

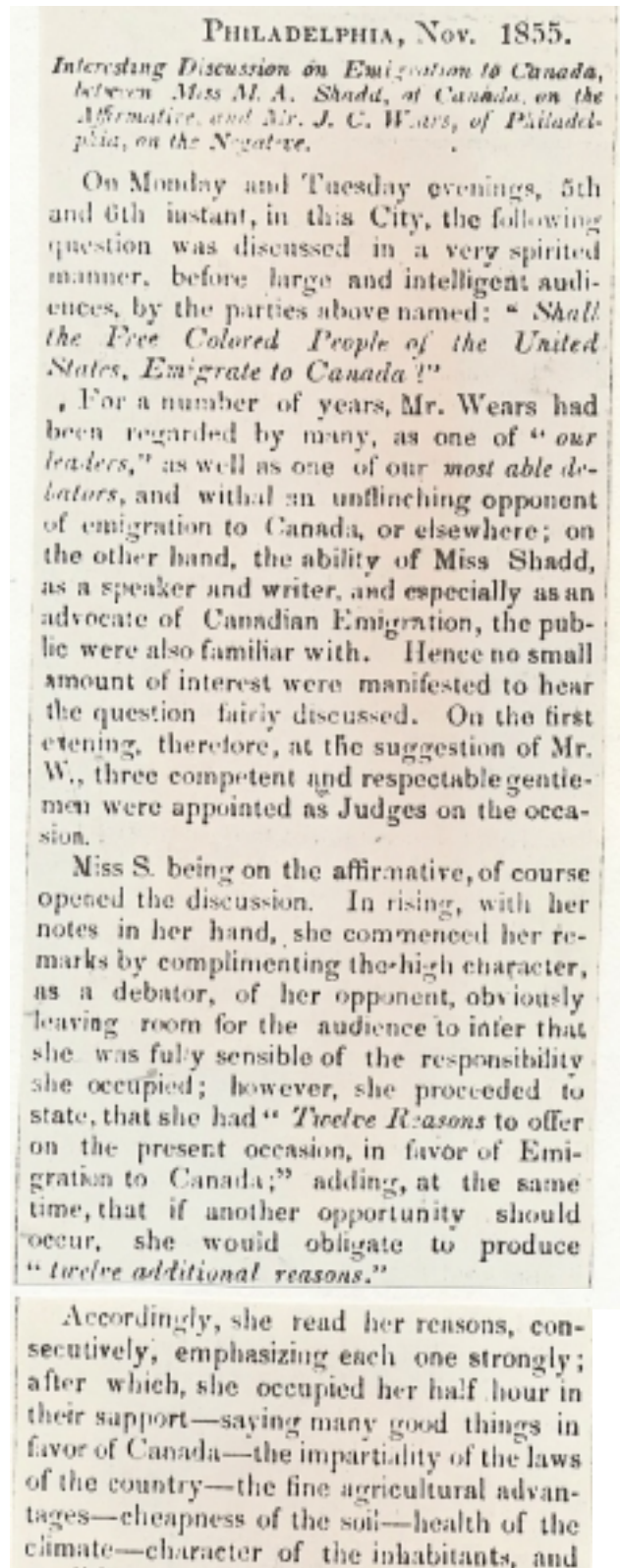
[PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 1855.]

*Interesting Discussion on Emigration to Canada, between Miss M. A. Shadd, of Canada, on the Affirmative, and Mr. J. C. Wears, of Philadelphia, on the Negative.*

On Monday and Tuesday evenings, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> instant, in this City, the following question was discussed in a very spirited manner, before large and intelligent audiences, by the parties above named: "*Shall the Free Colored People of the United States, Emigrate to Canada?*"

Miss S. being on the affirmative, of course opened the discussion. In rising, with her notes in her hand, she commenced her remarks by complimenting the high character, as a debator, of her opponent, obviously leaving room for the audience to infer that she was fully sensible of the responsibility she occupied; however, she proceeded to state, that she had "*Twelve Reasons*" to offer on the present occasion, in favor of Emigration to Canada," adding, at the same time, that if another opportunity should occur, she would obligate to produce "*twelve additional reasons.*"

Accordingly, she read her reasons, consecutively, emphasizing each one strongly; after which, she occupied her half hour in their support—saying many good things in favor of Canada—the impartiality of the laws of the country—the fine agricultural advantages—cheapness of the soil—health of the climate—character of the inhabitants, and



condition of the colored man, especially; frequently contrasting his chances, as a British subject, with his condition and chances in the United States, under oppression, proscription, &c.

[Miss S.'s half hour having expired, Mr. W. took the floor, doubtless entertaining the opinion, as did not a few of his friends, that he would very triumphantly demolish all her *en masse emigration notions*—would place emigration to Canada in the same category with African colonization, and thereby bring both schemes equally into bad odor. Consequently, after paying a polite tribute to Miss Shadd's ability and sincerity, he took occasion to give notice that he should *treat her in the discussion precisely as he would a gentleman, occupying her position*; assuring the audience that his opponent, though a lady, was too high spirited to crave any *special favor or courtesy*, as in fact she was not entitled to any; hence, he wished all to understand, that there were to be no compromises in the matter.

Having thus got fairly under way, without troubling himself however with replying to the "*Twelve Reasons*," he eloquently set forth what he conceived would be the disastrous consequences of *en masse emigration*, viz: the slave in his chains would be forsaken, the fugitive would be left unprotected, the ends of colonization would be satisfied, and, in short, the humiliating conces-

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sion would then appear, as our enemies have said, that the colored man could not be elevated in this country. The speaker also mentioned, that prejudice existed to a great extent in Canada, to the colored man's disadvantage. As evidences of encouragements, he declared that great progress were to be witnessed amongst the colored people, and that by remaining, their elevation would ultimately be effected, &c., &c. Though this was Mr. W.'s first speech, obviously, it was his most effective one; all his "thunder" in it was exhausted.]

Miss S., in entering upon her second half hour, in a felicitous mood, charged her opponent with having *shunned the issue*; in which she was reminded of the "Irishman's flea." "When he went to put his finger on it, it was not there."

The pertinency of the illustration seemed obvious, and much amused the audience. In further reviewing his remarks, she showed, that although *en masse emigration* were feasible, and the doctrine sound, nevertheless it could not reasonably be inferred that a spontaneous uprising would universally be resorted to by the people, prepared or unprepared.

As to the slave and the fugitive being left in his chain and forsaken, she argued that it would be quite the reverse; taking the position that the colored man's increase of character, wealth, influence, education,

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&c., in Canada, where his manhood would be recognized, would afford opportunities to aid to a far greater extent than could be done under present circumstances; while poor, and unprotected, being obliged to fill menial occupations, with but poor pay, taxed heavily to support schools, public institutions, State and General Government; while Common School privileges are withheld, the right of franchise denied! without being allowed the slightest liberty or say, in making the laws by which he is ruled; besides being hourly exposed to the infamous fugitive slave law, and countless other outrages. With regard to colonization, her position was, that emigration would be just the antidote for that vile scheme. Though the colonizationists wanted to get rid of the black man, they had no wish or idea of his going to Canada, where he would occupy precisely the same position enjoyed by the whites, socially, politically, and religiously. Under those circumstances, their doctrines and aims would all be brought to naught.

Also, by emigrating, she held up the idea, that in the event of the colored man's gaining power, being on the confines of the slave territory, he might, in a *time of need, be on hand to settle accounts with his oppressors.*

"Instead of having to wait five hundred years for his rights," as Dr. Smith, and others amongst the leaders have said, "he could enjoy them immediately." Instead of the

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young colored man having to put up with being a *barber*, and other pursuits, by which he is unable to make a respectable livelihood, he could be a respectable and successful farmer, mechanic, or professional man in Canada. Many instances of very rapid progress in the various callings in life, by those who went penniless, were enumerated by the speaker. Likewise, on the score of prejudice, she replied to Mr. W., acknowledging that it did exist, and in some places had been very malignant; but having *no law to back it up, the colored man had nothing to fear*; there, it was manageable, not like it is in the States. Even the *waiters* in St. Catherines, only two years ago, had put an effectual stop to the omnibus proscription; so now, where Bishop Payne, two years ago was refused a ride, by the same omnibuses, colored men are daily being accommodated, without distinction. In other places also, she referred to the existence of prejudice a few years back, but by colored people settling in the neighborhood, and making improvements, it had been easily dispelled. In the large towns and districts, amongst the most respectable inhabitants, schools, churches, colleges, offices, &c., &c., &c., were all acceptable to the colored man, if he would only avail himself of the privileges. Quite a number of instances were cited, showing that capable men were already filling responsible and lucrative posi-

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tions in office, having been duly elected thereto.

In conclusion, she scouted the idea entertained by many, that *because here is our birth-place, here, we must abide, fare well or fare ill; for spite, if for no other reason.*

[Mr. W.'s second half hour, evidently by this time he realized; that in attempting to answer Miss S.'s *reasons*, and at the same time, attend to some little incidental points, he would have quite an *uphill* job of it; a performance which he had not contracted for. In Pennsylvania, the slave hunting ground, especially in Philadelphia, the residence of the notorious *kidnapper, Alberti*; the dead *Engraham*, the infamous *Judge Kane, &c., &c.*, even the astute and gifted Mr. W. could not readily find plausible arguments in favor of a country tolerating such *monsters*, and the diabolical laws they administer.

Mr. W. however, remained on the "*old platform*," throughout, warmly contending that it was not the business of the colored man to emigrate under any circumstances, in view of his present condition.

The hour of adjournment having again arrived, and all parties being willing for the discussion to close, it only remained for the judges to give their decision in the matter; which, in a very *able, fair, and impartial* manner, they proceeded to do—all agreeing that *Miss Shadd had fully sustained her*

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