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THE MINUTES
OF THE
STATE CONVENTION
OF
THE PEOPLE OF COLOR
OF THE
STATE OF INDIANA.

THE State Convention of the people of color of the State of Indiana, pursuant to a call issued by the State Central Committee, met in the City of Indianapolis, in the A. M. E. Church on Friday morning at 9 o'clock, August 1st, 1851. The Convention was called to order by Mr. JOHN G. BRITTON, of Marion County, Chairman of the Central Committee, who called upon the Rev. JOHN A. WARREN, of Clark County, to address a Throne of Grace by prayer: after which, Mr. BRITTON was appointed President *pro tem.*, and Mr. WILLIAM J. GREENLY, of Floyd County, Secretary *pro tem.*

The delegates were called upon to present their credentials, when the following were received:

- John G. Britton, of Marion County ;
James Callihan, " "
John L. Johnson, " "
Thomas Bushrod, " "
Presley B. Delany, " "
William H. Manly, " "
William H. Carter, Vigo " "
James H. Bundy, " "

David Johnson, Vigo County ;
 William Chandlor, " "
 Jesse Mitchell, " "
 Rev. John Morgan, Washington and Orange Counties ;
 Rev. John A. Warren, Clark County ;
 William J. Greenly, Floyd " "
 Rev. Joseph J. Fitzgerald, Jefferson County ;
 Rev. William Anderson, " "
 Rev. William T. Couzins, Clark " "
 Rev. Benjamin Crider, Jefferson " "
 Samuel Jones, " " "
 John H. Morris, Tippeconoe " "
 T. S. McCoy, Wayne " "
 William Dudley, Bartholomew " "
 William T. Boyd, Madison " "
 Calven Brown, Putnam " "
 Morris Brooks, Shelby " "
 Henry Vestell, Johnson " "
 Calvin Outland, Wayne " "
 Elisha Weaver, Posey, Vanderburg, and Gibson Counties ;
 D. N. McDowell, Ripley County.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the Chair appoint a committee of five to choose permanent officers for the Convention.

The following were appointed said committee: H. W. Carter, T. Bushrod, P. B. Delany, J. L. Johnson, and Rev. J. Morgan.

The committee retired, and while absent the Convention was very warmly and eloquently addressed by the Rev. Mr. Fitzgerald, when the committee returned and reported the following :

JOHN G. BRITTON, *President*.

Rev. JOHN MORGAN, {
 D. N. McDOWELL, { *Vice Presidents.*

W. J. GREENLY, {
 W. T. BOYD, { *Secretaries.*

Rev. JOHN A. WARREN, *Chaplain.*

The report was received and adopted, and the above officers took their seats.

The President appointed Mr. John Manly Door Keeper, and then arose and addressed the Convention as follows :

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION: I am fully aware of the honor you have conferred upon me to preside as Chairman over this deliberative body of the Colored Americans of Indiana, now assembled in convention for the purpose of discussing subjects of a grave and important character. Gentlemen, we have been called together at a period of great excitement ; at a time when the whole State is in commotion in regard to our

race. For, on Monday next, is the annual State election, which, I have no doubt, from the best information that I can gain, will endeavor to seal the destinies of the Colored Americans of this State, by at least thirty thousand votes against us.

Gentlemen, I believe that this Convention will produce a new epoch in the history of the Colored Americans of Indiana; and I truly regret that your choice has not decided upon one who, from his experience and knowledge of parliamentary rules would be more able to discharge the duties that will be required upon this occasion than myself. This is the second Convention of any note that I have had the privilege of meeting in, and the first time that I have ever been called to the chair, to preside over a body of this magnitude. I would ask to be excused were it not that I do not wish to be considered remiss in the performance of any duty assigned me by my fellow citizens, especially when our liberties are at stake. Without any further apology, gentlemen, I will impartially endeavor to discharge the duties assigned me to the best of my ability.

Gentlemen of the Convention, and Fellow Citizens; before I take my seat you will permit me to say to you, that there are several important subjects which I trust will claim the undivided attention of this Convention. And, as I shall be confined to the chair during the sitting of this Convention, you will permit me to lay before you, a few important subjects, which I had contemplated introducing for the consideration of this Convention.

1st. As Colored Americans, we are entitled to all rights, privileges, and immunities of citizenship as other citizens, according to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of the United States.

2d. We are deprived of those inherent rights, set forth in the Declaration of Independence, and confirmed by the Constitution of the United States, all of which have been conferred upon foreigners that come into this country.

3d. Industry, Education, and Temperance should claim the undivided attention of each and every delegate of this Convention.

4th. The proposition of England to the Colored Americans of the United States, to migrate to the island of Jamaica, and the kind and friendly manner we are received in Canada.

5th. The American Colonization Scheme, I do hope will claim the special attention of this Convention, as it has been going the rounds through the public papers, that the colored people of Indiana had called a Convention for the purpose of deciding in favor of emigrating to Liberia.

6th and lastly. A response to the call for a National Convention, the time and place of holding it, and the propriety of electing delegates to represent the Colored Americans of Indiana in said Convention.

With these remarks, gentlemen, I will take my seat, hoping that the great Creator of all mankind will bless our efforts on this occasion.

The Convention then proceeded to business as follows:

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the President appoint a committee to prepare business for the consideration of this Convention.

The following were appointed said committee: J. L. Johnson, J. H. Morris, W. H. Manly, J. A. Warren, and J. J. Fitzgerald.

On motion of Mr. J. A. Warren, it was

Resolved, That the time of meeting of each day's sessions, be at 9

o'clock, A. M., and 2 o'clock, P. M., and the time of adjournment be at 12 o'clock, A. M., and 6 o'clock, P. M.

On motion of J. A. Warren, it was

Resolved, That the President appoint a financial committee of three.

W. H. Manly, J. Callihan, and C. Brown were appointed said committee.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That Mr. Blanks, of Michigan, be received as a member of this Convention.

The Convention was further addressed by Mr. Blanks and Mr. P. B. Delany.

On motion of J. L. Johnson, the Convention adjourned to meet again at 2 o'clock, P. M.

SECOND SESSION.

FRIDAY, 2 o'clock, P. M.

Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The President in the Chair. After prayer by the Chaplain, the roll was called, and the minutes of the first session read, received, and adopted. The Rev. J. M. BROWN, and Mr. JOSHUA B. DELANY, of Ohio, made their appearance in the house, and, on motion of J. L. Johnson, it was

Resolved, That they be received as members of the Convention.

On motion of J. L. Johnson, it was

Resolved, That Jefferson's Manual be adopted as the rule for this Convention.

On motion of J. B. Delany, it was

Resolved, That fifteen members constitute a quorum to do business.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That no delegate shall leave the house while the Convention is in session, without permission from the Chair.

The committee appointed to draft business for the Convention was called upon to report, when the chairman announced that they would be ready to report Saturday morning at 9 o'clock.

On motion of J. J. Fitzgerald, it was

Resolved, That no person shall speak more than twice upon any one question, nor longer than fifteen minutes at any one time.

On motion, the Convention adjourned to meet Saturday morning at 9 o'clock.

THIRD SESSION.

SATURDAY MORNING, 9 o'clock, Aug. 2d, 1851.

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The President in the Chair. A quorum being present, the house was called to order, and prayer offered by Rev. J. MORGAN. The roll was called, the minutes of the second session read, received, corrected, and adopted; after which, the order of the day was taken up. The business committee was called on to report, when the following was reported:

To the President and Convention assembled:

We, your committee, appointed to prepare business for the consideration of this Convention, beg leave to report the following preamble and resolutions:

WHEREAS, The second section of the second article of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, as framed by the Constitutional Convention of 1851, deprives its colored citizens of the elective franchise; AND WHEREAS, The second section of the thirteenth article prohibits others of our brethren from coming into or settling in the State, while foreigners of all nations are invited; therefore,

Resolved, That we ask and earnestly pray, in case of its adoption, that constitutional measures may be taken in accordance with the 16th article, for its amendment.

2nd. WHEREAS, We have an unquestionable right to the land of our birth, in common with all other men; therefore,

Resolved, That we recommend our people to remain in the land of our nativity, and labor on, and ever, until we shall have effected our own elevation, morally, politically, intellectually, and socially, and have obtained the repeal of all laws affecting our disabilities and grievances.

3d. *Resolved*, That should the laws of the State of Indiana become so oppressive as to be intolerable, we recommend our people to emigrate to Canada or Jamaica, in preference to Liberia.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the report be received.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the report be submitted for adoption, item by item.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the preamble and first resolution be adopted.

A motion was made for the adoption of the second resolution, when considerable discussion came up, for and against it; when it was

Resolved, That the resolution be laid on the table.

On motion, the third resolution was taken upon its adoption, when, after some discussion the Convention adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M.

FOURTH SESSION.

SATURDAY, Aug. 2 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. President in the Chair. Prayer by the Rev. J. M. BROWN. The roll called, the minutes of the third session read, received, and adopted.

Mr. Boyd, one of the Secretaries, being absent in consequence of sickness, it was

Resolved, That J. H. MORRIS be appointed assistant Secretary.

The 3d resolution was again taken up, when a motion was made to strike out all after the word emigrate, which was adopted. And then the resolution was laid over for discussion on Monday, 9 o'clock, A. M., Aug. 4th.

The second resolution was then taken from the table, and discussed at some length, when, on motion, it was laid over till Monday, for further consideration.

On motion of J. M. Brown, it was

Resolved, That there be a committee of three appointed to ascertain the amount of taxable property owned by the people of color of the State of Indiana.

The following gentlemen were appointed said committee: Rev. J. M. Brown, Rev. Wm. Anderson, Calvin C. Brown.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the President appoint three gentlemen to address the Convention and citizens generally, at early candle-lighting upon the subject of their moral and social elevation.

Upon which the Rev. O. T. B. Nickens, of Cincinnati, Ohio, Rev. J. J. Fitzgerald, of Madison, Ind., and J. H. Morris, of Tippecanoe County, were appointed.

On motion of W. H. Carter,

Resolved, That the Convention adjourn to meet on Monday morning, 4th inst., at 9'clock.

[Saturday evening at candle-light, the Convention and citizens met according to arrangement, and were very interestingly addressed by Revs. Nickens and Fitzgerald, (Mr. Morris absent). After which, while singing several anti-slavery songs, a collection was taken up by the financial committee, to the amount of \$6 40, for defraying the expenses of the Convention, such as printing the minutes, paying the Sexton, &c.; and the same was deposited in the hands of the President of the Convention.]

FIFTH SESSION.

MONDAY MORNING, 9 o'clock, Aug. 4th, 1851.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. President in the Chair; prayer by the Rev. W. T. COUZINS. The roll was called; the minutes of the fourth session read, received, and adopted.

The report of the committee in reference to the amount of taxable property owned by the people of color of Indiana, was called for, when the said committee reported that they were not able to ascertain the amount, to report to this Convention. The report was received, and the committee discharged.

The order of the day was suspended, until a communication from the Governor (sent by Mr. Bushrod,) to the Convention be read.

The same was read and a vote of thanks tendered the Governor for his kindness.

The third resolution was again taken up, and debated with much ability on both sides, when Mr. Fitzgerald offered the following amendment, to-wit: Insert, after the word "emigrate," "to Canada, Jamaica, or elsewhere, in preference to Liberia;" which amendment was adopted.

The resolution as amended, reads as follows:

Resolved, That should the laws of the State of Indiana become so oppressive as to be intolerable, we recommend our people to emigrate to Canada, Jamaica, or elsewhere, in preference to Liberia.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That the above resolution, as amended, be adopted.

The second resolution was again taken from the table, on its adoption, which was debated with much ability on both sides. Supported by Messrs. J. M. Brown, J. J. Fitzgerald, and J. A. Warren; and opposed by Messrs. T. Bushrod, P. B. Delany, and C. C. Brown. W. H. Greenly offered a resolution in lieu of the one under debate, as follows:

Resolved, That this Convention recommend the people of color through the State of Indiana, to use every lawful means in their power, while in the State, to prepare themselves for their future elevation; which motion did not prevail.

A division of the house was then taken upon the previous resolution, and adopted by a vote of 19 to 5.

The following preamble and resolutions were offered by W. H. Greenly.

WHEREAS, The Colonization Society has been engaged for years past, up to the present, in devising ways and means to colonize the people of color of the State of Indiana in Liberia; AND WHEREAS, Many have been under the impression that the present Convention was called for the purpose of deciding in favor of emigrating to Liberia; notwithstanding we believe the motives of many to be pure, though misguided by

wrong impressions; AND WHEREAS, We believe the emigration of the free people of color of these United States to Liberia would be the means of riveting the chains tighter, and forever upon our enslaved brethren; therefore,

Resolved, That we denounce the Colonization Scheme, and never will, as a body, emigrate to Liberia.

On motion of W. J. Greenly, it was

Resolved, That this Convention respond to the call for a National Convention, and recommend Tuesday, the 18th day of August, 1852, as the time, and Pittsburgh, Pa., as the place, of holding said Convention.

On motion of W. J. Greenly, it was

Resolved, That this Convention elect five delegates to the National Convention.

On motion of W. T. Boyd, it was

Resolved, That the house resolve itself into a committee of the whole, by appointing S. Jones, Chairman; and then proceed to the election of the five delegates to the National Convention.

Which resulted as follows: W. J. Greenly, of Floyd county; John G. Britton, of Marion; Rev. J. J. Fitzgerald, of Jefferson; John A. Warren, of Clarke, and Thos. Bushrod of Marion.

On motion, the Convention adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M.

SIXTH SESSION.

MONDAY, 2 o'clock, P. M.

The Convention met per adjournment, the President in the Chair.

Prayer by the Rev. B. Crider. Roll called. The minutes of the fifth session were read, received, and adopted.

On motion, it was

Resolved, That two reserved delegates be appointed to fill vacancies.

Upon which, John H. Morris, of Tippecanoe, and Wm. T. Couzins, of Clarke, were appointed.

On motion of W. J. Greenly, it was

Resolved, That there be an agent appointed by this Convention to canvass the State of Indiana, to lecture our people upon their present condition, the object of the proposed National Convention, and to collect moneys to defray the expenses of the delegates to the National Convention. The agent shall make report to the chairman of the Central Committee.

On motion of J. A. Warren, it was

Resolved, That W. J. Greenly be appointed the agent to canvass the State, and that he be allowed 25 cents on the dollar for all moneys he may collect for the purpose named in the above resolution, and his traveling expenses paid.

On motion of J. J. Fitzgerald,

WHEREAS, Virtue, knowledge, and happiness always dwell together, and the existence of one depends upon the existence of the other, Therefore,

Resolved, That we recommend our people to institute schools in every town, village, and settlement, and labor with unanimous effort for general elevation and improvement.

On motion of W. T. Couzins, it was

Resolved, That the Chair appoint a committee of three to nominate a State Central Committee, consisting of nine, whose duty it shall be to call a State Convention, whenever practicable.

The following gentlemen were appointed: Wm. Anderson, T. Bushrod, and J. A. Warrens.

The committee in a few moments reported the following as a State Central Committee:

John G. Britton, of Marion County,
John L. Johnson, "
Wm. J. Greenly, Floyd "
Rev. Wm. T. Couzins, of Clarke County,
J. H. Morris, Tippecanoe "
Wm. H. Carter, Vigo "
T. S. McCoy, Wayne "
C. Outland, " "

The above report was received and adopted.

On motion of J. M. Brown,

Resolved, That the Chair appoint a committee of three to draft an address to the legal voters, and one to the colored citizens of the State of Indiana, setting forth our grievances, and the necessity of action on our part.

W. J. Greenly, Rev. J. J. Fitzgerald, and W. T. Boyd, were appointed said committee.

On motion of J. J. Fitzgerald,

Resolved, That inasmuch as intemperance is destructive to the health, wealth, and morals of any people, we will exert our energies to arrest the progress of this monster in our midst.

Further business was suspended until a collection was taken up, to pay for printing the minutes. \$3 were collected, and deposited in the hands of the President.

The following preamble and resolution was offered by J. A. Warren:

WHEREAS, We, the people of color, have often been branded as not having taste in common with other men for agriculture, arts and sciences, &c.: Therefore,

Resolved, That we recommend our people to hold annual fairs for the exhibition of their stock, mechanical inventions, ladies' needle work, &c., in order that we may remove the odium so long cast upon us.

The above preamble and resolution was laid over for Tuesday morning, 9 o'clock.

It was then announced that there would be a public meeting at candle-lighting, at which time addresses would be delivered by Mr. MERRIWETHER, upon Liberia: J. M. BROWN, upon Canada, and J. J. FITZGERALD, upon moral elevation. Which was done, and while singing several anti-slavery songs, a collection of \$4 80 was taken up, and deposited in the hands of the President.

Adjourned to meet Tuesday morning, 9 o'clock, Aug. 5th.

SEVENTH SESSION.

TUESDAY MORNING, 9 o'clock, A. M.

The Convention met per adjournment, the President in the Chair,
Prayer by Rev. E. Weaver. - The roll was called, and the minutes of
the 6th session read, received, and adopted.

The preamble and resolution of J. A. Warren in reference to annual
fairs, was taken up and adopted.

The following preamble and resolutions were offered by Rev. J. M.
Brown, to-wit:

WHEREAS, The government of Great Britain has offered to the free people
of color of the United States a home upon the soil of her Britannia's
Isle, on terms of equality, at once recognizing the principles of universal
brotherhood, Therefore,

Resolved, That we hail with emotions of inexpressible gratitude, the
boon proffered to our countrymen.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Convention, the proffer is both
Christian, fraternal, and manly, at once placing the ban upon that anti-
christian, anti-republican, demoniacal spirit which dictates an idea so ma-
lignant as the one advocated by the Anglo Saxons of this and other por-
tions of this country, viz.: That the good of the two races demands their
ultimate separation.

On motion, the above preamble and resolutions were adopted.

On motion of W. J. Greenly,

Resolved, That each delegate in this Convention use his efforts to im-
press it upon our people in his county, to prepare premium articles for ex-
hibition, and at a proper time report to the chairman of the Central Com-
mittee the prospect of holding an annual fair.

On motion E. Weaver, seconded by J. Morgan,

Resolved, That there be one thousand copies of the minutes of this Con-
vention published, and the same distributed among the delegates, to be sold
at ten cents per copy, and the money to be forwarded to the Chairman of the
State Central Committee, to be appropriated to defraying the expenses of
the delegates to the National Convention, after the expenses of publish-
ing the minutes shall have been discharged.

On motion of E. Weaver,

Resolved, That we tender our thanks to the citizens of Indianapolis for
their kind hospitality in entertaining this Convention.

On motion of J. A. Warren,

Resolved, That we tender our thanks to the Trustees of the A. M. E.
Church, for the use of their meeting house.

On motion of J. J. Fitzgerald,

Resolved, That the chair appoint a committee of three for the revision
and publishing the minutes of this Convention.

Under which resolution the following gentlemen were appointed: W. J.
Greenly, J. J. Fitzgerald, and J. L. Johnson.