

Boston. July 30. 1838

Monday morning.

Dear Debra,

Yesterday morning I went to Dr Paul's & thought Mr Stone is a very good man, he is a stupid preacher. When the bell rang in the afternoon, I was in so deep a sleep that I could not possibly get up, so I slept most of the afternoon & nearly ran into my shoes. At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7. I went to hear Friend Gurney, but found I had missed the hour. The meeting was at 6. I returned just in time to welcome the junior Editor of the Atlas, who said till 11 o'clock out the risque, as I afterwards learned of being turned out of the house which was unreasonable in Henry as he was not kept up. About $\frac{1}{2}$ after 10, I nearly fell asleep myself; his voice sounded at a distance, but I conclude my observation of mind was not long, for he was talking of philosophical necessity when I lost the thread of the discourse, & when I came back he was on the same theme. I would not argue the slavery question, but meekly suffered him to contradict every word I said; he then fell full well on orthodoxy & as I would not defend that, he proposed to bring forward the arguments in favour of Pantheism & a nullitude of things of the same kind. The principal way in which he enumerated my arguments was "Miss Anna you're uttering perfect absurdities" or "you don't understand your own state of mind."

This morning I have been to Bennett's hot as it is. There I was treated with soda, bicarbonates & milk biscuits. **CIRCULAR.** Then I called at the doctor to see the scales. - Thank the gods that all

ABOLITIONISTS OF MASSACHUSETTS—

is over. I shall try to go to the Fair this afternoon though it is a joke. I am pretty well this weather indeed very well. My chest is much better this weather & I feel quite strong. Will you send in by Linfield on Wed my white petticoat as other wise I will not wear the white gown on the 2nd which I wish to do. I only had one with me so I could not have that washed. I should also like to have a chemise sent in, as mine is so mangled I did not like to wash it here.

Twenty thousand persons have sent memorials to the State Legislature, asking that body to protest, in the name of the people, against the unconstitutional and despotic resolution, adopted by the House of Representatives of the United States, on the 21st of December last. This is well, but well needs to be made better, even on this topic. Farther, a large proportion, full three fourths of these petitioners, it is believed, are immediate abolitionists. Upon this estimate, then, fifteen thousand persons, at least, should, before this, have sent in their petitions, asking the Legislature to declare (1) that Congress has Constitutional power to abolish slavery and the slave trade, in the District of Columbia and the Territories, and the slave trade between the States; and (2) that this power should be immediately exercised. Again, there are, in this State, at least 200 Anti-Slavery Societies formed on the principles of immediate emancipation. At a moderate estimate, these will average 100 members each. But few, very few of them are juvenile societies, and of the others, but a small portion of their members are minors. Besides these, there is a multitude of abolitionists in the State, who are not members of any society. So that, upon the most moderate calculation, there are, in this State, at least 20,000 adults, who are immediate abolitionists, and therefore, upon this estimate, instead of fifteen thousand petitioners to the State Legislature, on the above subjects, there ought to have been, before this, at least TWENTY-THOUSAND;—and if there had been, who does not know that the Legislature would at once speak the voice of immediatism on each and all of the topics named? But, alas! what are the facts? Why, that on the first topic, 20,000 have petitioned, and on the latter, only 6,400! Yes, humiliating as is the fact, of twenty thousand adult abolitionists in the State of Massachusetts, not seven thousand have yet even ASKED their legislature to do what it can, for the overthrow of that system of abominations, which is professedly the abhorrence of their souls! Friends of the slave, is this right?—Is this abolitionism?—Is this 'remembering them that are in bonds, as bound with them?' Are you to be content with this? God forbid. What then is to be done? We send out this circular to tell you. Last year the legislature passed the resolution, quoted in the memorial on the next page. In that resolution, the right of Congress to abolish slavery in the District, is admitted; and also, that nothing but 'the public good' should restrain its exercise. What we want this session is, that the legislature shall take another step, and say that justice, humanity, the honor of the nation, and the public good, so far from restraining, require, not only the exercise, but the immediate exercise of this right, in the abolition of slavery and the slave trade both, in that District. To this end, we must make the District our focal point of action. Besides, with 20,000 petitioners against the resolution of Dec. 21st, and only 6,400 against slavery, &c. in the District, what is the influence on the committee of the legislature? Obviously this—that while multitudes are ready to stand for the right of petition, the abolitionists are but a handful. With this state of things, then, and with a committee less favorable to the prayer of the petitioners than that of last year, the prospect now is, that the legisla-

ture will go but little, if it does at all, in advance of last year. The position of our cause is, therefore, most critical. Hence this special circular. Let every person then, who receives it, attend forthwith to the following things:

1. Call at once, a meeting of the officers or members of the Anti-Slavery Society in your place, or if there be no society, a meeting of several friends of the cause, read this circular to them, and adopt measures for the prompt and thorough circulation of the annexed memorial, in every school district in town.
2. Let adults only sign the memorial.
3. Let men and women sign separate memorials.
4. When the circulation is completed, let the signatures of all the men in each town, be united in one memorial, and the signatures of the women in another.
5. Fold each memorial, and write on the back of it, in a plain hand, the name of the first petitioner, the number of petitioners, and the place—thus—'Petition of A. B. and — others, ————of———, for a legislative declaration, &c. that Congress has the right, and ought immediately, to abolish slavery and the slave trade in the District of Columbia.'
6. Let the memorials be all circulated and sent to the legislature, within THREE weeks, at farthest,—from this time—sooner if possible. It is important the petitions come in before the committee make up their report, which will be in about this time.
7. It is no objection to persons signing this memorial, that they have signed the former one, as this differs somewhat from that, and is limited to the District.
8. The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States says—'We, the people of the U. States in order to establish justice, ** promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution,' &c. The Declaration of American Independence, says—'That to secure these rights [those of 'life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'] governments are instituted among men, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new Government,' &c. The quotations in the memorial refer to these: and yet the legislators of Massachusetts gravely suppose that 'the public good,' or 'the general welfare' forbids the 'establishment of justice' and the giving of 'liberty,' by Congress, to one sixth of 'the people' living upon territory under its 'exclusive legislation'! Our legislators need light. Twenty thousand petitioners will give it. They will make it day-light again, and operate like magic on 'the public good'!

Friends of the slave, the work is yours—will you do it? Rather let me say, what abolitionist is there that will not do it, and do it now? Oh! friends! how would the heart of the slave leap for joy, and that of his oppressor quake with fear, to see us, by our petitions, marching up to our legislative halls, in a solid phalanx of TWENTY THOUSAND! Do your duty, one and all, and it can be done.

A. A. PHELPS,

For the Board of Managers of the Mass. A. S. Society.

Boston, Feb. 12, 1838.

Also, if you have a brandyke you could lend me I should like it but this lent is not particularly consequential. I will write every chance as to you. Abby's chemise I have not for her but if you will send them in basket I will do them. I see that the best thing

I should also like to have a chemise sent in, as mine is so mangled I did not like to wash it here.

Also, if you have a brandyke you could lend me I should like it
 but this lent is not particularly consequential. I will write
 every shoville as to you. Kirby's chemises I have not finished
 but if you will send them in basket I will do them. I received from
 Dr Sweetser that the best thing that can be done for mischiefs
 consumption is to stay most of the time in the open air
 This I do which occupies a great deal of the day
 which may be done for my new sewing.
 Mrs Lindsay collects this morning & kept the children
 with the baby will try for I
 dress - no. even yet there
 done to see. Tell Aunt M. I
 have not got over my
 my on opposition yet
 I have used your collar so you can make mine.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives
 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The undersigned of in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, having read with great pleasure, the resolution of your honorable bodies, the last year, declaring—

'That Congress, having exclusive legislation in the District of Columbia, possess the right to abolish slavery in said District, and that its exercise should only be restrained by a regard to the public good;—believing also, that to 'establish justice * * and secure the blessings of liberty,' are among the great ends for which the Federal Government was instituted; that whenever it or any government 'becomes destructive of these ends,' to all or any portion of 'the people,' it so far fails to answer the purposes and secure the ends of all good government; and finally, that the idea of promoting 'the public good' by the continuance of injustice and oppression is a contradiction in terms: do therefore respectfully and earnestly pray your honorable bodies, without delay,

1. To reaffirm the Constitutional right of Congress to abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia.
2. To declare that Congress has also the Constitutional right to abolish the Slave-trade in that District.
3. To declare that the rights of humanity, the claims of justice, the honor of the nation, and 'the public good,' alike demand, that in each of these respects, Congress should immediately exercise said right.
4. To send a copy of said declarations to each of the Senators and Representatives of this State, in Congress, to be, by them, laid before that body; and to each of the Governors of the several States, to be, by them, laid before their respective Legislatures.
5. To instruct or request the Senators and Representatives of this State, in Congress, to use their utmost influence to effect an immediate and total abolition of Slavery and the Slave-trade in said District of Columbia.

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Miss Debora Weston.

Weymouth.

E. F. W.

Ms. A. 9. 2. 10 p. 42