

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ

Edited by

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Volume IV

Letters

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Cuba not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from its shores. I am sure if I had a good field glass I could see the people.

O if Moses were still living what strength he would give to our cause. But he is dead, and we must fight it out alone.

At Kingston a number of Jamaicans came aboard, some were Americans who had stopped there off our steamer going down. Of the Jamaicans some are distinctly colored, others you can't tell from white. One colored woman is chaperoning a number of children, of all colors; the father looks to be white. The dining room steward is in a quandery—The father and the white father and his white children are at the white table, the mother and dark one are at the Negro table. He fears me so he changed my seat and had me sit at the head of the Negro table. I mean to see the heads in New York and give them to understand that unless they stop segregating the colored in the dining rooms of their boats I will put the law on the Company.

I spend my time at table in describing to Blanche in soto (?) tones the great inventions of powerful implements of war which are to be used in the near future against the Anglo Saxons.

But everything is couched in such blind language that no one knows, not even those at the table the nature of the conversation.

But it is coming nevertheless.

Anderson.

Matthew Anderson to Francis J. Grimké

On the Ocean, Sept. 22nd, 1921.

Got Even,

A number of Negroes and mulattoes got on at Kingston Jamaica, among them was a magistrate (a judge?) This Negro has been stepping very high ever since he has been on board. When he found that he was assigned to the "nigger" table he frothed at the mouth; and when I spoke to him, giving politely the time of day, he returned it with a grunt. Finally a white man from Jamaica, an acquaintance of his, invited him to his table which he has occupied ever since; neither he nor his white friend has deigned to speak nor to sit on the side of the boat if any number of blackies were there. I said to Blanche, "That nigger we must broil, then chop him up for dog feed—we have one dog aboard." This morning he and his white pal would like to meet me, but I have avoided them. Indeed

I pass and re-pass them and never look at them—and why should I? They do not belong to our class. Both are drinking men, full most of the time.

This morning is rainy. The decks are wet. The colored or Negro passengers have taken possession of the Salon while the high steppers including the Judge (?) are sitting out on the wet chairs or promenading the wet deck. One black woman, a Jamaican, is entertaining white and black on the piano.

We are now sailing along the New Jersey coast. We will not be able to land before 9 o'clock tomorrow morning—Friday.

As Ever,
Matthew Anderson.

Charles B. Purvis to Francis J. Grimké

Boston, Mass., Oct. 23rd, 1921.

Dear Mr. Grimké:

You are in my mind. You are using this glorious morning differently from the way I am spending mine. You are out urging your flock to be good Christians, not in profession, but practically; you have a big job on hand. Most people go where there is the least resistance; it is easy to profess religion, but it is laborious to practice it. Strangely I was discussing religion with Mrs. Purvis this morning. I was not attempting to convert her to my dogmas, I am too old to bend my energies to big undertakings. I was discussing Ford's paper—the "Dearborn Independent," and an anonymous book on the "Jewish Peril." I was showing how irrational was the position of some of our friends who are fanatical religionists and who are bitter on the Jew. If my head was clear of ache, and my vision free from the specks that make writing and reading very difficult, I would write out my views, tell of my discussions, and of my opinions. My physical defects prevent me; it is bad for me, but good for you. If I should pour forth like a Johnstown cataclysm, you might be betrayed into quoting the poet who said:

I love to watch the rooster crow,
He is like so many men I know,
Who brag and bluster, rant, and shout,
And beat their manly chest without
The least damn thing to speak about.