

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION

OF THE

BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE.

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CALL FOR THE CONVENTION.

THE following is the Call for the Convention, as published in the *Northern Independent* and the *Northern Christian Advocate*:

BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE—A CALL.

The undersigned, impressed with a deep and painful sense of the immense mischief, crime, and shame that Slavery is daily working in the Church, and feeling it to be our sacred obligation to do all we can to extirpate the evil in 1860, hereby invite the members of the Black River Conference, and one layman from each charge in said Conference, to meet, in the city of Oswego, on *Tuesday, the 9th day of November* next, at two o'clock P. M., for the following objects:

1. To organize a Methodist Anti-Slavery Union, in order to unite, incorporate, and direct the anti-slavery sentiment and measures of the ministry and laity of the Conference, and thus invest our action with more system, unanimity, and efficiency, in promoting THE GREAT MEASURE of the next General Conference, *the extirpation of Slavery from the M. E. Church.*

2. To devise and set in operation a plan of active measures; to enlist the Church more fully in action, prayer, and faith, against this stupendous abomination of our beloved Zion, and to roll off our reproach.

3. To provide for the raising of a suitable fund to meet all necessary expenses in the prosecution of the work.

4. To attend to any other business that may be important to the cause of extirpation.

We invite all to come, with full reliance upon God that he will guide our deliberations, and crown our labors with success.

J. C. VANDERCOOK, }  
 A. J. PHELPS,        } Committee of Correspondence  
 H. MATTISON,        }

FULTON, Oct. 16, 1858.

O. M. LEGATE,	J. H. BURNETT,	M. THRASHER,
M. D. GILLETT,	W. L. TISDALE,	S. SALISBURY,
I. S. BINGHAM,	GEO. H. SALISBURY,	H. SKELL,
GEO. SAWYER,	L. L. ADKINS,	WM. JONES,
JAMES ERWIN,	P. D. GORRIE,	E. C. BRUCE,
ISAAC HALL,	L. P. TAFT,	M. LYON,
S. B. CROSIER,	ALEXANDER LA CLAIR,	J. C. KILLAM,
J. T. ALDEN,	J. H. MANN,	BYRON ALDEN,
W. J. HUNT,	J. P. GRIFFIN,	DAVID CHIDESTER,
A. S. WIGHTMAN,	ISAAC BELL,	M. M. RICE,
W. MERRIFIELD,	WM. BARNES,	A. F. BIGELOW,
E. H. MUNGER,	J. B. EDWARDS,	D. D. PARKER,
S. DEWEY,	J. B. VAN PETTEN,	H. O. TILDEN,
J. SLEE,	B. HOLMES,	J. A. LIVINGSTON.
J. D. ADAMS,	R. REYNOLDS,	
O. C. COLE,	W. A. NICHOLDS,	

#### MEETING OF THE CONVENTION, ORGANIZATION, AND OFFICERS.

The Convention met at the appointed time, in the First M. E. Church, Oswego, and organized by the appointment of JOHN H. MANN, Esq., of Oswego, as President *pro tem.*, and Rev. J. B. FOOTE, of Syracuse, as Secretary *pro tem.*

After prayer by Rev. J. H. LAMB of Rome, the credentials of Delegates were called for, and forty-two ministers and forty laymen responded, and were entered upon the roll as members of the Convention. Several others were subsequently added.\*

The Convention was then permanently organized by the election of J. H. MANN, Esq., as President; Rev. J. B. FOOTE as Secretary;

\* Not having the roll of the Convention, we are obliged to omit it. It is nearly the same as the list of members of the Union given on a subsequent page.

Rev. J. ERWIN and J. B. EDWARDS, Esq., as Vice-Presidents; and O. O. SHUMWAY, Esq., of Fulton, as Assistant-Secretary.

A Committee of seven were appointed to prepare a Constitution for an Anti-Slavery Union, namely, Revs. J. C. VANDERCOOK, J. B. VAN PETTEN, H. MATTISON, J. S. BINGHAM, and V. V. NOTTINGHAM, Esq., O. O. SHUMWAY, Esq., and Prof. J. P. GRIFFEN.

Omitting all details and discussions, we will next give the

#### Platform of Principles adopted by the Convention.

1. *Resolved*, That we believe that the holding of human beings as property is a sin against God and man, and contrary to every principle of natural justice and of the Gospel of Christ.

2. *Resolved*, That we are more than ever convinced that slaveholding is not only practised to a large extent by the private membership of our Church in the border Conferences, but also by Class-Leaders and Stewards, and in many instances by local Preachers and Ministers in the Conferences.

3. *Resolved*, That we feel especially called upon at this time to protest against the further corruption and disgrace of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the toleration of slaveholding, both in the membership and in the ministry; and we earnestly entreat our beloved Bishops to enforce our existing rule of discipline against all slaveholding in the ministry.

4. *Resolved*, That we deem it a great impropriety, if not a compromise of Christian principle, for any minister of our Church to invite a slaveholder to his pulpit, and thus to recognize him as a minister of Christ. From the Bishop downward we should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them; and we are equally opposed to the recognition of the ministers of the M. E. Church South, whether personally connected with slavery or not.

5. *Resolved*, That as ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we will never cease our efforts till the Discipline of the Church is made *unconditionally to prohibit all slaveholding*, as well in the private membership as every where else.

6. *Resolved*, That we reiterate, with increased emphasis, our abhorrence of the doctrine put forth at the last General Conference, that *slavery is protected by the Constitution of the M. E. Church*.

7. *Resolved*, That we have no confidence whatever in any other plan of legislation against slavery than that adopted at the Anti-

Slavery Convention at Rochester, and also by the Black River Conference at its last session, namely, to legislate directly in the chapter on that subject, without any attempt to change the General Rule.

The following Constitution for an Anti-Slavery Union was reported by the Committee, and adopted unanimously, Article by Article, with the exception of a few negative votes on the motion to adopt the Second Article :

### CONSTITUTION OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY UNION.

ART. I.—The title of this Association shall be THE METHODIST ANTI-SLAVERY UNION of the Black River Conference.

ART. II.—The objects of this Union shall be to unite, incorporate, and direct the anti-slavery sentiment and efforts of the Conference, both of the ministry and laity, with a view to securing the Disciplinary extirpation of SLAVERY from the M. E. Church, at the next General Conference ; to arrange for the diffusion of information upon the subject, by conventions and addresses, and by the circulation of anti-slavery publications in all parts of the Conference ; to canvass every charge in the Conference for signatures to petitions ; and to obtain funds for the carrying out of this system of active agencies.

ART. III.—The officers of the Union shall be a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, and five Directors, who together shall constitute a Board of Managers, (five of whom shall constitute a quorum,) who shall have the entire direction of all the business and interests of the Union during the intervals of the session.

ART. IV.—It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to promote the objects of the Union by correspondence with auxiliary Unions and Committees, and to use his best endeavors to perfect and execute the plan herein adopted in all the charges of the Conference, and also, as far as practicable, to promote the organization of similar Unions in other Conferences.

ART. V.—At least one half of the Board of Managers shall at all times be laymen, who, together with the other officers, shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Meetings of the Union.

ART. VI.—In case of the death or resignation of any of the officers of the Union, the remaining officers shall have power to fill the vacancy thus occasioned, till the next annual meeting.

ART. VII.—Any member or friend of the Methodist Episcopal Church may become a member of this Union by subscribing to its Constitu-

tion, and the payment of from twenty-five cents to one dollar per year, according to ability.

ART. VIII.—Any four members of the Board of Managers shall have power to call a meeting of the members of the Union whenever they judge it to be necessary.

ART. IX.—This Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the Union at any annual meeting.

The Constitution being adopted in detail and as a whole, a call was then made for the names of those who wished to become members of the Union by subscribing to its Constitution and paying the initiation fee; whereupon the following names were reported for membership in the Union:

**MEMBERS OF THE BLACK RIVER CONFERENCE  
ANTI-SLAVERY UNION.**

J. H. MANN,	J. R. NICHOLS,	W. H. FARRAR,
J. ERWIN,	C. W. ELMER,	M. LYON,
J. B. EDWARDS,	E. H. MUNGER,	A. F. WHEELER,
J. B. FOOT,	W. LAMBERSON,	A. J. PHELPS,
O. O. SHUMWAY,	R. REDHEAD,	GEO. H. DIXON,
H. SKEEL,	O. C. LATHROP,	P. B. BARKER,
S. B. CROSIER,	J. P. GRIFFIN,	GEO. SAWYER,
B. FULLER,	I. S. BINGHAM,	H. P. ROSS,
O. C. COLE,	M. H. GAYLORD,	S. BALL,
M. D. T. B. WELLS,	A. M. ROE,	M. D. GILLET,
H. S. HOLMES,	R. R. RICHMOND,	F. R. SMITH,
J. D. WRIGHT,	D. FAVILLE,	A. M. FRADENBURG,
D. S. WEED,	A. A. GEER,	J. S. CRANE,
N. W. ROSE,	J. M. SMITH,	S. F. SPENCER,
V. V. NOTTINGHAM,	S. G. ABBOTT,	J. N. SMITH,
MRS. A. A. VANDER- COOK,	P. P. WRIGHT,	W. ARNOLD,
MISS M. S. EDWARDS,	M. PECK,	W. L. TISDALE,
“ ELIZA L. BRIGHAM,	J. T. ALDEN,	W. WELBURN,
MRS. SUSAN A. DIXON,	R. N. BARBER,	G. DE MOTT,
S. D. WILCOX,	N. SALISBURY,	B. ALDEN,
H. MATTISON,	L. P. TAFT,	W. HOSMER,
R. REYNOLDS,	G. S. THOMAS,	L. GOODRICH,
W. A. NICHOLS,	S. E. BROWN,	W. HAMILTON,
P. SANDHOVAL,	M. THRASHER,	O. M. LEGATE,
	WM. JONES,	H. ROBINSON,

W. I. HUNT,	HIRAM NICHOLS,	S. FERGUSON,
ISAAC BELL,	M. F. CARPENTER,	H. SAEFFORD,
J. M. JENKINS,	F. JONES,	D. P. PECK,
L. L. ADKINS,	G. H. SALISBURY,	S. DEWEY,
M. L. MARY,	S. SALISBURY,	C. BALDWIN,
A. HUNTINGTON,	H. C. WHITING,	N. BUNNEL,
B. SPENCER,	J. STRUBLE,	H. N. BARRETT,
J. C. VANDERCOOK,	J. D. ADAMS,	J. B. VAN PETTEN.

About seventy-five dollars were paid in by the above persons, and passed over to the Treasurer of the Union, subsequently elected.

### OFFICERS OF THE UNION.

In accordance with the provisions of the Third Article of the Constitution, the Union then proceeded to elect its officers by ballot, with the following results :

Whole number of ballots cast, 97.

Votes for each officer as follows :

For President—Rev. H. MATTISON, 83 votes.

“ Vice President—J. H. MANN, Esq., Oswego, 87 votes.

“ Cor. Secretary—Rev. J. C. VANDERCOOK, Fulton, 81 votes.

“ Rec. Secretary—Rev. J. B. VAN PETTEN, Fairfield, unanimous.

“ Treasurer—O. O. SHUMWAY, Esq., Fulton, 70 votes.

“ Directors—Rev. GEO. SAWYER, Fulton, 73 votes ;

“ A. J. PHELPS, Oswego, 83 votes ;

V. V. NOTTINGHAM, Esq., Syracuse, 87 votes ;

J. B. EDWARDS, Esq., Oswego, 82 votes ;

ISAAC BELL, Esq., Weedsport, 81 votes.

### RESOLUTIONS.

The following resolutions were passed by the Convention :

*Resolved*, That we invite Rev. H. MATTISON to preach on the objects of this Convention throughout the bounds of the Black River Conference, so far as he can consistently with his other engagements.

A resolution was also adopted, inviting the Pastors of our churches throughout the Conference, to preach upon the subject.

### MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS.

On the call of the President, the Board of Managers met immediately after the adjournment of the Convention, and after transacting

some little business, adjourned to meet in Fulton the next day, Nov. 11th, at nine o'clock A.M.

### CONSTITUTION FOR AN ANTI-SLAVERY UNION ON A CIRCUIT OR STATION.

ART. I.—This Association shall be known as the Anti-Slavery Union of \_\_\_\_\_ [Station or Circuit,] auxiliary to the Anti-Slavery Union of the Black River Conference.

ART. II.—The objects of this Union shall be to carry out the designs and measures of the Conference Union, in order to secure the extirpation of all slaveholding from the M. E. Church, by diffusing information first among the members of this Charge, and as far as possible, through the Conference, by securing the delivery of sermons and addresses upon the subject, and by the circulation of approved anti-slavery publications, and also to circulate petitions through the Charge, and raise funds to defray the necessary expenses of all such active efforts.

ART. III.—The officers of this Society, all of whom shall be laymen, shall be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, who, together with two Directors, shall constitute a Board of Managers; who shall have the entire direction of all the affairs of the Union from one annual meeting to another.

ART. IV.—It shall be the duty of the Secretary to record all the proceedings of the Board, and report the organization to the Secretary of the Conference Union,\* and to do all the usual duties of such an office.

ART. V.—In case of the death or resignation of any of the officers of the Union, the remaining officers shall have power to fill the vacancy till the next annual meeting.

ART. VI.—The Board of Managers shall take the most effectual measures to secure at least one able discourse each year upon the subject of slavery in the M. E. Church, as also an anniversary meeting, till this great sin and reproach is rolled away from our beloved Zion; the character of this Union being that of an invincible and indissoluble league against slavery in the Church of Christ, till we are troubled with that "great evil" no more forever.

ART. VII.—The Board shall take effectual measures to place a copy

\* Rev. J. C. VANDERCOOK, Fulton, N. Y., is at present the Corresponding Secretary of that organization, to whom all letters of inquiry should be addressed.

of some approved anti-slavery publication, in pamphlet or tract form, in every Methodist family in the Charge, and to raise the means necessary for such a canvass and supply.

ART. VIII.—Whatever funds can be raised for general purposes, over and above what may be necessary to supply the [Station or Circuit,] shall be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Black River Conference Anti-Slavery Union, for the circulation of anti-slavery documents and petitions, where no pecuniary aid can be obtained.\*

ART. IX.—Any member or friend of the Methodist Episcopal Church may become a member of this Union by subscribing to its Constitution, and paying in advance from twenty-five cents to one dollar per year, according to ability.

ART. X.—Any three members of the Board of Managers shall have power to call a meeting of the Union whenever they judge it to be necessary.

ART. XI.—This Constitution may be amended by a majority of the members of the Union at any annual meeting.

The above is designed only as a general draft, subject, of course, to such modifications as local Unions may desire. Still, it is believed to contain every thing essential to a thorough-going local anti-slavery organization.

We hope all persons to whom this pamphlet is sent will at once interest themselves in the matter; have a public meeting called; a sermon, address, or speeches delivered, and a Union organized. Let us be in earnest and of one mind, in seeking by all proper means to rid our beloved Church of slavery at the next General Conference.

The Board of Managers of the Conference Union have under examination several anti-slavery tracts and pamphlets, with a view to adopting the most suitable for general circulation. Having selected and recommended one or more, they will procure them at the net cost of publishing, and furnish them to local Unions at actual cost.

Every new Union organized should at once be reported by its Secretary to Rev. J. C. VANDERCOOK, Fulton, N. Y.

All surplus money should be sent by draft to O. O. SHUMWAY, Esq., Treasurer, Fulton, N. Y., that they may be duly acknowledged in the Annual Report.

\* This is of great importance, as hundreds of dollars will have to be expended in this way before the necessary information can be got before our people generally, and petitions thoroughly circulated.