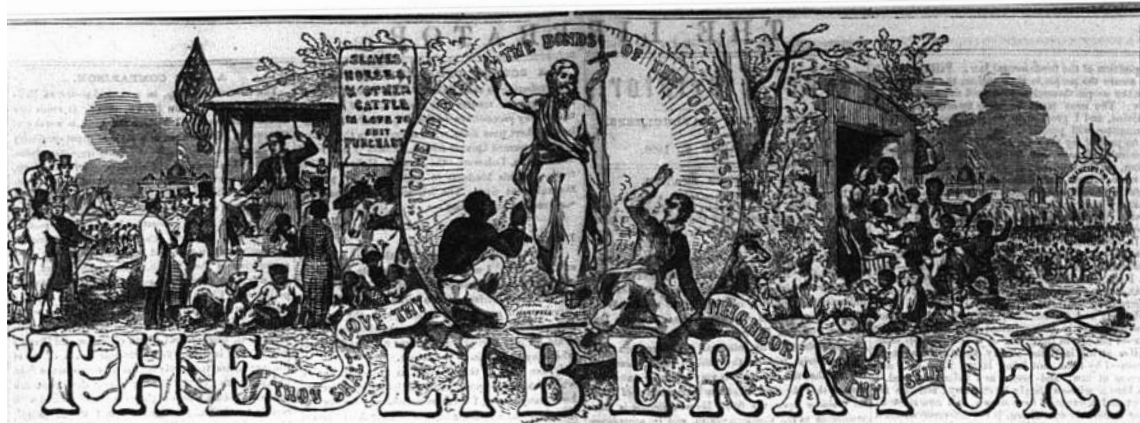


In the March 2, 1860 issue of *The Liberator*, Lizzie DeGarmo reports on the February 1860 Anti Slavery Caucus at Poughkeepsie.



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Our Country is the World, our Countrymen are all Mankind.

J. I

BOSTON, FRIDAY, MARCH 2, 1860.

WHO

CONVENTION AT POUGHKEEPSIE.

MR. GARRISON :

Will you permit a stranger friend to occupy a small space in your columns for the purpose of informing your many readers what a 'rich treat' we Poughkeepsians enjoyed, on the 23d and 24th of last month? Our anti-slavery friends, Parker Pillsbury, Susan B. Anthony, Aaron M. Powell and Marius R. Robinson, held a Convention in Concert Hall, Poughkeepsie City, at that time; and the deep interest and attention manifested by the people present were heart-cheering to those who have to wait and labor so long for 'the good time coming.' The speakers, as you well know, were of the highest order of talent and ability, and their discussions of the Slavery question, in all its varied aspects, were characterized by a clearness of insight, and an earnestness of purpose, that carried conviction to the hearts of their listeners.

The resolutions offered by Parker Pillsbury, and defended by himself and Mr. Robinson, were of the most radical and revolutionary type, in both language and sentiment; yet no one ventured to question their truthfulness and expediency, for the people are too thoroughly tired of this lukewarm opposition to slavery in the Territories, while they are fostering and cherishing it at home, by carrying out the requirements of this slaveholding and slavery-protecting government. It is a noticeable fact, and one worthy of remark, that the great Northern heart is every where beating with a more steady and healthful pulsation, since witnessing that noble and godlike sacrifice to principle, made by John Brown and his associates, upon that Virginia scaffold, in November last; and, although the lesson has been dearly learned, still it is not without its cheering results already; for it has shown us what manly courage, heroic fortitude, and

gize, when the trying hour shall come, when all gold must be tested in the Great Refiner's crucible.

The hall in which this Convention was held was a large one, and the several sessions quite fully attended, considering how literally flooded the city has been with all kinds of lectures, thus far, through the winter. There was a certain restiveness of spirit manifested by the pitiful apologists of the slave oligarchy, during the last evening, while the deeply probing artillery of Pillsbury's argument was pouring directly into the enemy's camp at its most vulnerable point, showing them their utter recklessness to all the great interests of humanity, by their blind devotion to the Union and Constitution. Yet, notwithstanding this little outbreak, the meeting was a perfect success, and the friends of freedom have great cause for rejoicing at the gradual spread of the true Abolition doctrine. The occasion was truly one in which the soul pours itself out in silent thankfulness to God, that such true-hearted men and women still live to bless humanity by their noble efforts in behalf of the down-trodden and oppressed.

There is yet one other cheering feature of this Convention, of which I wish to speak ere closing this communication, and that is, the numbers and intelligence of the colored people who attended its several sessions. Their number was proportionably large to that of the white people; and the interest and strict attention they manifested, joined to their quiet, orderly deportment, cannot help to reflect great credit to this much despised class of our citizens. Many of them are respected, and justly so, among us, as honest, upright business men and women; and it does

not seem possible that we should much longer tolerate that infamous decision, that declares that such as these 'have no rights that we, as God's children, are bound to respect.' Nor can we longer believe 'that institution to be beneficent, of God's ordaining, and for the best interests of both the black and white races,' that so effectually blots out the manhood and womanhood of over 4,000,000 of our brothers and sisters, and converts them into chattels personal.

Truly yours for the right,

LIZZIE DE GARMO.

Poughkeepsie, Feb. 1, 1860.

In the April 8, 1859 issue of *The Liberator*, James Marshall DeGarmo reports on the March 1859 Anti Slavery Caucus at Poughkeepsie.

James Marshall DeGarmo was born in Hyde Park, New York in 1838, the son of Peter and Sarah DeGarmo, who are buried at Crum Elbow Meeting House Cemetery. DeGarmo reports on the March 1859 Anti Slavery Caucus at Poughkeepsie.



Our Country is the World, our Countrymen are all Mankind. J. E. BOSTON, FRIDAY, APRIL 8, 1859. WHOL

THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE IN NEW YORK. Poughkeepsie, (N. Y.) March 27, 1859.

FRIEND GARRISON—It has been my wish, for a long time, to receive the *Liberator* regularly, and I now hope to gratify it. I like its abolition principles—its position on matters of Religion, as well as its stand upon Woman's Equality, Temperance, and Capital Punishment. Especially do I like its position upon the first and last of these, the two great crimes of our land. The one, a defiant denial of the manhood of man, and the womanhood of woman;—the other, with neither justice nor humanity upon its side,—with neither the highest good of society nor of the criminal in view, is a perfect embodiment of the law of vengeance.

Since your visit to this city, I have had occasion to test, in a measure, its anti-slavery force, by circulating a petition, praying that no slave might be sent back from the soil of New York. By many, the petition was graciously received, and signed; by some, silently refused; still another class objected, because it clashed with the national Constitution; and last, and lowest, were those who boldly denied the sinfulness of slavery, declared it in strict consonance with Christianity, and execrated all opposition to its rule. Concerning each of these, a word may not be out of place. Those who signed the petition were mostly our influential and upright citizens. Many of them were members of the ecclesiastical organizations of the place. This is a significant fact. It indicates the point toward which public feeling is tending. It shows that while the churches, as organizations, are in communion and fellowship with slaveholders, the individual members are beginning to awaken to a sense of the real position they occupy. If the body is yet contaminated by recognizing the Christian character of man-stealers, it is pleasing to know that a better sentiment is arousing among the laymen, which must aid materially in forming the Anti-Slavery Church of America. But I would remind them, that although they aid the fugitives, they still stand, by the requirements of their communion, the justifiers of slaveholders, by welcoming them as members of the Great Church. The churches of this city may not own slaves, nor permit slaveholders to become members, but they recognize, as Christian, churches that do fellowship slaveholders,—that do acknowledge the honorable nature of slaveholding. They are still members of those great organizations, that reach far down into the tyrant's abode, and receive, as moral and virtuous men, the minions of the Slave Power. The influence of these organizations is still given to support those bodies which sanction slavery. In their Conferences and Synods they greet, as Christians, such as are apologists of the accursed system. Some professed abolitionists, who delight in

the cry of 'Inidel,' 'Heretic,' &c., against such as do not receive their own ideas of a triune God, who declare them 'better dead than alive,' who believe not in 'everlasting fire,' with one hand upon a declaration of their sound Orthodoxy, will give the other to churches which boldly and unblushingly countenance slavery-apologizing ministers, as the Christian representatives of slaveholding churches; thus giving them credit before the world for a virtuous character. Such an anti-slavery principle would retain the shield of the Church around those pools of blood in which her garments are dyed. It is giving one hand to God, the other to Satan, if you only believe right.

Those who refused the fugitive's plea in silence must have lost their sense of justice, or sacrificed it to some minor consideration. I would ask them, in Heaven's name, what they do mean by such silence, if it be not to yield consent to the slaveholder's claim? Has their agreement with sin so benumbed their sense of right that they fail to abhor the crime of hunting down men? Or do they mean, by silence, to say that they feel no interest in the fugitive's behalf? If they are thus indifferent to crime, their ceremonial worship is an abomination; their profession, hypocrisy; their religion, a mockery. Do they respect justice? And then sit quietly down, and see even the meanest conceptions of justice outraged? Do they love humanity? How well they prove that love, by speechlessly allowing humanity to be robbed of its brightest ornament before their own eyes! Do they honor God? Admirably do they exhibit their honor by composedly countenancing kidnappers and murderers! In vain are their pretensions to abhor sin, when they thus quietly see it committed in its vilest forms. Perhaps they fear to array themselves with the enemies of slavery, because it is entrenched in high places! This is cowardice. In either case, they are negligent of their duty, regardless of the cries of the oppressed, and deaf to the pleadings of justice and humanity. And what shall I say of such as these? How safe is virtue in such hands? I can no more truly class them than with the supporters of the slave system, the silent observers of sin, the hushed spectators of villany, the abettors of all crime united.

I would also ask those who refused on constitutional grounds, by what rule they regulate their conduct? They were earnest in their protestations of hostility to slavery and slave-hunting, but in vain, till they act more consistently, will their words be, 'We hate slavery and slave-catching; but, O! the Constitution! that sanctions both!' What! their Constitution upholding slavery, sustaining the lowest iniquity, and they sustaining the Constitution! Thus shamelessly do they confess their complicity, and admit

they are following a guilty course. Out of their own mouths I impeach them, and they arraign themselves as enemies of human freedom. They cannot accuse me of injustice, for they admit the whole thing themselves. They denounce slavery as wicked, as criminal, and yet declare their loyalty to a document which supports all this wickedness, this criminality. They array the Constitution and the Eternal Law of Justice against each other, and to one they must turn for guidance. Dare they tell me that they prefer the Constitution to the higher and better Law, written on their own souls, when that parchment, by their own admission, is dyed with blood? If that document is the highest law they recognize, then let them cease their preaching of the gospel, their Sabbath gatherings, their sacraments and prayers; for they are mockeries. Let them take this instrument, fresh from the slave pen, and preach from, pray over, and kneel to it. Let them regulate their estimate of human liberty by it, and since it holds slaves, let them hold slaves; since it returns the fugitive, let them, like thirsty hounds, join in the chase. But if they admit a law of right, of Christianity, that governs them, higher than Constitutions, and more binding than national corruption, I at once pronounce them apostates to that Higher Law, when they permit a Constitution, which they confess countenances iniquity of the deepest dye, to stand between them and their duty. They would rather defy the eternal law, than disobey a slaveholding, slavery-propagating parchment!—Is this their Christianity—this their virtue? No wonder the nation reels in crime, when men so forget their sense of justice and morality as to prize more dearly the smiles and favors of slaveholders, than the approbation of conscience, the approval of every sense of right, and the smile of the Infinite Father. No wonder, when the plea of silence and affiliation with debauchery are put ahead of that justice and human right. It is thus the slaveholder crushes his victim, the tyrant rules the conquered. For my own part, I can see nothing which should prevent men from the performance of their moral duty. No consideration of present opposition; of love, of hatred; of Constitutions or Unions; of consequences, present or to come, should intimidate any true soul from sanctioning and upholding the right of all, black or white, to liberty. The right is before all agree-

ments, greater than all Unions. Only the right is acceptable with God. And he who yields a high principle to any Constitution, who sacrifices human freedom upon the altar of the Union, must yield his hollow pretence of being governed by any law higher than that document; and practically scoffs at the Infinite. He crawls at the foot of Slavery, its basest minion.

Concerning the open defenders of slavery, I have but little to say. They know *its guilt*, and stand self-convicted whenever they claim liberty as their own birthright. The religion that upholds slavery is false; and when they learn the first elements of genuine Christianity, they will find their assertions of its slaveholding nature to be false, utterly false. Their theology would hardly do to teach South-Sea Islanders morality, if it sanctions the 'sum of all villainies.' They may scoff at abolitionists, but cannot safely deride the brotherhood of mankind.

Your visit to Poughkeepsie was highly pleasing to the friends of emancipation, so far as I know, and we all hope that you will come among us again ere long. We have Republicanism in its best form, but its supporters still shrink from the imputation of abolitionism. We want earnest, honest advocates of emancipation, and they can do a good work.

Yours respectfully,
JAMES M. DEGARMO.