

**CHRISTIAN LIBERTIES IN BOSTON:
A SKETCH OF RECENT ATTEMPTS
TO DESTROY THEM THROUGH
THE DEVICE OF A GAG-BY-LAW
FOR GOSPEL PREACHERS**

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Christian Liberties in Boston: A Sketch of Recent Attempts to Destroy Them through the Device of a Gag-By-Law for Gospel Preachers by Wm. F. Davis

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WM. F. DAVIS

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—IN—

BOSTON.

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THROUGH THE DEVICE OF

A Gag-By-Law for Gospel Preachers.

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INTRODUCTION.

FRIENDS OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY :

These pages have all been written or compiled in Suffolk Jail, since my second incarceration, on the 12th day of the 10th month of this year. They lack the supervision of even a single earthly friend. To err is human. But it is believed that whatever mistakes occur in the following pages, sent to press chapter by chapter as soon as written, in response to printer's call for "copy," to be in type by a specified time, are but as the small dust of the balance in comparison with the gigantic wrong here assailed.

The saintly Heman Lincoln, late Professor of sacred history in Newton Theological Seminary, not known to me personally until after my first imprisonment for preaching, by his letters, published in the *Boston Journal* and in other papers, called the attention of citizens far and wide to the limitless usurpation attempted through Boston revolutionary by-lawry. Besides these patriotic published protests, the writer received within four months past six private communications from Professor Lincoln, burning with righteous indignation at the flagrant outrage upon the rights of free-born American citizens embodied in the odious ordinance. Had it not pleased God to give our beloved brother rest from his labors, before even a single chapter of this pamphlet was written, he would doubtless have contributed the Introduction to the following pages, and have supervised the whole, as he had kindly signified his willingness to do.

He has joined the glorious company of the martyrs. Abel, Enoch, Daniel, Jeremiah, Stephen, Peter, Paul, Wil-

liam Tyndal, John Rogers, John Bunyan, the Huguenots, Roger Williams, George Washington, Wendell Phillips, John Brown, and a bright throng of kindred spirits, have, as the writer believes, lately received direct, and very fresh tidings from that fearless, and well-nigh peerless soldier of Christ, concerning this latest Boston notion for ordaining anarchy.

The publication of nearly all the press notices and letters bearing on the iniquitous ordinance must be deferred. Intelligent Christians, with whatever denomination they may be connected, will not misunderstand the writer, in his arraignment of the Rum-Jesuit conspiracy, to which he believes we owe a specimen of City-Council legislation that might be fitly designated, *an act for producing riots, for annihilating municipal order, and for exterminating public peace.*

God's children, known of Him, knowing and loving one another, and departing from all iniquity, are to be found in all those outward communions known in man's directory as "Greek Church," "Armenian Church," "Catholic Church," "Episcopal Church," "Methodist Episcopal Church," "Presbyterian Church," and many others. But whatever outward folds these true children of God may now be catalogued in by us, God reckons them all as members of his *"one flock."* John 10: 16. True Greek text.

They are all really members of the One Catholic, Apostolic, Davidic, Abrahamic, Noachian, Patriarchal, True Church of Christ. They are all martyrs, witnesses, missionaries, or disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. But it is equally manifest to all everywhere, who are taught of God, that in every one of the various "denominations" there are to be found children of the devil, haters of Christ and of his gospel and of good men, who of course *pretend* not to be such.

These men are full of falsehood, treachery, hypocrisy, and

flattery. Their speech doth bewray them. By their fruits they are known. On the one hand, as Lowell says,—

[They] "daily cower, and cringe, and plot,
And Sins climb, and know it not."

Their intercourse with each other is by private winks, and signs, and passwords, and grips, and plots, and secret meetings. By these means they devise, on the other hand, how to gratify their appetite for riches, and praise of men, high-sounding titles, foppish regalia, expensive dinners, after-dinner flattering speeches, vain parades, and whitewashed sepulchres. Whatever names these men may apply to themselves, they are really members of the Catholic Apostate, Cainish, Sodomite, Baalamite, Nicolaitain, Romish, Rumish, Jesuit, Mormon, Masonic, Tobacco, Satanic Church.

From such separate thyself. They gave to Boston the gag-by-law for gospel preachers, concerning which the reader may well ponder the subjoined first two leading articles in *THE CONGREGATIONALIST AND BOSTON RECORDER*, BOSTON, THURSDAY, JULY 24, 1884, in contrast with what appeared in that journal on the sixth day of last month :

A Christian whom circumstances have misrepresented, but whose conscience is clear, always has this assurance, that he can afford to wait for his vindication.

Rarely, if ever, does integrity fail to be recognized at last. The words of the Psalmist, "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light," are certain of fulfilment. Matters never have been settled finally unless they have been settled rightly. It is in accord both with the nature of things and with the divine will that goodness shall triumph over evil, and that its supremacy shall be evident to all; and any beliefs, plans, efforts, or even any apparently established institutions, which are based upon the disregard of this fact, are built upon rotten foundations and are certain to fall. The inherent buoyancy of truth brings it up to view sooner or later, and God makes it so radiant that nobody can fail to perceive its glory.

It is time for the citizens of Boston to wake up to the fact that the sacred right of free speech is being interfered with unjustifiably by an ordinance of the City Council. On Sunday afternoon last,