

Transcription of Germantown Friends' Protest Against Slavery, 1688

This is to y^e Monthly Meeting held at Richard Warrell's.

These are the reasons why we are against the traffick of men Body, as followeth: Js there any that would be done or handled at this manner? viz., to be sold or made a slave for all the time of his life? How fearfull & fainthearted are many on sea when they see a strange vassel, being afraid it should be a Turck, and they should be tacken and sold for slaves into Turckey. Now what is this better done as Turcks doe? yea rather is it worse for them, w^{ch} say they are Christians; for we hear that ye most part of such Negers are brought heither against their will & consent; and that many of them are stollen. Now tho' they are black, we can not conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying, that we shall doe to all men, licke as we will be done our selves; macking no difference of what generation, descent or Colour they are. And those who steal or robb men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alike? Here is liberty of Conscience, w^{ch} is right & reasonable; here ought to be lickewise liberty of y^e body, except of evildoers, w^{ch} is an other case. But to bring men hither, or to robb and sell them against their will, we stand against. In Europe there are many oppressed for Conscience sake; and here there are those oppressed w^{ch} are of a black Colour. And we, who know that men must not comitt adultery, some doe comitt adultery in others, separating wives from their housbands and giving them to others; and some sell the children of those poor Creatures to other men. Oh! doe consider well this things, you who doe it; if you would be done at this manner? and if it is done according Christianity? You surpass Holland & Germany in this thing. This mackes an ill report in all those Countries of Europe, where they hear off, that y^e Quackers doe here handel men licke they handel there y^e Cattel. And for that reason some have no mind or inclination to come hither. And who shall maintaine this your cause or plaid for it? Truely we can not do so, except you shall inform us better hereoff, viz: that christians have liberty to practise this things. Pray! What thing in the world can be done worse towards us, then if men should robb or steal us away, & sell us for slaves to strange

Countries, separating housband from their wife & children! Being now this is not done at that manner, we will be done it, therefore we contradict & are against this traffick of menbody. And we who profess that it is not lawfull to steal, must likewise avoid to purchase such things as are stollen, but rather help to stop this robbing and stealing if possible; and such ought to be delivered out of y^e hands of y^e Robbers & and sett free as well as in Europe. Then is Pennsilvania to have a good report, in stead it hath now a bad one for this sake in other Countries. Especially whereas y^e Europeans are desirous to know in what manner y^e Quackers doe rule in their Province; & most of them do loock upon us with an envious eye. But if this is done well, what shall we say, is done evill?

If once these slaves, (:w^{ch} they say are so wicked and stubborn men:) should joint themselves, fight for their freedom and handel their masters & mastrisses as they did handel them before; will these Masters and mastrisses tacke the sword at hand & warr against these poor slaves, licke we are able to belive, some will not refuse to doe? Or have these Negers not as much right to fight for their freedom; as you have to keep them slaves?

Now consider well this thing, if it is good or bad? and in case you find it to be good to handel these blacks at that manner, we desire & require you hereby lovingly, that you may informe us here in, which at this time never was done, viz., that Christians such a Liberty to do so. to the end we shall be satisfied in this point, & satisfie likewise our good friends & acquaintances in our natif Country, to whose it is a terrour or fairfull thing that men should be handeld so in Peñsilvania.

This is from our Meeting at Germantown held y^e 18. of the 2. month 1688. to be delivred to the Monthly Meeting at Richard Warrel's.

garret henderichs
derick op de graeff
Francis Daniell Pastorius
Abraham op Den graef.

at our monthly meeting at Dublin, y^e 30—2 mo: 1688 we having inspected y^e matter above mentioned & considered of it, we finde it so weighty that we think it not Expedient for vs to meddle with it here, but do Rather comitt it to y^e consideration of y^e Quarterly meeting; y^e tenor of it being nearly Related to y^e truth.

On behalfe of y^e monthly meeting.

Signed, P Jo: Hart.

This, above mentioned was Read in our quarterly meeting at Philadelphia, The 4th of y^e 4th mo 88 and was from thence recommended to the Yearly Meeting and the abovesaid Derick and the other two mentioned therein to present the same to y^e Abovesaid meeting it being a thing of too great A weight for this meeting to determine.

Signed by order of y^e meeting

Anthony Morris.

(Based on text in Marion Dexter Learned, *The Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius: The Founder of Germantown* [Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1908], 261-62.)

This is to ye Monthly Meeting held at Germantown the 17th of 1688
These are the reasons why we are against the traffick of men
of flesh and blood. Is there any that would be done or traded at
nearer? viz to be sold or made a slave for all the time of his life
How fearful & fainehearted are many on sea when they see a strange
vessel being afraid it should be a Turk, and they should be taken
and sold for Slaves into Turkey. Now what is this better done
as Turke doe? yea rather is it worse for them, wch say they are thieffes
for we hear that ye most part of such Negroes are brought heathen
against their will & consent, and that many of them are stolen.
Now tho' they are black we can not conceive there is more liberty
to have them slaves, as it is to have they white ones. There is a
saying that we shall doe to all men, like as we will be done
our selves, making no difference of what generation, descent or
Colour they are. And those who steal or rob men, and those who buy
or purchase them, are they not all alike? Here is liberty of Con-
science, it is right & reasonable here ought to be likewise liberty
of ye body, except of condovers, wch is an other case. But to bring
men hither, or to rob and sell this against their will, we stand against
in Europe there are many oppressed for Conscience sake, and here there
are Negroes oppressed wch are of a black Colour. Some men, what care
that men must not commit adultery, some doe commit adultery in other
separating wives from their husbands and giving them to other
and some sell the children of those poor Creatures to other men.
Oh! doe compare wch this things you who doe it, if you would be
done at this manner! and if it is done among Chripranity?
You saye Holland & Germany in this thing. This makes
an ill report in those Countries of Europe where they hear off
that the Negroes here handel men like they handel there
ye. ~~And~~ ~~we~~ ~~have~~ ~~no~~ ~~mind~~ ~~or~~ ~~recreation~~
to care hither. And who shall maintaine this your cause
if we should be? Truly we can not do so except you shall
show us better things, viz that Chriprians have liberty
to gratifie the things. Now what thing is the world can be
done worse towards us then if men should rob or steal us away
sell us for slaves to strange Countries, separating husbands
from their wives & children. Being now this is not one
but many, we will be done in this we are contented & are
wch the traffick of men being. And we are the traffick

The Germantown Protest against Slavery, 1688 (from Marion Dexter Learned, *The Life of Francis Daniel Pastorius: The Founder of Germantown* [Philadelphia: William J. Campbell, 1908], after p. 262).

that it is not lawful to steal man's liberty, and to purchase
 such things as are stolen, but rather help to stop the course
 of stealing if possible, and such ought to be delivered out of
 the hands of Robbers, & sold free as well as in Europe.
 There is Pennsylvania to have a good report in that it hath now a
 bad one for this sake in other countries. Especially whereas ye
 Europeans are desirous to know in what manner ye Quakers
 do rule in their Provinces, most of them do look upon us
 with an envious eye. But if this is done well, what shall
 we say is done well!

Ye see these Slaves (with this joy we so wish and flourish in)
 should just themselves, fight for their freedom, and hand all their
 masters & magistrates as they do hand them before, will they
 keepers & magistrates take the sword at hand & war against
 these poor slaves, like we are able to abuse, some will not
 stand to see! Or have they tigers not as much right to fight
 for their freedom, as you have to keep them slaves?
 You consider well this thing, if it is good or bad? and in case you
 find it good, to hand these blacks at that manner we afore
 say, you may kindly say, that you may inform us here in
 Liberty to do so. to the end we shall be satisfied in this point
 & satisfied likewise our good friends & acquaintances in our native
 Country, to whole it is a tedious or fearful thing that need
 should be handled from Pennsylvania

This was from our meeting at Germantown this
 ye 18. of the 2. month 1688. to be delivered to the Monthly
 meeting at Richard Wargels, Gerrard Hendrick
 Francis Daniel Pastorius.
 Abraham de Deck graef

at our monthly meeting at Germantown ye 2. mo. 1688 we having inspected
 a letter after mentioned & considered of it we find it so weighty that we think
 it not expedient for us to meddle with it, but do rather commit it to ye conference
 of ye Quarterly meeting of Germantown being nearly related to ye conference
 in behalf of ye monthly meeting of ye Hart

This above mentioned was read in our quarterly meeting and
 considered of ye 23. mo. 1688 and we being informed that the
 above mentioned letter was the original of the same and that the
 same was presented to the Quarterly meeting of Germantown
 and a great number of the Quakers of Germantown were
 present to observe

The Germantown Protest against Slavery, 1688.