder to the work, with a determination to do right, & leave
the result with God. The day is not far distant when this benevolent
enthusiasm will become popular. Its patrons will be compelled to
struggle a little longer. Victory will crown our efforts, & I trust it will
be done without bloodshed, for I am a peace man, but yet not such a
peace man as to repudiate all human government & laws.
Our Southern brethren are feeling the bitter effects of their oppressive acts
towards the poor Indian, & how much we shall eventually partici-
-pate in their misery, time only will determine. The Florida Indians
are practicing on the principle of retaliation. In their cruelty & wrongs,
they are only imitating the example of the whites. I do really feel that
Anti Slavery principles acted out, & reduced to immediate practice
will save our Southern brethren from a similar retaliation at the
hands of the colored man. They cannot always be cowed down by the
whips, for Ethiopia will yet stretch forth her hands unto God, & God will
hear the oppressed when they call. The African ^{can} be taught! he can
learn! & he can imitate! And such is human nature, before renewed
by divine grace, that all are predisposed to imitate the bad example
placed before us. If then the African is taught by example, that power
gives right to oppress; & if he sees no argument used but force, then
what lesson is he taught? will he be taught one lesson, & learn another?
No! The lesson he is taught he will learn. That example which succeeded
in accomplishing the object of the Master, the poor Slave will imitate.
In the depth of his ignorance, he knows nothing but, to imitate the example
of his good!! pious!! & benevolent!! Master! If his ignorance continues & his heart
remains unrenewed, as soon as he has power he will exercise it as his
Master did. It is in my heart to add much more, but other cares &
duties forbid.

I am,

Dear Sir, yours in behalf of the Slave,
& a cheerful cooperator in the holy cause.

Rev A A Phelps

James H Brown

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