

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY

OF CANADA,

PRESENTED AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 1857.

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TORONTO:

PRINTED AT THE GLOBE BOOK AND JOB OFFICE.

1857.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY

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List of Officers.



PRESIDENT:

REV. DR. WILLIS.



TREASURER:

JOHN ARNOLD, ESQ.



SECRETARY:

THOMAS HENNING, ESQ.



COMMITTEE:

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 REV. DR. BURNS.  
 REV. ROBERT DICK.  
 JAMES LESSLIE, ESQ.  
 J. F. MARLING, ESQ.  
 GEO. BROWN, ESQ, M.P.P.  
 R. H. BRETT, ESQ.

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## RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT ANNUAL MEETING.

The SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING of the SOCIETY was held in the Mechanics' Institute Hall, on the 29th April, the President, Rev. Dr. WILLIS, in the Chair. The following are the Resolutions passed, with the names of the movers and seconders :

Moved by the Rev. ROBERT DICK (Baptist), and seconded by JAMES LESSLIE, Esq., and *Resolved*—

I. "That the Report now read be received and adopted, and printed for circulation."

Moved by Hon. ADAM FERGUSSON (Episcopalian), seconded by Rev. Mr. BARRASS (Primitive Methodist), and *Resolved*—

II. "That, although recent events have proved, in some measure, discouraging to our hopes of speedy abolition of slavery on this continent, this Society feels that the call is as imperative as ever on the friends of our common humanity in all countries, to interest themselves in the condition of millions of immortals, subjected to the cruel degradation which slavery involves; and resolves to continue, by the exertion of moral influence, to seek the universal emancipation of their fellowmen; and especially to strengthen, by their sympathy, the hands of those in the neighbouring Republic who are seeking the redress of the existing wrongs of the slave, and the protection of free coloured persons from the re-imposition of a grievous yoke."

Moved by R. H. BRETT, Esq. (New Connexion Methodist), seconded by JOHN ARNOLD, Esq., (Episcopalian), and *Resolved*—

"III. That the Society gratefully acknowledges the humane labours of the Ladies' Association in ministering to the relief of the fugitives from slavery, who have sought refuge in the British territories."

Moved by the Hon. ADAM FERRIE seconded by Rev. Mr. MARLING (Congregationalist), and *Resolved*—

IV. "That the following gentlemen compose the Committee for the current year, viz.:—*President*—Rev. Dr. Willis. *Treasurer*—John Arnold, Esq. *Secretary*—Thomas Henning, Esq. *Committee*—Peter Brown, Esq.; Rev. Dr. Burns; Rev. Robert Dick; James Lesslie, Esq.; J. F. Marling, Esq.; George Brown, Esq., M.P.P.; R. H. Brett, Esq.; George A. Pyper, Esq.; Rev. Mr. Ellerby; Hugh Miller, Esq.; Rev. Mr. Marling; J. McDonald, Esq.; Rev. J. H. Robinson; Rev. James Richardson: with power to add to their number.

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## REPORT.

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Since our last public meeting, the operations of this Society have been carried on chiefly through the agency of the Ladies' Association. The part of your Committee has been to supply from time to time, not the sinews of war, but the *materiel* for charity; and, as on former occasions, we have again gratefully to acknowledge the energetic and self-denying labours of the members of that Association, who have continued to minister to the wants of all who came within the range of their benevolent operations.

The funds reported as on hand at the time of our last meeting as a Society, were so considerable, that your Committee, while individually contributing for the relief of certain special cases as they occurred, did not feel it so incumbent to make fresh demands, meanwhile, on the members of the Society. When occasion shall arise for further contributions, we doubt not they will be made in the same liberal spirit as heretofore. The expenditure, as shewn by the Treasurer's report, amounted, during the last two years to £444 7s 7d. leaving a balance in hand of £263 3s. 7d. The report of the Ladies' Association shews the number of Fugitives relieved during the same time to have been between four and five hundred.

The Committee adheres to its rule of testing, as far as it has the means of doing so, the genuineness of the applications made for aid from the funds, and the system of monthly visitors has been steadily kept up by the Ladies. For two years we have not employed any agent as an itinerating Lecturer, nor did the number of occurring cases seem to call for the continuance of an office at which a paid officer should attend, although we have had occasion to engage the services of a party to procure lodgings and find suitable places for Fugitives as they arrived.

## PRESENT STATE OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

Being an Anti-Slavery Society, and not limiting our object to the aiding of destitute Fugitives—though that is an important part of our object—we may be expected to refer generally to the present state of the Slavery, or rather anti-slavery question. We have been observers, in common with you all, of the course of events in the neighbouring republic; now hoping, now fearing, as the balance seemed to incline to the side of righteousness and mercy, or on the contrary, to the perpetuation of grievous wrong. In many respects, our fears have been, alas! realized, rather than our hopes. Yet there is not only no cause for despair, but it may be doubted, if what, on a first view, looks so ominous of evil, be not a step onward to the realization of all we wish in a speedy destruction of slavery. It would have been but a doubtful good, if the mere question of extension of the Slave Territories had been decided in the negative, on the condition of an everlasting arrest being imposed on the agitation against Slavery as it exists. It may be better that liberty for ulterior agitation has not been compromised by a temporary triumph, more apparent than real, at the Election Polls of the United States. The events that have occurred have revealed the designs of the slave-power in a light more convincing than ever; and it is not without promise of good that the majority has been proved to be so narrow on the side of a pro-slavery policy, and the number to be so large on the side of liberty and equity. It has been demonstrated that the Free States, if only duly alive to their obligations, possess, under Divine Providence, the means to set bounds to the Slave power. And it may be that the revelations made daily of the uselessness of all concessions to slavery, may compel more decision and more unity in the efforts of real Abolitionists. It is not alone in vague mutterings and menaces, that slavery avows its will to effect a larger aggression on the domain of freedom. A revival of the slave traffic itself is boldly proposed and vindicated; and recent decisions of the highest legal tribunal in the Union have tended to unsettle

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yet more and more, every guarantee which the Constitution of those States was believed to have provided for citizen rights of coloured as well as other freemen. If the inhabitants of the Free States will submit to such interpretations of their laws or charters as have recently been promulgated, verily, freedom is without a place to repose its head within the whole range of its most boasted sanctuary. We cannot believe that such a course of retrogression will go on. We have confidence in a God of righteousness who reigneth over all; and surely deliverance will come from some quarter, in answer to the cries of oppression that have so long ascended to Heaven, and entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

#### THE CHURCH AND SLAVERY.

And here a reference to the action of the Church in this matter seems necessary. We have on former occasions shown that, with a few honourable exceptions, the great Ecclesiastical bodies in the United States, are all either neutral or on the side of oppression.

"When nations are to perish in their sins," 'tis in the Church the leprosy begins," says Dr. Cheever, and continues the Doctor: "it is in the Church that this leprosy has been sanctioned and cherished, instead of being shut out and condemned by itself in a pest-house for the warning and abhorrence of the world. If the Church had spoken out, and rejected and excommunicated this sin, when it was as a half-frozen viper seeking warmth, then the poison of its venom had not gone leaping and burning through our veins as it has now. If the Church and the ministry had spoken and acted according to the light and power given to them of God for the world's good, then the mountain waves of this iniquity had not rolled over us. Our very wilderness would have budded and blossomed as the rose, and our whole country would have been a fairer scene of glory and beauty, beneath the tread of teeming millions pouring southward, westward, northward, in liberty and love, than ever the Christian imagination of Jeremiah Evarts, kindled on the verge of heaven, ever threw forth as an almost angelic dream. Alas, alas, that the hoofs of demons should trample this paradise, where angels ought to tread! For in very truth, God appointed his Church in these last days, to mould society and the world in freedom and in love. And of old when he said of those who kept his truth, "Ye are the light of the world," he meant its living light, if they would let it so shine, or that men would see it such, and glorify God on account of it and by it, and not a light springing from corruption and quickening only to men's vices. Under its living power, the green earth would have thrown off the tyranny and curse of Satan, and exulted in the shadow of the trees of life, with their fruits for the healing of

the nations. And never did Church in all the world have the opportunity given it of God, that this Church has in America, to purge off a reigning sin, to confront and conquer a dreadful antagonist evil, and gain a mighty victory for Christ. Who could have believed it possible that any portion of that Church could have taken this iniquity to their embrace, and baptized it in the name of Christ, and enthroned it as a missionary institute, assaulting the Christian reputation of those who fight against it, as if they were, in consequence of that hostility, the arch-enemies of God !”

If such, then, be the relation of the church in the United States to Slavery, as described by one of her own gifted Sons, how can Churches in Britain or Canada, or in any part of Christendom, be free from blame, if, without remonstrance, they can fraternize with Ecclesiastical organizations, thus so far implicated in so unchristian a policy ; or if, after remonstrating in vain, they continue to fellowship with them, as if they were walking orderly and as became the Gospel ?

#### SCHEMES AFFECTING THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

We cannot but feel an interest in various schemes that have been propounded as calculated to affect this great question. The attention of the public in Britain has been called to a commercial enterprise which might yield moral as well as economical results. It has been urged as a policy much called for, to convert certain colonial territories of Britain to the service of the Cotton market on such a scale as might relieve our country of any dependence on American slave labour, and save it from being indirectly even compromised with the guilt of upholding oppression. India will, doubtless, ere long be made to contribute largely to this end ; Africa, according to the best authority, is full of peoples and countries suited, in all respects, to the cultivation of Cotton. We cannot but hope, with the great organ of public opinion in England, that “British philanthropy, science, and capital may lay their heads together, as they have often done before, and seek a common object in the extension of the Cotton cultivation without the aid of slavery.”

We also hear of proposals to redeem the millions still in slavery by some large proffer of indemnification to the owners

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of this (so-called) property. It does not belong to us to dictate a course to our neighbours, nor even to agitate as their own citizens might do, in respect of a measure so entirely an internal and national one to those beyond the lines. Only as citizens of the one republic of humanity and religion, we may be permitted to interest ourselves in such proposals. Waiving the question of abstract right, we can understand how slaveholders may have claims on the country that has long legalized and otherwise identified itself with the system of slavery. We know what Britain generously lavished, not on the cause of slavery, but of slave emancipation. If it be practicable, of which, however, we must be permitted to express a doubt, who would not rejoice in the redemption of three millions, though it were at great cost? Nay, it were worthy of sacrifices not by Americans alone, but by all freemen throughout the world; it were a cause worthy the aid of Britons and Frenchmen,—if only allowed to contribute to it, or if the redemption could not otherwise be effectuated,—to bring the priceless blessings of liberty to so large and so long down-trodden a portion of our human race.

There is one other mode of settling this question which politicians are now beginning to moot—viz. that of **PHYSICAL FORCE**; and though it is one horrible to contemplate, still it is to be preferred to that unnatural and immoral system which exists in the Union, debasing and brutalizing all within its influence. The light in which this is regarded may be learned from the following extract from the London "Times" of 24th September last, and which has been copied into several northern journals:

"The slavery question in the United States (says that journal) seems to be now rapidly approaching this mode of settlement. The Southern planter has determined on the spread and extension of slavery; he is not to be argued out of his resolution; he has by his superior adroitness got the Federal Executive positively on his side, and has prevailed in Congress so far as to defeat an obstacle which the opposite side laid in his way; he is consequently supremely confident, boastful, and sanguine, and is setting to work in right earnest to extend slavery in the Union. On the other hand, the Northern States cannot, as a matter of conscience and principle, allow this ex-

tension. They look upon slavery as in itself wrong, and, though, from necessity they tolerate it where it exists and within its present limits they regard the extension of it as abominable. They cannot, therefore, as a matter of principle, allow themselves to be parties to such extension, or to aid or to second it in any way, direct or indirect, tacit or express. But they are parties to this extension if this extension goes on within the limits and by means of the power of that federation of which they are members. By giving their weight and strength to a Union which carries on such a morally objectionable policy they give their weight and strength to that policy—they allow themselves to be used for the support and extension of a morally bad cause. The support they give is given, indeed, indirectly and through a medium, the medium of the federation and the common and central Government; but, if the extension of slavery is wrong, the indirect support of it is just as wrong as the direct, and the Northern States are just as much substantially committed to what is done by a central power which they support and make what it is as if the same thing were done directly by themselves.

“Such is the present moral dilemma of ‘the North,’ and in this state of the case it is certainly open to ‘the North,’ if it chooses to take such a course, to clear itself of all responsibility in the extension of slavery, and to wash its hands of the guilt of it, by separating from that federation which adopts and carries on this policy. A dissolution of the Union would be one mode of solving this difficulty and getting out of the dilemma. It is open, undoubtedly, to the Northern States to relieve themselves from all participation in this act of the Union by ceasing to belong to the Union. But if ‘the North’ continued its adherence to the Union, we must frankly confess we see no other alternative before it but that of resistance. The extension of slavery must in that case be positively stopped; the Northern conscience can allow a membership of the Union upon this condition alone, and the extension of slavery, it is quite clear, can only be stopped, under existing circumstances, by resistance, and by armed resistance.”

Would to God that the hearts of slave-holders were so touched as themselves to initiate any likely scheme. They have more cause to tremble in the possession of such power as they still hold to, than cause to fear its abandonment. It is their own interest surely to count the cost of persisting in claims of property repudiated by the law of nature, revolting to the sentiments of mankind, and only depending on the forced ignorance and disunion of multitudes of beings possessing some idea of the grievous injustice under which they groan. May that be conceded by a love of right which the exhausted patience of millions of sufferers may dare to vindicate by methods at the thought of which one's blood runs cold !

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## FAVOURABLE SYMPTOMS.

We cannot close, however, without saying that there are signs that slavery is wasting in some portions of the Union. "Emigration from the north has been slowly beating in upon Virginia and Maryland, renovating worn-out lands, and consolidating a population that neither own nor work slaves, and who show to all that surround them, the greater value of free labour. In Missouri the anti-slaveholding population has so largely increased during the last few years, that the question of emancipation has been boldly mooted in her Legislature, and though disposed of for the present by the slaveholding interest, is likely to come up again at the August election, when a large party are prepared to make it the issue on which the contest shall be waged at the polls. In 1851 the free men of Missouri were as 65 to 1 to the slaves; now they are as 132 to 1. On the borders of Iowa, Missouri is virtually free, and a Representative of St. Louis in the State Legislature, did not hesitate to say that 'emancipation is already actually going on in Missouri,' and in twenty-two counties of the State is 'practically accomplished.'"

Meanwhile, no one should look on, unsympathizing with the grievances of so many oppressed immortals. Surely the duty is more incumbent than less to strengthen, by all methods open to us, the hands of the friends of liberty and justice in the States. And were it but to renew our assurances of interest in their exertions, and to express our expectations from their perseverance and determination, were it but to pray to the Almighty for their success,—our meetings as a society are still called for, and should be continued.

On behalf of the Committee,

THOMAS HENNING,  
*Secretary.*

## APPENDIX.

### AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

As the conduct of this society respecting Slavery has been much before the public, and very generally condemned by Christians everywhere, it will be interesting to learn what action has been taken in the matter by the Society at its late meeting in New York. This will be seen by the following resolutions, which shadow forth its future operations, and which were agreed to by all parties :—

*Resolved*,—That in the judgment of your Committee, the political aspects of Slavery lie entirely without the proper sphere of this Society, and cannot be discussed in its publications ; but that those moral duties which grow out of the existence of Slavery, as well as those moral evils and vices which it is known to promote, and which are condemned in Scripture, and so much deplored by evangelical Christians, undoubtedly do fall within the Province of this Society, and can and ought to be discussed in a fraternal and Christian spirit.

“ *Resolved*, — That whatever considerations in the past may have seemed to recommend to the Publishing Committee the course pursued in its revision of certain works, yet, in the future publication of books and tracts, no alteration or omission of the sentiments of any author should be made ; but works not adapted to the design of the Society in their original form, or by a regular impartial abridgment, should be wholly omitted.”

The following comment on these resolutions is from the *New York Tribune* and are certainly very justly merited. The Society virtually acknowledges, by its action, that, whereas, in the past, it has been acting dishonestly, it means to do so no more. That *when* it appropriates other people's books, it will deal fairly with them, not mutilating them, but accepting of them either entire or not at all. Says the *Tribune* :—

We understand that this result, though accepted by both parties, is especially regarded as a triumph by the Anti-Slavery men connected with the Tract organization. If so, we must think them thankful for small favours. To what does it amount ? That the Society will cease to print works as Dick's, or Chalmers', or Wesley's, or James's, which have ceased to be truly such, through their deliberate mutilation by the Society's own agents, is very proper, like any act of reformation which implies repentance ; for the Society had no right to make an author say what he did not mean by omitting a very important part of what he actually said. Apologists for Bondage habit-

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ually insist that Christ was not hostile to Slavery, because he nowhere in express terms condemned it; but if he had done so, and such men as have hitherto controlled the issues of the Tract Society had been allowed to edit and publish the Gospels, the modern world would have been kept in ignorance of the fact. And we apprehend that such works as bear explicit testimony against the sin and wrong of slaveholding will henceforth be deemed "not adapted to the design of the Society in their original form"—and that will be the upshot of *this* resolution.

"As to the proceeding, it seems to be calculated rather to "darken counsel" than frankly to affirm and declare a line of policy on a most momentous question. Among "those moral duties which grow out of the existence of Slavery," is the duty of abolishing Slavery included, or is it not? Does the Tract Society consider the naked act of making a poor and ignorant woman labour through life and bear children, for the benefit of an intelligent and powerful man whom the State declares her master, right or wrong? Among "those moral evils and vices which Slavery is known to promote," is the enforcement of unpaid service or is it not recognized? And will the Society publish and circulate tracts which, "in a fraternal and Christian spirit," exhibit the inherent and inevitable wrong of slaveholding, and the Christian duty of abstaining from and discountenancing it? This is the vital point, and on this point the Report fails to enlighten us. We must await, then, the acts which are to give significance to this non-luminous congeries of words before we can join in exultation over yesterday's doings by the Tract Society."

THE TREASURER IN ACCOUNT WITH  
THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY OF CANADA,

*From May 3, 1855, to April 29, 1857.*

RECEIPTS.

By Cash in hand from 1854-5,.....	£645	1	8
Additional Funds from England, £25 15s. sterling,.....	30	10	0
Collections at St. Lawrence Hall—less expenses,.....	3	16	3
Office Furniture sold,.....	2	7	9
Interest on Account with "Ontario Building Society,".....	25	15	6
	£707	11	2
	£707	11	2

EXPENDITURE.

Sundry Expenses for Meetings, Advertising, and Printing Reports, £	30	12	0
Mr. O'Dea for Mrs. Ward's Rent,.....	15	6	7
Rev. Hiram Wilson, St. Catharines, at different periods, for the Relief of destitute Fugitives,.....	35	0	0
Mr. Plummer, for Clothes for Fugitives at different times,.....	23	9	4
Board for Fugitives, to different parties, at different times,.....	9	8	2
Ladies' Association, for distribution amongst destitute Fugitives, including £25 omitted in last year's Report,.....	215	0	0
Mr. Williams, recommended by the London Committee, partly on Loan,.....	12	10	0
Bartliff, on Account of Mrs. Ward,.....	1	16	3
St Lawrence Hall for Mr. Nicoll's Lecture,.....	2	10	0
Rent and Taxes for Mr. Ward,.....	39	10	10
Mr. Anderson, Teacher, from London,.....	5	0	0
Mr. Seth Phillips, for Boarding Fugitives and for his Services towards them,.....	41	12	0
Funeral Expenses of Seth Phillips,.....	3	0	0
Clothes, at Auction, for distribution.....	13	10	7
Dr. T. Augusta, for Medical Services,.....	2	16	10
Sundries for Clothes and Aid to Fugitives,.....	1	15	0
Subscription to <i>Anti-Slavery Standard</i> and <i>Frederick Douglass' Paper</i> , .....	1	10	0
	£454	7	7
Balance in Bank at Interest,.....	253	3	7
	£707	11	2
	£707	11	2

*Correct* — R. H. BRETT, AUDITOR.