

**LIBERTY OR DEATH—OHIO AND KANSAS—ANTHONY BURNS' EXCOMMUNICATED FOR RUNNING AWAY, &c.**

CLEVELAND, O., Feb. 15, 1856.

DEAR GARRISON:

Events growing out of and deeply affecting anti-slavery in the West, and every where, crowd so rapidly one upon another, that one hardly knows what to speak of. Two events in this State have sent a thrill through every county and town and city, and the end is not yet.

*The Special Message of Governor Chase, and the Resolutions of the Legislature resulting therefrom.* Have you seen that Message and those Resolutions, all touching Kansas, the Missouri ruffians, and their leaders, Franklin Pierce and Caleb Cushing? They are now before me. They recommend the admission of Kansas as a free State, the admission of Reeder as the legal and true representative of Kansas to Congress, and the passage of such laws, by Congress, as shall secure the freedom of election in Kansas. It is not much, but it is something. The Message and the Resolutions, and the discussion of them in the Legislature, have greatly stirred up all parties here. I think the State will sustain the Governor and the Legislature in their efforts. This is one event of importance.

A second event is, *the Cincinnati Tragedy.* MARGARET GARNER, that loving, heroic mother, who cut her child's throat rather than see Christians (?) consign it to the horrors of slavery, bids fair to live on the record of time when the names of Patrick Henry, of Washington, Jefferson, and their compeers, shall have been forgotten. Patrick Henry spoke the words—'Give me liberty or give me death!' Margaret did the deed, and with her own hand took the life of her child, dearer to her heart than her own life, and would have done the same to her other three children, and then to herself, had there been time, to save herself and them from the cruelties and sufferings which Christians (?) and Republicans (?) would have inflicted on them. Who can blame that mother? Not one who thinks it right to take life at all. Will not Wendell Phillips, Theodore Parker, Henry Ward Beecher, Mrs. Stowe, and Dr. Lyman Beecher, deliver orations and sermons, and write eulogies on that slave mother, and make her name, her fame and heroism, known to the ends of the earth, as one who, like that Roman of old, could put the knife into the heart of her child, to save it from its Christian and Republican ravishers? Margaret acted not blindly nor inconsiderately, but she had deliberately made up her mind to kill all her children, and then herself, rather than again be subjected to the pollutions and cruelties of American slaveholders. Why do not all the ministers and churches, poets and orators, politicians and statesmen, who believe it right to kill to save themselves from slavery, combine to spread the name and heroism of MARGARET GARNER to the ends of the earth? She sought not to injure her cruel oppressors; she sought to destroy her own life and the lives of her children, to escape the doom of what the Reverend Doctors, Adams, Lord and Blagden call the God-ordained and Christ-sanctioned institution of slavery. That tragedy has appalled the whole State; it may well appal the world, that Christians (?) and Republicans (?) should inflict such cruelties on innocent, helpless women and children, rather than have them subjected to them. Where are Nehemiah Adams, Nathan Lord and George W. Blagden now? Why do they not come forth and arraign Margaret Garner before God and man as a murderer, because she killed her babe rather than have it fall into their pious, reverend, slave-catching hands?

But Margaret is in the hands of the conjutors of these Rev. Doctors, and Ohio, with her two millions of people, has no way to rescue her, but to arrest her on the charge of MURDER! What will Salmon P. Chase, Governor of Ohio, now do? It is for him alone to say whether that mother and her still living children shall be given up to slavery. If they are sent back, he and the Republican party of this State must be held accountable, for they now have an opportunity to array the State in a victorious conflict with the slave-hunting Union. Will the Republicans, who now control the State, protect that mother from the fangs of the slave-holding Union? We shall see. If they do, the entire State, and the North too, I think, will sustain them. Be assured, nothing has ever occurred in Ohio which has so deeply and so painfully moved the hearts of the people as this.

What can I say of a religion and government which drive even loving mothers to such fearful deeds, to save their little ones from the outrages and cruelties which they would inflict? Can I but loathe a system of God-worship which can perpetuate and sanction pollutions and crimes in its adherents, that drive their victims to such fearful deeds to escape them? The slaveholding God of the American Church and Republic is a malignant, bloody fiend; for one, I scorn his worship and defy his power. Better no God at all than such an object of worship. With disgust I turn from such a polluted and bloody shrine, and lovingly and reverently bow to the loving, just and humane God of anti-slavery.

I am asked often—Did Margaret Garner do right? Perfectly right, just and noble, according to her own standard of right, and according to the standard of nearly universal Christendom; but perfectly wrong, according to my standard. Had she cut the throats of the master and of all who sought to enslave her, and should the slaves of the South cut the throats of all their oppressors, they would do right, as the church and clergy of this nation count right. But their bloody standard is not mine; their God of 'hot wrath, of revenge and war,' is not my God. The absolute sanctity of human life is the only principle that can save this world from slavery, war, anarchy and murder. This is the lesson taught every day by passing events.

*Fugitive Slaves.* Slaves are running across Ohio from every point on the river, to find protection in Canada against American religion and republicanism. The Ohio River is frozen over from Pittsburg to Cincinnati—600 miles. Over that long bridge of ice, slaves from Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee are passing, to be free, in great numbers. Good! I wish I had an opportunity to trample the Fugitive Slave Law under foot, and show my contempt for the authority of the Union every hour. Fugitive slaves have become a regular and a principal article of export on Western Railways. No help for it. The business of running for liberty all sets from South to North. The current can never be turned South.

*Anthony Burns.* Have you seen his excommunication? You have, doubtless, or I would forward it. It begins, 'The Church of JESUS CHRIST,' &c., and ends by excommunicating him from the 'communion and fellowship of this church,' because he had 'disobeyed the laws of God and man,' in running away from slavery. Was such a burlesque on Jesus of Nazareth ever perpetrated before? The Church of Jesus Christ cast a man out and give him up to the buffetings of Satan, because he escaped from the condition of a slave to that of a free man—of a brute to that of a man! Who could wish to enter such a church of Christ? The first step towards justice, mercy and truth leads out of it. What is its recommendation good for? Poor Anthony Burns! I did not think he would sink so low as to feel that the recommendation of such a church could help him! But his estimate of the sin of slavery must be very small, and his reverence for the Baptist Church, even though it trafficks in slaves and the souls of men, be very great, or he never could have applied to such a church for a testimony to his character. But I am glad they cast him out. I am glad to see the Southern churches true to their idea, though the churches of the North are so utterly recreant to liberty and humanity. But let the Northern churches see what those are with whom they seek Christian union.

I have been in Ohio about three weeks. Yesterday morning, the mercury, at sunrise, was twenty-four degrees below zero where I was, and the snow sixteen inches deep on a level. Many poor, thinly-clad fugi-

tive slaves have suffered heroically to gain their freedom. Lake Erie spreads out before me, showing one solid mass of ice; a great chance for ice merchants, but a dreary sight to the fugitives from American stripes and chains.

HENRY C. WRIGHT.