TO THE PUBLIC.

WHEREAS there have been sundry false reports circulated in Baltimore and other places, to the prejudice of the Church generally, and the official members in particular, therefore we feel ourselves bound in behalf of the Church and the official members (who is a slave body) to convene ourselves together (a free body) and set forth the truth and deny those false and slanderous reports which have a direct tendency to injure the Church and the christian character of our bound brethren abroad.

In accordance to our arrangements then, we ask in the first place how did this slave body of men come in possession of the church?—We answer in the first place, when there was a convention called in the town of Cambridge in the year of our Lord 1835, John Driver was called to the Chair, A. C. Thompson appointed Secretary, the question was asked by vote whether they should have a Church or not; it was answered in the affirmative by a unanimous vote that we should. And as the convention was composed both of free and slave, the question arose who should go ahead, build the Church and take the controle of it—hear a long debate arose on both sides; John Driver moved that the Church should be built resting on a body of free men, on this motion a long debate arose, by way of compromise it was resolved that they build it together, in other words, there should be an emalgamation of free and slaves; in accordance to this motion, they proceeded to appoint the collectors as follows: Solomon Jackson, (Free;) Shadrack Crumwell, (F.;) Joshua Stanley, (F.;) Daniel Smith, (Slave;) William Huse, (F.;) Anthony Driver, (F.;) Benjamin Jenefor, (S.)

The several collectors made their report and proceeded to get their timbet together. At this stage of affairs, after 5000 feet of plank and 9000 shingles having been bought, a dissatisfaction arose among us—after this dissatisfaction arose there was a meeting called, and the whole affair was given up to the free men, in accordance to John Driver's first motion, that the Church should rest on a body of free men; after this being done John Driver proceeded to get a body of free men to assist him to carry out his views. He continued in this effort for 12 months—his effort was to get 6 free men to join him, but finding he failed in this, he tried to get 4, failing in this, he said if he could get 2 free men in the county to join him he would go on and build the Church, but he failed in this his last effort also. Finding that he failed in every effort which he had made, he of his own good will being mortified and disgusted, returned the bill of the Church to the slave body of men, and advised them to go on and build the Church and at the same time promised to give them his aid and any advice or instruction which might be beneficial to them. Upon this the slaves calls a meeting, in this meeting there was a building committee of 9 appointed, this committee agreed and pledged themselves to pay $10 each, and buy the frame which was 80 odd dollars—now they had the frame, shingles, and plank, they proceeded to build the Church; they raised it and shut it in—now at this stage of affairs the slave body of men finding themselves $18 in the arrear, called a meeting and concluded to give the Church up to the old body of trustees (a free body)—they go with the papers and accounts, calls the free body together, offered them the Church and all the papers, promises to pay the $18 if they would go on and finish the Church and take it under their controle, and they the slaves stand in the same relation to them that they would to a body of white men; but they refused and said you have built your Church, you had better keep it; for if we take charge of it you will say we slaves built a Church and gave it to the free men. The slaves seeing that they refused to receive the Church, they proceeded to appoint their trustees. The following slave body was made choice of:—C. Auston, B. Jenefor, John Cornish, Geo. Cornish, Jasper Cornish, E. Moore, N. Chase, Sandy Cornish, W. S. Elsey.—And from that time until the present there has been more or less a division, and a part of the free body drew themselves entirely off, while at the same time a part continued with them—it is true that the above mentioned body held the station, with a few exceptions, of trustees; but we their free brethren have from that time and do at the present, enjoy all the privileges of the Church in common with our slave brethren, and we do affirm that no priviledge has been ever withheld from any free brethren at any time to our knowledge—in evidence thereto we state the following facts:

First.—That from the consecration of the Church down to the present time, all the free local preachers in the town of Cambridge and the circuit thereof have had their stated and regular appointments in the said Church.

2nd'ly.—That the free brethren from the country and adjoining counties have had a free access to the pulpit, and it has never been withheld.

3rd'ly.—That the pulpit has been and is still free for any preacher or exhorter coming from abroad, when properly authorized to preach or exhort whether they be free or slave.

4th'ly.—That all free persons do enjoy all the privileges of the Church, and if they do not, it is only because they will not; and we will here remark, that several reports relative to the pecuniary affairs of the Church have been propagated, and these of a slanderous nature; but in every instance when the matter was investigated it proved to be false and without foundation, and the character of the trustees stands unblemished until the present time.

In evidence of the above facts, I John Driver do state and affirm that I have been with them as a member of the said Church from the dedication until the present time, and I have enjoyed all the privileges of the Church in common with my slave brethren; I have met them in their official capacity, consulted and advised with them relative to their Church affairs, I have consulted them on various matters and as a father I have overlooked and guided them to the best of my ability, and I can say that they have always took heed to my council, and obeyed me as children. J. D.

I Charles Auston, wss made choice of as a trustee when the Church was first built, and remain one at the present, I have been a free man for the last 2 years, and I can and do say that I have experienoed no change, I still retain my office as a trustee, and their conduct toward me is the same as when I was a slave.

C. A.

We collectively do affirm that we are free men, and have been members of the said Church for a series of years, and that we have and do enjoy all the privileges of the said Church, and we do not know that it has been otherwise with any of our free community at any time. Joseph Stafford, Wm. Banks, S. StClair, Ezekiel Stanley, R. Nevitt.

We hereby certify that we have been local preachers in the M. E. Church, and have been in and out with them for a series of years and we can truly say that all the above statements are in accordance with our experieuce.

T. FULLER, Jr.,
A. DRIVER.

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