

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ

Edited by

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Letters

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ii

To drive home a great truth, to establish a principle of extreme action is at times necessary. Mohammed went to war to establish a religious principle. Calvin committed an act that would have sent him to the electric chair today so that the world should have for generations a fundamental religious conviction to guide it. Our Civil War was a conflict between Southern Gompers and Northern Soviets. One battled to make organized slave labor supreme, the other to clean the national escutcheon and make all laborers free men. I have written you at length because there is a "big" problem to be thought over! I do not know what the trustees of Howard will do. All may take to the woods. I shall not follow. I shall as a physician look for the physical and moral causes that place our institutional life in jeopardy.

Tell your brother to fight Williams' nomination for comptroller of the Treasury. Pardon me for writing so much.

Sincerely yours,

C. B. Purvis.

Williams was the scoundrel who insulted the colored clerks—humiliated them.

Matthew Anderson to Francis J. Grimké

Philadelphia, January 22, 1920.

Dear Grimké,

This has been a crowded day for me. It is now 11 o'clock Thursday night. I ought to be in the chair at the meeting of our Building and Loan Association which is in session in the basement of the church instead of writing to my old friend, Dr. Grimké. I have gone through much since I wrote you last. My experiences have been, as changeable, as a chameleon, or the shapes in a kaleidoscope. Several times I came near, if not all together, losing my temper, and if I did not it was because the ridiculous babbled up and I gave vent to a good hearty laugh, sometimes at the expense of some innocent victim; at other times at some ridiculous experience in the distant past.

I will mention two incidents. A little skinny, husky fellow called the other day at the office to matriculate, as a student in the Berean School—"What is your name please?" asked Miss Williams. The little fellow looked at her shyly for a moment and then said, "My name is Shine."—Our colored machinist in connection with the hosiery class became very unsatisfactory, and we had

advertised for another. A very spritely fellow called in answer to our inquiry. "What is your name?" I inquired.—"My name is James Unthink." I at once took him up to the nursery department and presented him to Mr. Buch who is over the department as Mr. Don't Think.—"Oh no, Dr. Anderson, you are mistaken," he holloed out. "My name is not Don't Think, but Unthink."

My chief trouble just now is the young man who was employed as my assistant is laying down on the job. He does not at all come up to my expectation, and what is worse I must keep him until the end of the school year. All that fine energy which he exhibited in July and August when you were here and all through September suddenly ceased when the school opened in October. He at once assumed the role of gentleman at large, whose hands must not touch much less do anything physical. His change-about-face, was really ludicrous. Sometimes I felt like roaring, at others like cursing. I know well what Archie will say. "That's Anderson over again. He slops all over when he first gets acquainted with one, but very soon discovers there is no good in him whatever." That may be true, but he must not forget, that the devil, at times comes to us as an angel of light, and that even he, Archie, has been deceived. And then again I think that we should treat even his Satanic majesty as we would the genuine article, so long as we think he is such.

My dear niece and her distinguished husband, the Rev. George Davis, are here on their winter vacation, from Columbus, Ohio where he has one of the leading Baptist Churches. My phone rang out on Monday, the 5th, and a voice cried out: "Is the Rev. Dr. Anderson home?"—"Yes," I said, "he is on the phone."—"Well who is this that is speaking to you?" the party said.—"Really I can't say though the voice is familiar."—"It is Fannie from Columbus," was the answer.—"Why hello, Fannie, when did you get here?"—"We arrived this forenoon."—"Where are you?"—"We are stopping at Fannie Williams'."—"How long are you going to be in the city?" I asked.—"Oh about two weeks."—"Well, aren't you going to spend some time with me?" I asked—"Well, I don't think so. Our friends here are expecting us, and hardly think we will have any time to spend with you."

Last week I thought I had better extend a formal invitation to them to spend a couple of days at my house. After five days I received the following answer:

“Dear Uncle Math:

“We are going to extend our visit two weeks longer than we expected, but we will not be able to spend any time at your house, as our friends are having us out to meals three times a day, ever since we have been in Philadelphia. At night we are very tired so you will please excuse us.”

I have decided to employ old Brother McKinney to come and give me a good solid kicking. And I know just what he will say. He will say: “Well, De-de-de-Doctor Anderson I-I-I know, you wo-wo-wouldn't ask m-m-me to d-d-do anything wo-wo-wrong, so js-js-just turn i-i-it up, and I wi-wi-wi-will kick you.”

Yesterday my dear niece and my dear sister-in-law called on business at the Building Loan Association, which was in session, and passed a few minutes in the house. They seemed like two peas in a pod. One of the homes in which my dear niece was feasted was the home of my dear sister-in-law, Grimké.

I have been thinking of late that I wanted to erase from my heart every unfriendly feeling towards my relatives, or at least I wanted to exhibit to them that I hold towards them no ill will whatever. That they might look upon me as their friend. In keeping with this purpose I have been putting myself out of the way to please them, when my niece Mary Bell came to Carrie's funeral I paid part of her traveling expenses in return besides giving her presents. I have Ella Still to many meals during the year. On every special occasion she was among the guests. I have been twice to see Will Still's wife in the hospital. Last week took her fruit and sent her a broiled chicken, but I am here to say I will never put myself out of the way again to accommodate any of my relatives, except it be my nephew John Anderson. I am through, entirely through. I have been a friend, a benefactor to them all, and they have returned my kindness with hate and contumely.

Margaret is home and is greatly improved, all send love to the Grimkés.

As ever your friend,

Matthew Anderson.

Charles B. Purvis to Francis J. Grimké

Los Angeles, Calif., January 25, 1920.

Dear Mr. Grimké:

Your notes and Thanksgiving sermon were duly received. I am pleased to hear from you and to learn through you that your brother and niece are well.