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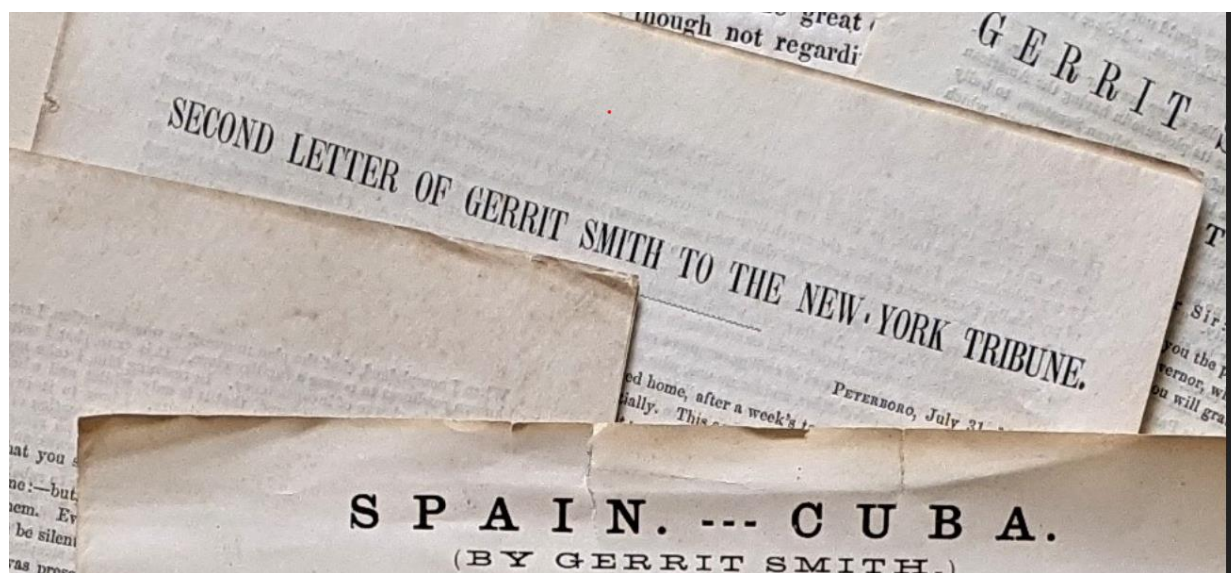
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## List 40, New Series

### Gerrit Smith Collection

An Intellectual History in His Own Words



Printed Letters, Discourses, Speeches and Sermons

Gerrit Smith (1797-1874). *A Collection of Thirty-Six Publications, mostly from the Press in Peterboro on the Political and Religious Movements in Mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century America.*

\$ 4,500.00

Mostly bifolium and broadside publications measuring approximately 12 x 8 inches. Some previously folded but all very clean with no foxing or pencil markings. Excellent condition.

This small but content heavy collection of printed material from Gerrit Smith's printing press in Peterboro, New York is a treasure trove of information on the social movements of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century America. In the words of Gerrit Smith one finds the intellectual foundation of many of the arguments made by reformers on the subjects important to the day. The movements for land reform, woman's rights, abolition, universal peace, capital punishment, debtor's rights, Cuban independence, and temperance are just the most important issues that Smith addressed in these publications, and they contain the arguments that were used by those who followed him in the decades to come.

Gerrit Smith was born in 1797, the son of Peter Smith, a partner with John Jacob Astor. Much of his wealth was invested in land in Upstate New York and upon his retirement, Gerrit became the master of thousands of acres of land and at a highpoint \$ 80,000 income per annum. Gerrit was brought up in the Calvinist tradition and educated in Hamilton College. His education broadened his understanding of the conditions of mankind and as he aged he began to see Christianity in a universal light. Salvation was not based on predestined but on good works which benefitted the lives of his fellow man.

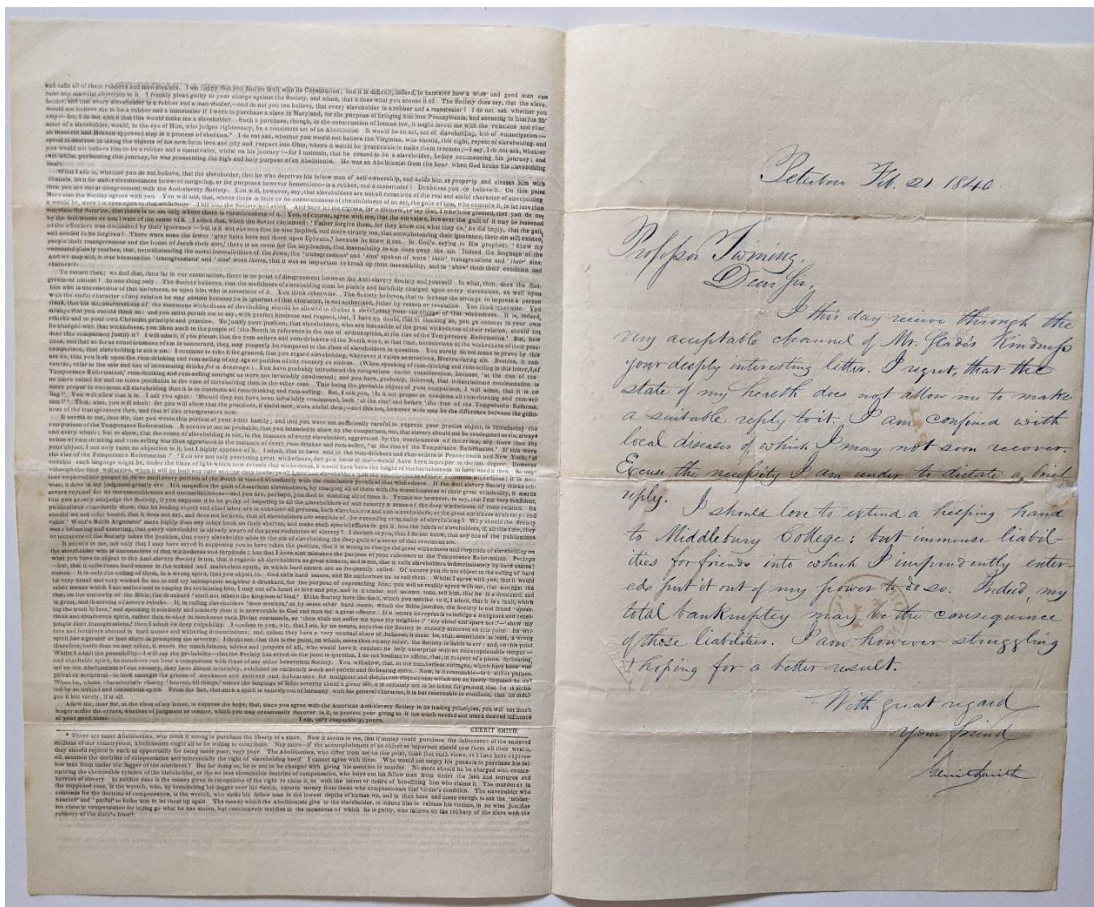
As you will see from the items described in this collection, Gerrit Smith used his wealth and voice to address the issues of this day. The rigor he brought to his arguments challenged others to examine their own positions and as a result he made numerous enemies, even from allies in the movements he supported. Reading these publications one comes away with an understanding of the nuance of the ideas Smith brought to his arguments and respect for his determination to express the need for justice, equality, and empathy in our relations with the people of this country.

**WITH AN AUTOGRAPH LETTER SIGNED BY SMITH AND A PROPERTY DEED SIGNED**

*1. Warranty deed for a parcel of land, between Gerrit Smith of Peterboro, Madison County and his wife, Ann Carroll Smith; and James Lyon of the village and county of Oswego. Oswego: May 26, 1837. Oblong pro-forma folio broadside. 13½ x 17 inches. accomplished in ink. Previous folds with neat, professional repair on verso, some minor loss at the interstices, and the whole lightly toned; good or better.*

Broadside outlining the sale of "those certain pieces or parcels of land described as blocks numbers seventy-two and seventy-three in the village of East Oswego ... and also block number thirty-six, reference being had to a map of said village ... in the office of the Secretary of State..." for the sum of one thousand, one hundred dollars. Signed by all three parties to the transaction, the Smiths' signatures also with wax seals still intact. The verso with several docketts by M. W. Matthews, the clerk's office recorder, and O. W. Steele, commissioner of deeds..

Accompanied by a 2-page autograph letter signed. from Gerrit Smith to James Lyon, dated May 16, 1838, address panel and round stamp on integral leaf. Smith writes that he has just returned from New York "in a bad state of health, originating in a very severe cold. I find your letter enclosing your and Mrs. Lyon's deed, and also a writing signed by Mr. Fitzhugh. Be assured that it affords me great gratification to be an instrument of contributing relief of mind to those whom I respect as greatly as I do Mrs. Lyon and yourself ... Much as I shall lose in the property you convey to me, you lose still more in it - and difficult as it is for me to suffer losses in my present circumstances, it is still more difficult for you to suffer them. I accept the deed of Mrs. Lyon and yourself and I have caused an endorsement to be made on your bond..."



**WITH A MANUSCRIPT LETTER TO YALE PROFESSOR ALEXANDER TWINGING**

2. Letter of Gerrit Smith to President Schmucker. Rev. S. S. Schmucker, President of the Theological Seminary, Gettysburgh, Pennsylvania. Peterboro, June 19, 1838. Bifolium 12 3/4 x 8 inches. Text printed on pages one and two. Previously folded, tears at folds and a bit fragile.

WITH: Autograph Letter Signed by Gerrit Smith and dated Feb. 21, 1840 in ink on page three.

The circular is addressed to Reverend Samuel Simon Schmucker, D.D., Professor of Theology in the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, also an abolitionist, who argued for the support of the American Colonization Society, as a moral way of ending slavery.

In Smith's letter he outlines his reasons, in a lengthy argument, for supporting the American Anti-Slavery Society instead of the American Colonization Society, although in the beginning he was a proponent of both. "If the Colonization Society had not come out against the doctrine of immediate emancipation, and inferentially against the doctrine of sinfulness of slavery, I should, in all probability have continued as a member of it."

Smith advocated full emancipation and the ability of emancipated slaves to remain in this country as freemen. He cites other sources such as "a letter from a gentleman in Ohio" to show that the Colonization Society is the great hindrance in his region for arresting the progress of abolition.

The hand written letter to Prof. Twining on a blank page of the circular reads in part, "I regret the state of my health does not allow me to make a suitable reply--I should love to extend a helping hand to Middlebury College: but immense liabilities for friends into which I imprudently entered put it out of my power-- indeed my total bankruptcy may be the consequence of those liabilities....With great regard, your friend, Gerrit Smith."

#### SMITH'S MESSAGE ATTACKING COLONIZATION AS THE "SECOND BEST THING"

*3. An Address. Reported by Gerrit Smith to the "Christian Union Convention" Held in Syracuse, August 21, 1838. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 ½ inches. 4 pp. Text printed on pages one and two.*

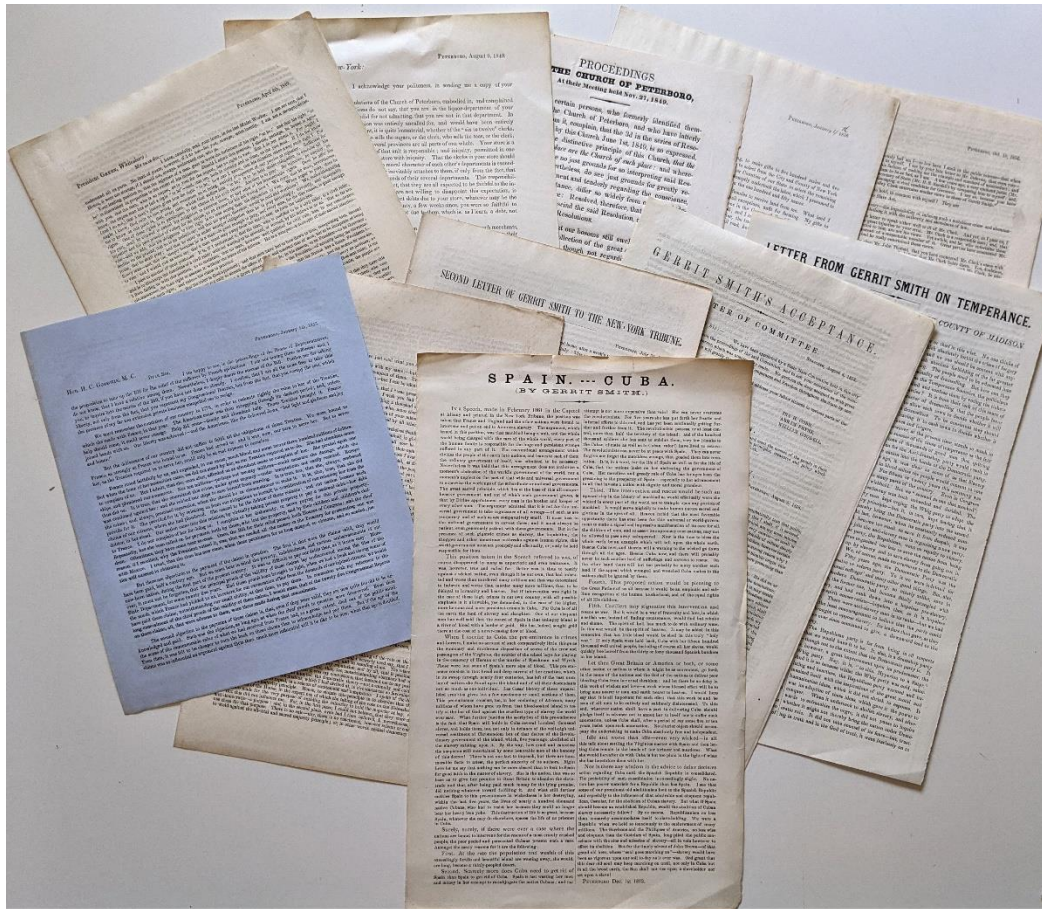
"Our age and country furnish another and very striking instance of the impolicy, as well as wickedness of taking up with a 'second best thing' in the stead and in guilty disparagement of a Heaven commanded 'first best thing'. God requires the immediate and unqualified liberation of the millions of our enslaved countrymen. Now, but their murderous oppressors at the South and their scarcely less murderous enemies at the North exact the condition of the banishment of these afflicted brethren."

#### A NON-SECTARIAN MANIFESTO

*4. Union of Christians. At a Meeting, Held in Peterboro, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1841. 4to. 9 ¾ x 8 inches. Text printed on recto of first leaf only. Previously folded.*

Minutes of a meeting with resolutions to print 500 copies of the "3 Resolutions" passed by the Christian Union in December 1840 and January 1841 and posted and distributed throughout the town of Smithfield.

The three resolutions referred to are first, that Bible does not condone the bifurcation of Christianity into sects or parties and denominations are 'anti-scriptural and wicked'. Second, any Christian church that refuses 'to receive into its fellowship' any person admitted to be a Christian, is contrary to the Church of Jesus Christ. Third, a common Church would 'take the place of the Methodists and Presbyterian and Baptists and other sects, which now divide and afflict and corrupt Zion'.



**AN ARGUMENT FOR UNIVERSAL, NOT SECTARIAN CONTROL OF THE HOUSES OF WORSHIP**

5. *To the Christians of Peterboro and its Vicinity.* Peterboro, February 25, 1842. Folio broadside. 13 x 8 inches. Note in pencil "Feb. 25, 1842/ 20 copies". Previously folded.

"The spirit of sectarianism is apt to run high, when the spirit of Christianity runs low. Accordingly it is not surprising, that we now hear of a plan to build a Methodist Meeting House in our Village . . . I say sectarianism is his own cause: -- for if sectarianism is not devilism, what is? If that, which makes Presbyterians and Baptists and Methodists the great props of American slavery, is not of the Devil -- then nothing is."

**TESTIMONY THAT 'DRAM-DRINKING IS MORALLY WRONG'**

6. *To the People of the Town of Smithfield:* Peterboro, March 15, 1843. Folio sheet printed two sides. 12 ¼ x 8 inches. Previously folded.

Praise for citizens of Smithfield who refused to elect to the Commission of Excise, men who were willing to license the sale of alcohol in their town. But illegal sales of alcohol continue in Smithtown

and the law 'has thus far proved impotent'. Citizens must redouble their efforts by the force of persuasion, not law, to influence those law breakers who manufacture and sell drams of alcohol.

THE CREED AND RESOLUTIONS GOVERNING THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED  
CHURCH OF PETERBORO

7. *Church of Peterboro.* [December 1843]. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages.

This appears to be the formal establishment of the Church of Peterboro with a written Creed of the Church and Resolutions of its incorporation. The written Creed reads in part, that we are "bound to recognize as a member of it every person within our territorial limits, who affords satisfactory evidence that he is a disciple and friend of Christ . . ." This is followed by fourteen Resolutions that include the elevation of Samuel Wells of Vernon as the Elder or Bishop of the Church and to assume the responsibilities associated with the position. Other resolutions include the request that the congregation financially support the work of the Elder and a declaration of his duties; that sectarianism is the 'mightiest foe on earth to truth'; --- the need for the Church to remain independent of other denominations in order to maintain purity; --- that the mob which attacked the Church in 1842 was the 'most flagrant outrage on human and divine laws – on the rights of Man and the rights of God; --- that the Church condemns the selling of grain to the brewer and distiller and those persons who defend the use of intoxicating liquors; --- renunciation of Christians who patronize Missionary and other Societies which solicit contributions from Slaveholders; --- renunciation of voting for any official advocating, supporting, or benefiting from Slavery --- that preaching the politics of temperance, anti-slavery and anti-sectarianism on Sunday is righteous and correct.

"THE INDIANS ARE DISGUISED WHITE PERSONS"

8. *To the Persons Who Derive Title from Myself or my Late Father to Land in Charlotte River and Byrne's Tracts, in the Counties of Delaware, Otsego, and Schoharie: Fellow Citizens.* Peterboro: May 24, 1844.

Folio broadside. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Previously folded.

Smith's response to inquiries from land owners who purchased property from Smith's father concerning the legitimacy of the property title. "You have been recently informed, that your above title is bad. But, if Indians are your only informants, you surely need not be uneasy. Indians are unfit to investigate land titles, and to expound the laws of civilized communities. I am, however, aware that it is strongly suspected that these, who call themselves, and dress themselves, and arm themselves, like Indians, are disguised white persons . . . I learn that the Indians, who offering themselves as legal advisers, should at least be law-abiding men, are in fact so lawless as to enter upon my wood-lands, and destroy and carry away my timber. This is a crime which I have o right to overlook. . ."

GERRIT'S SMITH'S CRITIQUE OF THE WHIGS, HENRY CLAY,  
THE NATIONAL PARTY SYSTEM, AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LIBERTY PARTY

9. *William H. Seward, Esquire*. . . Peterboro, January 1, 1845. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages. Previously folded.

In 1844 Willian Seward retired as the Governor of New York State, was soon to be elected as Senator, and in 1861 was appointed by President Lincoln to be his Secretary of State. He was a Whig politician, an ardent abolitionist, and became one of the founders of the Republican Party.

This letter to Seward is an important and detailed critique of the Whig Party and Seward's continued association with, and reluctant support for, Henry Clay during the 1844 election. Having a slaveholder as a presidential nominee was abhorrent to Smith, who founder of the Liberty Party in reaction to this pro-slavery sentiment of the Kentucky representative and the Whig alliance. Smith discusses in detail Clay's position on slavery and the annexation of Texas and compares them with President's Polk position on each and suggests a very close association of the two parties. For Smith, the National Parties, Democrats and Whigs, are both 'Pro-Slavery' parties and this in itself was justification for the creation of the Liberty Party which he helped establish in 1840.

In the final two paragraphs Smith discusses the reasons for Clay's loss to Polk in the presidential election. He defends the abolitionists who were blamed for the loss and placing it at the feet of Clay himself who was unwilling to "publicly wash his hands of the blood of dueling and slavery." Had he done this, he would have been elected. He regrets Seward's backing of Clay, the Whig Party and his reluctance to see that the Liberty Party is the only vehicle to end slavery and the annexation of territory strengthening the power of the South.

SMITH'S POSITIONS ON FREE TRADE, TOLLS, AND THE LIMITATION OF GOVERNMENT

10.. *Hon. F. Whittlesey of Rochester, -- Dear Sir*. . . Peterboro, February 1, 1845. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages. Previously folded.

Frederick Whittlesey was an attorney, local politician in Rochester, who was elected a Member of Congress in 1840. He served two terms and renewed his law practice before being appointed a judge in the 8<sup>th</sup> District and the elevated to the State Supreme Court in 1847. In 1844, Whittlesey argued that the Oswego Canal could not be used for commerce thus cutting it off from the profits and tolls generated by the Western Trade. Smith a property owner and free-trader, criticized Whittlesey's decision and in doing so provides a history of the canal system in New York State and the regulatory system that governed its use. The Oswego Canal runs south from Lake Ontario and connects with the Erie Canal north of Syracuse. Smith contends that Whittlesey's arguments were formulated to bolster the greed of business concerns who see Oswego Canal as a challenge to the control of the toll system that generated wealth from Western trade.

“IT IS NOT TO ANNOY YOU – IT IS AGAIN TO ENTREAT YOU TO PREACH POLITICS . . .”

*11. To Those Ministers in the County of Madison, who Refuse to Preach Politics.* (Peterboro, July 15, 1845). Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages. Previously folded.

Part of Smith’s anti-slavery efforts was to convince ministers from the various denominations that it was an obligation to preach a mixture of religion and politics, as it was required by the Bible. “You well know to, that, in my preaching of politics, I present not the claims of any political party; make no appeals to selfishness; throw out no baits to ambition or avarice; but read what Gods says of Civil Government and the Civil Ruler, and argue, that Civil Government and Civil Rulers should, in every age, conform to God’s plain requirements of them. . . In what other way, however, than by political action, can American slavery be overthrown? Moral suasion is, indeed, indispensable to the antislavery cause: but it is so, mainly because of the political action, which is its legitimate result.”

INTRA-PARTY SQUABBLE  
PITTING ABOLITION AGAINST A POLITICAL PLATFORM OF FREE TRADE

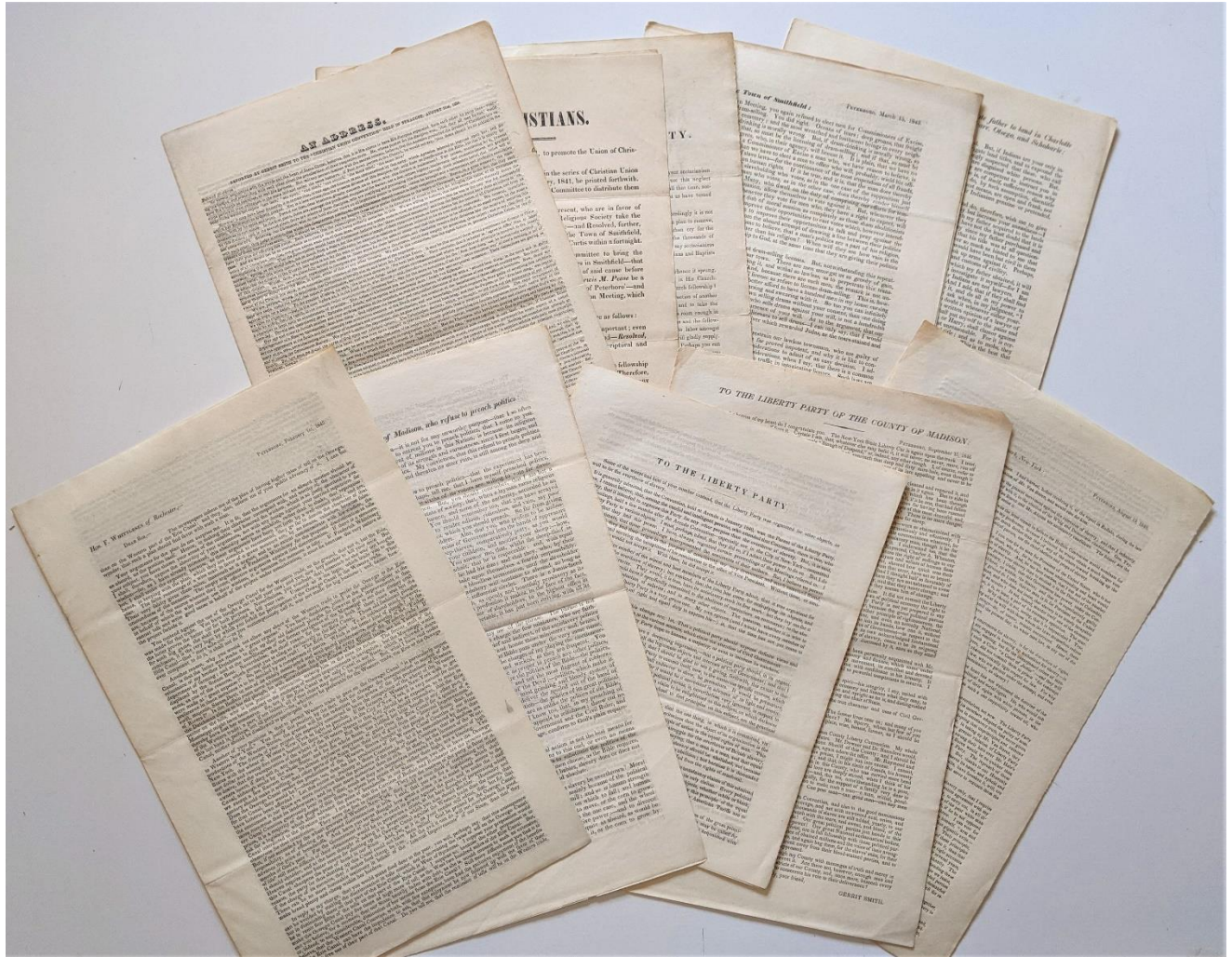
*12. To the Liberty Party.* Peterboro, May 7, 1846. 4to. 10 x 8 inches, Text printed on three pages. Previously folded.

With the origins of the Liberty Part in 1840, the focus of the platform was exclusively on the abolition of slavery. The presidential candidate was James G. Birney of Kentucky but much of the rhetoric and ideas came from Gerrit Smith. The Liberty Party grew from a grass roots organization to a party with representatives in nearly every Northern state, and again in 1844 Birney was the candidate. By 1846 the Liberty Party was changing and discussion about broadening its goal of abolition to include a greater emphasis on free trade and limited government. These two later issues were part of Smith’s governing philosophy but on the issue of lessening the emphasis on slavery he writes, “My own opinion (and it would have every member of the Party avail himself of his equal right and equal duty to express his --) is, that the time has not yet come to attempt it.”

Smith broadens his argument by describing the goal of abolitionist as being based the equal rights of man, not the political economy or the nation’s prosperity. In fact he goes so far as to say the weakness of the Liberty Party, and the reason it has not grown as it should, is that its core message, the elimination of slavery in all the United States is being obscured by the economic and issues of trade, as important as they are to the health of the country.

Smith’s arguments chiefly won out and he was nominate for President in 1848.





**“THE CRIES OF CHAINED MILLIONS  
AND THE VOICE OF THEIR AVENGING GOD ARE IN OUR EAR.”**

**13.** *To the Liberty Party of the County of Madison.* Peterboro, September 15, 1846. Broadside. 12 ½ inches x 8 inches. Previously folded.

Smith’s message of congratulation to the voters of the Canastota State Convention for fighting off the potential takeover of the Liberty Party by the Whig elements at the convention. One of the major victories was a purity test for potential candidates and office holders, none of whom going forward, would compromise on any tenant of the anti-slavery movement. No longer would economic arguments compromise the platform of the Liberty Party. “*The Liberty Party will, proceed henceforth, harmoniously and effectively.*”

*UNIVERSALISM AS A TENANT OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH*

*14. Abstract of the argument, in the public discussion of the question: "Are the Christians of a given community the church of such community?" Made by Gerrit Smith, in Hamilton, N.Y. April 12th, 13th, 14th, 1847. Hamilton, NY: S.W. Green, Patriot Office, 1847. 8vo., pp. 38; printed wrappers; very good with minor age toning and wear to the extremities.*

Gerrit Smith was a wealthy philanthropist, abolitionist, and advocate for women's suffrage. His home was a stop on the Underground Railroad, and he gave a great sum of money in support of abolishing slavery. Smith was also known as a radical Christian, advocating reform in the church as well as social reform such as the temperance movement.

*"BUT, IT IS NOT TRUE, THAT I SHALL VOTE FOR MR. VAN BUREN.  
I CAN VOTE FOR NO MAN FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,  
WHO IS NOT AN ABOLITIONIST."*

*15. J. K. Ingalls, Editor of the Landmark, New York: My Dear Sir, --. Peterboro, August 15, 1848. Folio sheet printed on two sides. 12 ½ x 8 inches.*

Joshua King Ingalls, was a religious reformer and early American anarchist whose message of economic socialism and easy land policy for workers reinforced many of the secondary issues of the Liberty Party. His principles were in conflict with Smith's in the sense that abolition was not his primary goal, rather economic justice for all men motivated his politics.

In this essay Smith reiterates his reasons for not supporting Van Buren and charging him with the crime of denying the doctrine of the 'perfect equality of all men, in both their political and social rights.' He continues to offer thoughts on the nature and responsibilities of government, regulation of society by laws, and the power of the government to unilaterally eliminate slavery. He concludes with his views on land monopoly and the concept of every man a home that Ingalls exposed. He also found fault with Van Buren's position on this issue as well but states unequivocally emancipation first, land reform to follow.

*INSISTING THAT THE VOTE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE REPUBLIC*

*16. President Green, Whitesboro: My Dear Sir, \_\_. Peterboro, April 4, 1849. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on first two pages.*

Beriah Green was a nationally known abolitionist and the second president of Oneida Institute in Whitesboro, New York, a college which he integrated with black students during the 1830 and 1840's. He was an active supporter of the Liberty Party, but with its failure in the election of 1848, Green denounced democracy and embraced the idea of a God chosen ruler who without the vote of an electorate could rise to power and impose the rule of the Bible on society.

Smith was an old friend of Green's but in his letter to him, he challenges Green writing that a God chosen ruler leads to tyranny and that the vote is essential. Where Green sees the rabble as a voting block which hinders the movement of society in the direction of equal rights, Smith counters with the idea that the vote is a distinguishing characteristic of society that can be informed by the message

of the rights of man. This would lead to equality in government and the economy, land reform, and the distribution of wealth.

#### HIRAM CROZIER, MINISTER AND DRAMSELLER

*17. At the meeting of the "Church of Peterboro," held July 7th, 1849, the following Resolutions were passed, without a dissenting voice. [Peterboro, N.Y.]: 1849. Broadside 6¼ x 7¾ inches.*

"Three numbered resolutions, primarily written by Gerrit Smith, charging that the church's pastor, Hiram P. Crozier, who was also clerk in a store which sold intoxicating drinks, "is out of his place, when preaching the gospel; and is especially offensive, when presuming to preach it to the Church of Peterboro."

#### TEMPERANCE SERMON TO THE CONGREGATION AT PETERBORO

*18. To the Church of Peterboro: A short time ago . . . Peterboro, July 20, 1849. Broadside. 12 x 8 inches.*

Parable about the tea merchant, the coffee merchant and the liquor merchant and the responsibility of a good society to recognize that the profits from the sale of liquor are no justification to allow it to pollute the community. The Church of Peterboro must stand in unity to "an be steadfast in its integrity. . ." no matter that ". . . the unstable multitude have, of late, pressed hard against it."

#### THE TEMPERANCE PARABLE IS RESPONDED TO AND SMITH ARGUES BACK

*19. Hiram P. Crozier, New York: Dear Sir, I acknowledge your politeness, in sending me a copy of your Circular . . . Peterboro, August 9, 1849. Broadside. 12 x 8 inches.*

Hiram Crozier, local merchant and rum-seller issued a rebuttal to Smith's sermon of the 20<sup>th</sup> of July and this broadside contains Smith's reply and offers a good look into the real life struggle against the perceived evil of hard spirits. Shall a liquor store be tolerated? Shall a brothel? Just for the sake of "accommodating, satisfying, and retaining your customers."

**"THAT HE IS NOT YET READY OR WILLING TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF WITH AND PARTICIPATE IN  
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ANY CHURCH.**

*20. Proceedings of the Church of Peterboro, at their Meeting held Nov. 27, 1849. Broadside. 9 ½ x 6 ¼ inches.*

Resolution by the Church of Peterboro to "vote on questions affecting the continuance of H. P. Crozier's pastorship."

“MY GIFTS TO COLORED PEOPLE TOOK ALL MY LARGE TRACTS OF FARMING LAND  
SAVE ONE IN THE COUNTY OF FRANKLIN . . .”

21. *John Cochran, Isaac T. Hopper, Daniel C. Eaton, George H. Evans, William Kemeys: Gentlemen,-- I proposed, last Spring . . .* Peterboro, January 4, 1850. Broadside. 12 ¼ x 7 ½ inches.

Smith enlisted the help of the five men named in the letter above to choose five hundred men and five hundred women to receive grants of land in New York State. Land that originally purchased by Smith's father at the turn of the century. He is proposing that a tract of land encompassing nineteen thousand acres, already surveyed and divided into farm plots be given to the men. The women, should be give fifty dollars which can be used to purchase forty acres of government land, which is nearby in New York State. “To you, who know my heart on this subject, I need not say, how deeply I feel, that every person needs to be the admitted owner of a parcel of land.”

*THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT*

22. *The true office of civil government. A speech in the city of Troy.* New York: printed by S. W. Benedict, 1851. 8vo. 30 pp. Original printed paper wrappers; light foxing and occasional damp staining throughout; small wormholes pervade text; otherwise good and sound.

Ownership inscription of Adin Ballou (1803-1890), a prominent American advocate of Christian pacifism and abolitionism. He traveled around New England lecturing on social reform and in 1882 he helped establish the Hopedale Community in Milford, Mass., a commune that sought to live outside of traditional government.

“YOU HAVE DONE GREAT INJUSTICE TO YOUR RIVAL. MR. CLARK IS A RESPECTABLE MAN . . .”  
THE NEW YORK GUBERNATORIAL RACE IN 1854

23. *Greene C. Bronson, Esq., My Dear Sir . . .* Peterboro, Oct. 18, 1854. Bifolium. 12 ¼ x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages. One manuscript correction to the text written in ink in the margin.

Greene C. Bronson was a lawyer, judge for many years Oneida County and a well-known in State politics during the middle years of the century. At the time of the printing of this letter, Bronson was running for Governor on the Barnburner Ticket and polled fourth out of a field of an equal number. The Barnburners were a splinter group of the Democratic Party and held views on slavery, economics, and temperance that were an opposite of the Liberty Party. Because of a split in the Democratic ticket Myron Holley Clark was elected Governor in the 1854 election. His platform reflected the Whig Party, and his principal issue was prohibition.

Smith's letter challenges Bronson for disparaging remarks he made about him and Myron Clark about their position on slavery. Bronson's rhetorical remarks compared Clark's platform to Smith's views and suggested to the public that Clark was out of step with New York voters. The letter

encapsulates the complex issues surrounding slavery and prohibition and the difficulty of parsing nuanced positions as they related to the voting public.

### TREATIES AND DIPLOMACY WITH FRANCE OVER COMMERCIAL REPARATIONS

Henry C. Goodwin, a member of the Whig party, was elected to the House of Representatives in 1853 to fill the seat left vacant after the resignation of Gerrit Smith who held was elected in 1852 as a member of the Free Soil Party. The letter concerns the issue of reparations for property taken and destroyed by the French Government during the early years of the century. Claims were made by American property owners and although recognized by the French, were never made. It is a surprisingly nationalistic position for Smith to have taken, but from a historical point of view it offers an insight into the diplomacy of reparations in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### POWER OF THE PRESS AND FALSE NEWS REPORTING ON SMITH'S VOTE AGAINST THE REPEAL OF THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE AND ENACTMENT OF THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT

*25. To the New York Tribune. I have just read what you say of me in your yesterday Number. . . Peterboro, July 17, 1855. Bifolium. 12 x 7 ½ inches. Text printed on three pages.*

Letter to editor which accuses the *New York Tribune* of falsely reporting that he missed the vote on the 'Nebraska Act' when in fact he was there and dutifully voted against the legislation. "...The report, that whilst in Congress, I was guilty, not only of deserting the cause of freedom, but of deserting it for the sake of the petty self-indulgence of saving a few hours of sleep."

What follows is a detailed description of events in the House of Representatives on the night of the Nebraska Act vote. This includes Smith's arguments presented on the floor of the House, previously unpublished by the *Tribune*, which illuminate the political machinations proposed by both parties in the attempt to bring forward and block the vote on the bill. Smith was accused of lacking 'backbone' for not supporting the Whigs attempt to block the bill and this was the cause of the attack on his character by the *Tribune*. It was not the vote on the bill, but rather his unwillingness to go along with the Whig's party maneuvers as the bill approached a vote. "The meanest Whig, or Democrat, or Sectarian, from the fact, that he has the party and the press to help him, can succeed in starting any, even the most extravagant , lies respecting me."

### "YOU HAVE MULTIPLIED THE WRONGS . . ."

*26. Second Letter of Gerrit Smith to the New York Tribune. Peterboro, July 31, 1855. Bifolium. 12 ¼ x 7 ½ inches. Text printed on four pages.*

In the editorial printed by the *Tribune* along with the publication of Smith's letter of July 17, 1855 described above, Smith writes, "You have but multiplied the wrongs against me, instead of blotting out, by the repentance I had hoped for, both the effect and the sin of those wrongs, which you have previously inflicted on me." The accusations made by the *Tribune*, suggest that Smith has gone over to the slavery side, that "I was giving signs of utter apostacy from the cause of the slave,

and that the slaveholders, having covered me all over with the slime of their flattery, were swallowing me entire. . .”

*“IN WORLD’S HISTORY, GOVERNMENT HAS HAD NO SMALL SHARE  
IN THE FORMING THE PUBLIC MIND.”*

*27. Edward C. Delavan, Esquire. My Dear Friend, I write to you a few pages on subjects, which have interested us, is some of our conversations with each other . . . Peterboro, August 22d, 1855. Bifolium. 12 ½ x 8 inches. Text printed on four pages.*

Edward Delavan was a wealthy business man and founder of the American Temperance Union. He was nominated for Governor by the Native American Party but declined the opportunity. He was closely associated with Smith on supporting the Maine Law of 1846 which legislated a total ban on alcohol manufacture and use in the State.

This letter to Delavan Smith discusses how the U. S. government, through its legislative bodies, supports slavery by its unwillingness and inability to abolish the system. It therefore influences the thoughts and actions on the subject and perpetuates these crimes against mankind. He continues with a similar argument about the use of alcohol and governmental inaction on its prohibition. He goes into a detailed account of the Maine Law, its origins and impact, and the judicial decision in the State of New York that law it is unconstitutional and therefore cannot be adopted. He mentions Judge Bronson (see above), Daniel Lord and others who have taken this position and condemns them as “being guilty of treason to the cause of temperance, and of contemptible folly.”

*GERMAN AMERICANS COMPLAIN OF THE CLASSING OF LIGHT BEER  
WITH INTOXICATING DRINKS*

*28 Edward C. Delavan, My dear sir. Peterboro, May 18, 1857. Folio sheet, printed two sides. 12 x 8 inches.*

Reply to a letter from Delavan requesting Smith attend the meeting of the New York Temperance Society, which occurs while he is in Wisconsin. But in his absence he writes against the statues which are proposed by government and outlines in detail the impact that liquor sales have on the workingmen of the State. He discusses crime, murder, abandonment, and the self-destructive nature of the poison. He discusses why German Americans refuse to support temperance and the need of the Temperance Society to address the immigrant populations and gain their support for legislation.

*“THE GOVERNMENT HAS EVERYWHERE BECOME THE OWNER OF THE PEOPLE.”*

*29. From the New York Tribune. Mr. Gerrit Smith on the President's Message. Currency and Hard Times. To the Editor of the N. Y. Tribune. Peterboro, Dec. 21, 1857. Bifolium. 12 x 8 inches. Text printed on three pages.*

Written nine months after the inauguration of James Buchanan as President and two months after the closure of the banking system in New York due to the Panic of 1857. This was the first international recession that affected not only the U. S. but the economies of Great Britain and France. Banks, insurance companies, the oil business, railroads, and the stock market were all hit very hard, and the money became very scarce and business failures multiplied.

Smith argues that the government should tackle the sins of slavery and temperance but other than the issuance of currency has no authority over the banking system, especially state systems that by right of the Constitution can regulate their economies. He concludes with half dozen paragraphs describing the meaning of "hard times" caused by slavery, intemperance, and presently the lack of liquidity in the market. He ads his proposals for managing the economy, the banking system and the implementation of usury laws to protect the public.

**MY YEARS HAVE BEEN SPENT IN SECLUSION. MAY HABITS ARE ALL FORMED TO PRIVATE LIFE.  
NEVERTHELESS I ACCEPT THE NOMINATION.**

*30. Gerrit Smith's Acceptance. Letter of the Committee. Resolution. Mr. Smith's Reply. Syracuse, August 4, 1858. Bifolium. 12 x 8 inches. Text printed on 4 pages.*

By the unanimous vote of the State Mass Convention, Gerrit Smith was nominated to run for the Governorship of New York in the 1858 election. In a response from Peterboro dated August 5, 1858 Smith accepts the nomination, while aware that it is highly unlikely that he will garner the votes to win. This is a masterful reply in that he covers his history as an abolitionist and temperance fighter over the past decades and reiterates all the fights he has waged in the political arena for a moral and equality-based government. He writes about the economy, the land monopoly, his philanthropy, the courts, and the responsibility of civil government. He describes in detail the newly organized Republican Party and his relationship to it. He is aware of the skepticism with which his nomination will be held by many in the state but responds with the understanding that his voice and the issues he exposes must be a part of the debate. The Republican Party sweep the election and Edward D. Morgan was elected Governor.

**"NOW THAT THE ELECTION IS PAST AND MY LABORS CONNECTED WITH IT ARE ENDED. . ."**

*31. To the Men Who Put Me in Nomination. Peterboro. November 5, 1858. Folio sheet printed on two sides. 12 x 8 inches.*

Smith writes about the miles he traveled, the number of meeting he attended and speeches he gave (53), and the time away from home he spent in quest of the governor's seat. He speaks candidly about the issues he exposed and with some humility he writes in part:

"The novel character of the Meetings was enough to make them interesting. They were filled up with questions and answers and occasional discussions between my questioners

and myself. They were emphatically a school for acquiring knowledge of the province and duties of civil government – a school in which we were all pupils, and in which we were all at liberty to be teachers.”

“I hope that the good accomplished by these Meetings will not be estimated by the smallness of my vote (2,545 votes out of 539,604 cast ballots). They have perhaps had the effect to reduce rather than increase it. Very unpopular answers were drawn from me by those who questioned me in regard to the Common School, the Poor House, the Rights of Women, the Legislation of a Sabbath, Tariffs, &C. &c. Manifestly the people are not yet prepared to receive the thoroughly democratic theories, which I have spent so much of many years inculcating. Manifestly I must live and die an unpopular politician. Still I may not have lived in vain; and the words, which I have spoken and written, may not all die with me.”

**NOT CONTENT TO BE CALLED ‘ALMOST RIGHT’ ON TEMPERANCE  
& SOFT ON THE REPUBLICAN PARTY’S STANCE ON SLAVERY**

*32. Letter From Gerrit Smith to Rev. Dr. John Marsh and Letter from Gerrit Smith to Joshua A. Giddings. Peterboro, November 12, 1858. Folio sheet printed on two sides. 12 x 8 inches.*

Letter from Smith to Dr. March, editor of the *American Temperance Union* and the *New York Prohibitionist* that attempts to rectify an editorial that suggested that he was ‘unsound on Temperance’. After explaining that he has served the cause of temperance for 32 years and run for election based on the prohibition of liquor he writes, “In these circumstances therefore I am not content to be called ‘almost right’ on Temperance.

Joshua Giddings, an abolitionist and politician from Ohio who was instrumental in forming the Republican Party, had written a public letter to Smith encouraging him to embrace the Party and its platform. Smith replies that pledging to abolish slavery is not the same as creating legislation to eliminate the practice and emancipate the slaves. In a reference to the Kansas Nebraska Act, Smith writes that the position of Republicans to allow Kansas into the Union as a state, ‘with or without slavery is one that you approve and I condemn’. He consoles Giddings as an old friend and suggests that the work together to create a political party “which shall seek honestly and earnestly to actualize the beautiful and sublime ideal of an every way righteous Civil Government.”

**THE CHURCH OF PETERBORO AND THE “NEW RELIGION”**

*33. Gerrit Smith has Consented to Deliver and Discourse in the Presbyterian Church in this Village on Sunday the 23d inst. at 11 a.m. in Behalf of the Religion of Reason, or as it is Frequently called in this Community, the “New Religion.” Church of Peterboro, January 14, 1859. Broadside. 12 ¼ x 8 inches.*

“The following original hymns will be sung in connection with Mr. Smith’s Discourse.” The broadside includes the printed lyrics for four hymns that will accompany Smith’s presentation.



### REPUBLICANS SOFT ON PROHIBITION

*34. Letter from Gerrit Smith on Temperance. To the Thoughtful and Candid of the County of Madison.* Peterboro, March 8, 1871. Single folio sheet. 12 x 8 inches. Text printed on two sides.

Written at age of 74, Gerrit Smith addresses the local election of Republican candidates and despairs that the dramshop will survive because of the Parties reluctance to create legislation that prohibits the manufacture, sale, and consumption of alcohol. Calls Republicans a 'dramshop party' though better than the Whigs and much better than the Democrats.

"As death came to the Whig party because it would not adopt our anti-slavery principle, so death is now threatening the Republican party because it will not espouse our opposition to dramselling."

### SHOWING SUPPORT OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY TO DEFEAT THE DEMOCRATS

*35. Gerrit Smith to the Anti-Dramshop Party. A Mutual Disappointment.* Single sheet folio. 14 x 8 ¼ inches. Peterboro November 6, 1872.

An apology of sorts for choosing to support the Republican candidates over the Anti-Dramshop Party because of the threat of a Democratic resurgence in New York. Smith decides that the Republicans would 'protect persons and property from the ravages of dramselling.'

*"WITH THE MONSTROUS OUTBREAKS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS,  
THIS WORLD GOVERNMENT MUST ACT PROMPTLY AND EFFECTIVELY,  
OR JUSTLY BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THEM."*

*36. Spain. - - - Cuba. (By Gerrit Smith).* Broadside. 12 x 8 inches. Peterboro Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> 1873.

"For Cuba is of all the earth the land of slavery and slaughter . . .and the record of Spain is that unhappy island is a river of blood with a border of gold." If the World Government were to intercede, "This intervention and rescue would be such an upward step in the history of mankind as would effectually warn the wicked in every part of the world not to trample upon any portion of mankind."

Referring to himself Smith concludes, "God grant this dear old soul may keep marching on until, not only in Cuba but in all the broad earth, the Sun shall not rise upon a slaveholder nor set upon a slave!" Smith died a year later, on December 28, 1874.



(Photograph not Included in the Collection)