

LETTERS FROM FREDERICK DOUGLASS. NO. III.

DUBLIN, (Great Brunswick Street.) }
September 29th, 1845. }

MY DEAR FRIEND GARRISON:

I promised, on leaving America, to keep you informed of my proceedings whilst I remained abroad. I sometimes fear I shall be compelled to break my promise, if by keeping it is meant writing letters to you fit for publication. You know one of my objects in coming here was to get a little repose, that I might return home refreshed and strengthened, ready and able to join you vigorously in the prosecution of our holy cause. But, really, if the labor of the last two weeks be a fair sample of what awaits me, I have certainly sought repose in the wrong place. I have work enough here, on the spot, to occupy every inch of my time, and every particle of my strength, were I to stay in this city a whole six months. The cause of temperance alone would afford work enough to occupy every inch of my time. I have invitation after invitation to address temperance meetings, which I am compelled to decline. How different here, from my treatment at home! In this country, I am welcomed to the temperance platform, side by side with white speakers, and am received as kindly and warmly as though my skin were white.

I have but just returned from a great Repeal meeting, held at Conciliation Hall. It was a very large meeting—much larger than usual, I was told, on account of the presence of Mr. O'Connell, who has just returned from his residence at Derrynane, where he has been spending the summer, recruiting for an energetic agitation of repeal during the present autumn. On approaching the door, or gateway leading to the Hall, and observing the denseness of the crowd, I almost despaired of getting in; but, having by the kindness of James Haughton, Esq. obtained a note of introduction to the Secretary of the Repeal Association, and being encouraged to persevere by the evident disposition of the friendly crowd to let me pass,—many of whom seemed to be holding in their breath, and thus contracting their dimensions, to allow me passage way,—I pressed forward, and with much difficulty succeeded in reaching the interior. The meeting had been in progress for sometime before I got in. When I entered, one after another was announcing the Repeal rent for the week. The audience appeared to be in deep sympathy with the Repeal movement, and the announcement of every considerable contribution was followed by a hearty round of applause, and sometimes a vote of thanks was taken for the donors. At the close of this business, Mr. O'Connell rose and delivered a speech of about an hour and a quarter long. It was a great speech, skilfully delivered, powerful in its logic, majestic in its rhetoric, biting in its sarcasm, melting in its pathos, and burning in its rebukes. Upon the subject of slavery in general, and American slavery in particular, Mr. O'Connell grew warm and energetic, defending his course on this subject. He said, with an earnestness which I shall never forget, 'I have been assailed for attacking the American institution, as it is called,—negro slavery. I am not ashamed of that attack. I do not shrink from it. I am the advocate of civil and religious liberty, all over the globe, and wherever tyranny exists, I am the foe of the tyrant; wherever oppression shows itself, I am the foe of the oppressor; wherever slavery rears its head, I am the enemy of the system, or the institution, call it by what name you will. I am the friend of liberty in every clime, class and color. My sympathy with distress is not confined within the narrow bounds of my own green island. No—it extends itself to every corner of the earth. My heart walks abroad, and wherever the miserable are to be succored, or the slave to be set free, there my spirit is at home, and I delight to dwell.'

Mr. O'Connell was in his happiest mood while delivering this speech. The fire of freedom was burning in his mighty heart. He had but to open his mouth, to put us in possession of 'thoughts that breathe, and words that burn.' I have heard many speakers within the last four years—speakers of the first order; but I confess, I have never heard one, by whom I was more completely captivated than by Mr. O'Connell. I used to wonder how such monster meetings as those of Repeal could be held peaceably. It is now no matter of astonishment at all. It seems to me that the voice of O'Connell is enough to calm the most violent passion, even though it were already manifesting itself in a mob. There is a sweet persuasiveness in it, beyond any voice I ever heard. His power over an audience is perfect.

When he had taken his seat, a number withdrew from the Hall, and, taking advantage of the space left vacant thereby, I got quite near the platform, for no higher object than that of obtaining a favorable view of the *Liberator*. But almost as soon as I did so, friend Buffum had by some means (I know not what) obtained an introduction to Mr. John O'Connell, son of Daniel O'Connell, and nothing would do but I must be introduced also—an honor for which I was quite unprepared, and one from which I naturally shrunk. But Buffum; in real Yankee style, had resolved (to use a Yankee term) to 'put me through' at all hazards. On being introduced to Mr. O'Connell, an opportunity was afforded me to speak; and although I scarce knew what to say, I managed to say something, which was quite well received.

The Hutchinson family have been here a week or more, and have attended two of my lectures on slavery; and here, as at home, did much by their soul-stirring songs to render the meetings interesting.

My Narrative is just published, and I have sold one hundred copies in this city. Our work goes on nobly. James and myself leave here for Wexford on Monday next. We shall probably hold two meetings there, and from thence go to Waterford, and then to Cork, where we shall spend a week or ten days. I have also engagements in Belfast, which will detain me in Ireland all of one month longer.

Much love to my anti-slavery friends.

Ever one with you, through good and evil report.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.