

THE WORKS OF FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ

Edited by

CARTER G. WOODSON

Volume IV

Letters

The Associated Publishers, Inc.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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Printed in the United States of America

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Emmett J. Scott to Francis J. Grimké

Washington, D. C., November 1, 1927.

Dear Doctor Grimké:

Mrs. Scott and I appreciate more than I can possibly tell you the comforting expressions contained in your letter which followed closely upon the passing of our beloved daughter.¹

We, too, like yourself, had hoped all along for her recovery, but the Father in Heaven has called her, and we bow submissively to His will. I am frank to say that, sorely stricken as we are, it is so difficult for us to "understand". We try and try, but find ourselves more and more bewildered. It is comforting to know that we have the assurance of Jesus Christ, as you express it, that "death is not the end."

Young Delany has suffered as we have suffered, but we are all finding comfort in the cheer of good friends and in the contemplation of the beautiful life which has passed on.

Mrs. Scott asks me to tell you that she will not soon forget that beautiful letter you have written us, and that it brought her good cheer in the midst of her sorrow and anguish. It certainly helped me!

Sincerely yours,
Emmett J. Scott.

Matthew Anderson to Francis J. Grimké

Philadelphia, Pa., November 9, 1927.

Dear Grimké:

Your letter received yesterday was read with great interest by us all. I am very glad that you have improved. Be very careful in going up and down stairs, be careful in crossing the street; do not allow yourself to become the least excited. I have had touches of vertigo—I remember one time crossing 12th Street, I think it was on Chestnut—all at once I became perfectly bewildered, and called to a gentleman to help me across the street; if a car had been coming then, I am sure I would likely have been killed. So be careful.

I received a card from Nana—she says her Father while better, is quite unwell. So we three are getting nearer and nearer the

¹Reference here is to the passing of Clariisa Scott who was the wife of Hubert Relany. She was a much beloved young woman.

shore—no question about it. I know it's coming, but I am not going to worry the least about it. I am going to try to crowd into my life all the good I can to advance the condition of our people. I know you are doing the same.

I want you to read the clippings enclosed, and express your opinion on the same.

All send love to you and yours.

Sincerely yours,
Matthew Anderson.

One of my experiences

In my experience as pastor and educator in the city of Philadelphia for nearly forty years, I have frequently been astounded by the deep-seated prejudice exhibited towards the Negro on the part of many intelligent men and women high up in the Christian Church.

In the summer of 19— at the request of a number of friends I went to Coatesville, Penna., to call upon Mr. Charles L. Huston, president of the Luke's Iron Works. Mr. Huston is a reputed philanthropist, interested in many charities, an elder in the Presbyterian Church and the Chairman of the Permanent Committee of Evangelism of the General Assembly. In addition to this Mr. Huston employs a great many Negroes in his firm and is regarded as a friend of the race.

When I reached his residence, I saw a gentleman in his shirt-sleeves walking around in his yard examining the flowers. I took it for granted that it was Mr. Huston. I went up to him and I said "I presume this is Mr. Huston"; he replied in the affirmative. I then said "I am Mr. Anderson, pastor of the Berean Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia and principal of the Berean Manual Training and Industrial School. Would you kindly give me a short interview?" He made no reply but motioned me towards the house. As he was about to enter the house and it was a very hot day and there were chairs on the veranda, I said, "Mr. Huston, could I not see you here on the porch?" He at once had me seated and took a seat beside me. I then went on to tell him about my educational work, why it was started, the success it had attained, its character, and needs. "I have come to see, Mr. Huston, whether you would not be willing to make a contribution to the school." Looking me

squarely in the face, he said, "I must tell you frankly that I am losing my interest in your race. Most of the leaders of your people are very assertive, they want to be the social equal of white people. You have come here, and look how you have introduced yourself to me. You said, 'I am, Mr. Anderson.' Now what do you mean by that? You mean simply that you are my social equal and I don't care to have anything to do with a colored man that uses any such assertiveness."

For the moment I was shocked and thoroughly indignant, felt like using all the invectives I could command. But another thought was also suggested, looking him straight in the face, I said, "Mr. Huston, may I ask you how would you have me introduce myself?" For a moment he was speechless, then scratching his head he said, "Why introduce yourself as Anderson." I said "Why, Mr. Huston, that suits me, as I don't think there is any name superior to Anderson, I am certainly proud of my name and hereafter Mr. Huston, when I come to this city to see you and gentlemen of this community, I will always introduce myself as Anderson."

I saw that I had unhorsed him as he at once began to tell me about his works. The number of hands he employed, the number of colored men he had in his employ, his great interest in temperance, his refusal to employ any one who drinks, and the improvement in his men since he took this stand. His family relation, his marrying a southern woman, a native of Atlanta, who as a girl was very much interested in charities, especially the hospitals of her own city, and it was because of this fact he became interested in her and as a result he became her husband. On their return to Atlanta with their first child the little one took diphtheria while there which was fatal. In the course of a few years their second increase and visit to Atlanta, the second child took diphtheria while there and came near dying, of his wife's great interest in the poor about Coatesville, all of which he told me unsolicited. Before leaving the thought occurred to me I might succeed in making this brother a real friend of the Berean School and turning to him I said, "Mr. Huston, you will pardon, what I am about to say, but I want to say to you, sir, that you have a great mission to fill in my race. You may not know it. I feel satisfied that you have a big heart. I believe that God wants you to help to lift up the race that has been so long oppressed, and I want you to do it. I want you to agree to take the place on the Board of a man who has been one of the best friends of my

work, namely, Mr. John H. Converse." "O, do you know I have been asked to take Mr. Converse's place on the Evangelistic Commission?" said he, "I do not have the money which Mr. Converse had, however, and I am so overwhelmed with work that I could not give it the time." I said, "Don't give an answer now, but think the matter over and pray over it." I must confess that even while I was saying this and believed all that I was saying, I could not rid myself that he ought to have been severely rebuked for the insult that he gave me. Before leaving I left him some printed matter concerning the school also one or two addresses, one on the servant question. It was the last of the week when I called. On Monday I received two letters, one from Mrs. Huston, in which she expressed her high appreciation of my lecture on the servant question, thinking it was most practical and that I was a man of hard sound sense, and she wanted to know more about the Berean School, in which letter she enclosed her check for ten dollars, saying at the same time that I would hear also from Mr. Huston. The other letter was from Mr. Huston, himself, in which he said that he hoped that I would accept his check for one hundred dollars for my most excellent work and he was sorry that he could not send more at that time. He addressed me as the "Reverend Matthew Anderson, D.D., Principal of the Berean Manual Training and Industrial School."¹

Daniel W. Hays to Francis J. Grimké

Baltimore, Md., Nov. 14, 1927.

Dear Doctor Grimké:—

My attention has just been called to the recurrence of your Birthday. Though somewhat belated, I embrace the opportunity to add my hearty congratulation to the many you have received from friendly sources. I wish you many returns, bringing health and good cheer.

I thought of you when reading Psalms, 92:12, 13, 14, especially the last verse.

God bless you.

Yours very truly,
Daniel W. Hays.

¹ Dr. Grimké was interested in this case for the reason that it justified his often disputed accusation that race prejudice had become deep seated in the Church itself—so much so that there was little room for the practice of the principles taught by Jesus of Nazareth.