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*Anacostia Community Museum Archives*

## **Douglass' Monthly, December 1860, Vol. III, N0.VII**

Extracted on Mar-28-2024 10:16:49

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DECEMBER, 1860.  
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across the Atlantic, to bid these fanatical rifleman to stop shooting, but I can at least assure them that I could teach them a better aim. 'Your practice is sharp, gentlemen, but you are disgracefully bad shots.'

The protest to which I have referred embraces the following points :--1st, The appeal was first made by a few individuals, without the knowledge of the church or society. Answer--They had a perfect right to make it, for they did not make it in the name of the church, or as an appeal by the church, and the society was not even referred to, and had no authority or responsibility in the matter. The protest is made by a few individuals against the deliberate action of the church as a church; and if they have the right to make such a protest, much more had a few individuals, acting for the benefit of the church, this right to make an appeal for aid. Ours is a Congregational church, you say, and a fundamental principle of our organization is that all questions of general interest connected with the church shall be acted on by the whole body. Then the protest ought to have been so acted on, and had it been submitted to the knowledge and decision of the church, would have been forbidden. The action of the self-constituted minority inaugurating this protest, is a usurpation of the rights of the church, and subversive of our principles as a congregational body.

2d, The protestors against the appeal charge upon us an intention to change the character of our organization. Answer --There is no such intention : there never was. When it is said that we wish for aid in order to establish our citadel of the gospel on the foundation of a free church, it is merely the reducing of the expense of the sittings (by providing for the ground rent) to so moderate a rate, and the provision for such a number of free sittings, that the poor, as well as the rich, may have a place in the house of God, and not to be ruled out of their privileges either by the money power or the slave power.

3d, The protestors say that they protest against the appeal because of the strifes and divisions which have resulted from it.-- Answer--The protestors themselves have produced these strifes and divisions, endeavoring as a minority to overrule the majority, and by means of strife and division to compel the pastor to retire from the church. For that purpose they deliberately discussed the whole question, and settled it by sanctioning, adopting, and re-affirming the appeal, appointed the same 'self-constituted committee' to take charge of it, and ordered that it be sent forth anew to the churches of Great Britain, declaring its integrity and necessity. It was then the duty of these protestors to cease their opposition, or to retire from the church. The opposition of a minority to the deliberate will and action of the church, is faction and schismatic, and as such is disorderly, and directly and inevitably productive of strife.-- But these protestors not only would not submit to the declared determination of the church to sustain the appeal and the pastor, but carried their factious opposition into the society ; and then, at the annual meeting for the election of trustees, formed a party with the intention of



appointing to that office persons opposed to the appeal and to the action of the church as an abolition church, and of the pastor as a preacher of abolition doctrines. The judges of the election, and scrutinizers, and tellers of the votes on this occasion were selected from their own party ; but when the votes were declared, it was found that the candidates of the church, and the persons in favor of abolition and of the appeal, and of sustaining the pastor in the war of God's Word against slaveholding as sin, were elected by the legal majority. These persons were accordingly declared elected, and were thenceforth the legal trustees. But the law requires the judges of the election to issue a certificate under their signature of the election, of the persons having the highest number of votes, and so declared at the election, and provides that such certificate shall be the legal

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proof of such election, and of the right of the persons elected to possess their office. These judges, finding that the election had gone against the protestors, refused to issue the required certificates, although they had declared the persons elected, to whom they refuse them. Had they rested there, it would have been comparatively a small matter. But after consultation on the matter with the defeated parties, they deliberately proceeded to issue certificates of election to the defeated candidates, declaring them duly elected to the office of trustees.

This high-handed outrage compelled the persons who had been declared elected, but from whom the certificates had been unjustly withheld, to carry their cause, in behalf of the church and society, to the courts for redress. But this part of their complaint, detailing this wrong and fraud, and the history of it, are suppressed by the protestors in their protest, and only a portion is given to the British public. If the authors of this outrage had been the best anti-slavery persons in the world, the wrongfulness of this act would have been no less conspicuous. But they have avowed themselves as opposed to the kind and manner of anti-slavery agitation and efforts pursued by the pastor and the church, and against any appeal for sympathy and aid of British Christians to animate and support the pastor and the church, as an abolition church, in their conflict against the slave power. If they dislike the anti-slavery method and manner of the pastor, and prefer to carry out their professed anti-slavery principles in some other way, they ought to have withdrawn ;-- but they have no right as a minority to remain and oppose the pastor and the church in their chosen way in the conflict against slavery, which seems to them the right way. In so remaining and opposing, they are themselves producing strife and dissension, and laboring to defeat the pastor and the church, destroy their influence, cut off their means of support, and prevent the freedom of the Word of God against slavery. Some of them are the very persons who would have a negro pew.

4th, The protestors say that they oppose the appeal, because they are not paupers, but that, as a church and society, they are abundantly able to meet all their legitimate wants. Answer--The protestors are able. They are wealthy, and have withdrawn their ability and wealth from the support of the church and pastor as an abolition church, rendering it necessary for the church, on that very account, to appeal for aid. They have endeavored to remove the pastor, and have openly avowed this as their object. They have declared that by his preaching against slavery, and by the course into which he has drawn the church, he was making it a nuisance in the community, and was greatly diminishing the value of the church property. They have declared that the prosperity of the

church, and the fulfillment of its mission required the removal of the pastor. To this end they endeavor to prevent the possibility of his getting a support for his church in the abolition conflict. Some of the protestors belonged neither to the church nor the society. Some of them have thrown up their pews, in order not to contribute to the support of the church; but, at the same time, in order to maintain the right of a vote in the society, and thus the opportunity of opposing and annoying the abolition and appeal party, have taken single sittings in the outskirts of the church or in the galleries by the payment of a few shillings. Some among them I had supposed were my friends and friends of the enslaved, but they have now been persuaded into a measure which places them and their influence directly against us, and weakens our ability and power. If these protestors would support the church and its pastor, instead of combining to defeat us, we should need no other aid.

5th, The protestors accuse us of an attempted despotism by the money power, because we are endeavoring to sustain ourselves in opposition to their effort to put us down.  
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No answer is required to this absurdity.

6th, The protestors say that this appeal is made a test of anti-slavery. Answer-- Unless we get aid, we cannot continue to fight against slavery in the Church of the Puritans with the Word of God. Those who oppose this aid do therefore oppose our anti-slavery efforts and strength.

7th, The protestors say that the appeal is injurious to the anti-slavery cause. Answer --The church declare that it is quite essential to the support of that cause, through our instrumentality. The dissension growing out of it is entirely the work of the protestors, and would cease if they ceased opposing us.

8th, The protestors say that they are opposed to the appeal because it is not right to settle by the arbitration of money a question which the parties interested have not mutually submitted to such arbitration. Answer--It is this very arbitration by the money power which the church and pastor are resisting. The protestors, by possessing the money power, and withholding the revenue of the church, are endeavoring to compel the church to submit to their will, and desert their pastor. They are attempting to arbitrate by starvation, and the church and pastor are seeking reinforcements to disappoint that plan. The endeavor of the church and pastor to sustain themselves with the aid of friends, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the aid of the protestors, and against the conspiracy to overthrow the pastor, they affirm to be the arbitration of the question by the money power. They say, renounce your abolitionism and the appeal by which you would sustain it, or you will be starved out. Our independence, in spite of their opposition, by the aid of those who sympathize with us in behalf of the enslaved, they affirm to be the settlement of a question by a money arbitration, and an interference with the internal affairs of a Christian church. But it is the protection of the church against such a despotism. Some of the protestors, joining with certain trustees, undertook so to alter the title deeds of the pews, as to deprive the church of its revenue. By such efforts and influences, the church being crippled and impoverished, the protestors now denounce the effort of the church for its own maintenance as the arbitration of a question by the interference of money. It is, in truth, the arbitration of the question of our being

compelled by starvation into a surrender to the slave power. There is a mutiny, and those who hold the garrison against the mutineers send off to friends for aid. The mutineers protest against the garrison receiving such aid, saying that it is unfair to them and subversive of their rights to have the dispute between them settled in such a way. The whole country of America is in rebellion against God and His truth, against duty and freedom, maintaining the vested rights of slavery, and supporting the despotism of the slave power. Beleaguered by that power in our citadel in Union Square, we are commanded to surrender, and because we send over for help to the Christians in Great Britain, the enemies of freedom assail us even here, and would prevent you from bestowing that aid and sympathy which would enable us, by the blessing of God, to maintain our post, and fight on with God's Word and God's Spirit against slavery. Now, may God forgive our opponents and turn their energies against our common foe, this gigantic, corporate, and individual sin ! I am not willing to call them enemies, for some of them are personal friends; but they are mistaken, and under a cloud of prejudice and partisan zeal. May God preserve us from a bad spirit, and give them a better!

Most deeply am I sensible that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. In this conflict we need to be baptised more than in any other with the spirit of love. We need that love towards the oppressor as well as the oppressed. But when we come to the Word of God, and inquire our duty there, we find that we are bound to defend the oppressed against the oppressor, and to do it in the way and with the weapons that God ap-

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