

10775. 17.5

MINUTES

OF THE

STATE CONVENTION,

OF THE

COLORED CITIZENS OF OHIO,

CONVENED AT COLUMBUS,

January 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, 1850.

COLUMBUS:

PRINTED AT THE OHIO STANDARD OFFICE,

BY GALE & CLEVELAND,

1850.

MINUTES
OF THE
STATE CONVENTION,

OF THE
COLORED CITIZENS OF OHIO,

CONVENED AT COLUMBUS,

January 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, 1850.

COLUMBUS:
PRINTED AT THE OHIO STANDARD OFFICE,
BY GALE & CLEVELAND,

1850.

CONVENTION

OF THE

COLORED CITIZENS OF OHIO.

MINUTES.

FIRST SESSION, WEDNESDAY MORNING.

PURSUANT to a call of the STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, for holding a Delegate State Convention, the delegates to said Convention met in the *Bethel Church*, in the City of Columbus, on Wednesday, January 9th, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Convention was called to order by D. Jenkins, of Franklin County, and was organized by appointing L. D. Taylor, of Franklin, President pro tem., and C. A. Yancey, Secretary.

Prayer having been offered by the Rev. Mr. N. Nooks, the Convention proceeded to enroll the names of the Delegates.

W. H. Day, of Lorain, introduced the following resolution:

Resolved, That persons present from their respective counties, who have credentials, and those who have been regularly elected, constitute this Convention.

Which resolution, after some discussion, was amended at the suggestion of D. Jenkins, as follows:—

Resolved, That all persons present from counties not duly represented, and those who have been duly elected, constitute this Convention.

The following gentlemen were present to represent their respective counties:

FAIRFIELD COUNTY—A. Strauder.

LORAIN COUNTY—John Watson, W. H. Day, Thomas Brown, and C. Ross.

MORGAN COUNTY—G. Hilton.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY—H. Ford, J. D. Pattison, L. Adams.

MADISON COUNTY—J. Purnell.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY—J. L. Watson, J. Mercer Langston, H. F. Douglass, Jas. Monroe Jones.

JACKSON COUNTY—N. Nooks, A. Yancey, J. W. Stuart.

GALLIA COUNTY—W. Stuart, J. Gee.

LOGAN COUNTY—K. Artis.

PICKAWAY COUNTY—D. S. Moss, G. Adams.

WARREN COUNTY—F. Wilson.

GEAUGA COUNTY—H. Lott, Sr., H. Lott, Jr.

ERIE COUNTY—J. J. Pearce.

MERCER COUNTY—S. Jones.

CLARK COUNTY—N. Morgan, A. Demsey, W. P. Morgan.

GREENE COUNTY—J. W. Divine, J. H. Johnson.

JEFFERSON COUNTY—T. H. Dorsey, J. P. Underwood.

SENECA COUNTY—D. Roberts.

MUSKINGUM COUNTY—W. H. Burnham.

ROSS COUNTY—G. R. Williams, Dr. C. H. Langston.

FRANKLIN COUNTY—J. Poindexter, D. Jenkins, L. D. Taylor, J. Booker, P. Letchford, W. S. Davis, J. M. Brown, T. Washington, T. J. Goode, G. Johnson, D. Hart, D. Trent, W. Copeland, J. Bennett, J. Freeland.

LICKING COUNTY—Morgan Melton.

HIGHLAND COUNTY—J. W. Delany, J. Taylor.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY—John Jackson, Thos. Jefferson.

PIKE COUNTY—G. W. Evans.

D. Jenkins moved that a committee of one from each county represented, constitute a committee to nominate permanent officers for the Convention.

The committee having retired, the Convention was entertained by eloquent speeches from Messrs. H. F. Douglass and Wm. H. Day.

The nominating committee having returned, reported through their chairman, C. H. Langston, the following gentlemen as officers for the Convention:—J. L. Watson, President; L. D. Taylor, W. H. Burnham, John Watson of Lorain, and John Gee, Vice Presidents; and Jas. Monroe Jones, C. A. Yancey, K. Artis, and George R. Williams, Secretaries. J. P. Underwood and J. D. Pattison were appointed Chaplains to the Convention.

W. H. Day moved that the report be adopted.

While the motion was pending, Wm. Copeland moved to amend the report, by striking out the name of J. L. Watson from the list of permanent officers of the Convention. He said he thought that the young members of the Convention ought to be placed in office, in order that they might become acquainted with conventional affairs.

Mr. J. Mercer Langston then arose and made a most eloquent speech in favor of sustaining the original list of officers. He said that Mr. Watson was the "*wheel horse*" of the Reserve, and had devoted his time and talents in defense of the colored men of the States. He eulogized the manly conduct that had characterized Mr. W's whole life as an Anti-Slavery Lecturer. He therefore thought the Convention ought to place him in the Chair, as a mark of respect to one who had so well deserved it.

The question on the adoption of the original report was called for, and the report was unanimously adopted.

Whereupon, Messrs. W. H. Day and G. Adams were appointed to escort the President Elect to the Chair. The President, on taking the Chair, made a very appropriate address; which was received with shouts of applause from the members of the Convention.

On motion of L. D. Taylor, Jefferson's Manual was adopted as the guide for the Convention.

D. Jenkins moved that the Convention appoint a business committee, consisting of one from each county represented: Whereupon the following gentlemen were selected as a business committee: John Mercer Langston, of Cuyahoga; D. Jenkins, of Franklin; Dr. C. H. Langston, of Ross;

T. H. Johnson, of Greene; John Gee, of Gallia; A. Strauder, of Fairfield; J. D. Pattison, of Champaign; Thos. Brown, of Lorain; F. Wilson, of Warren; J. J. Pearce, of Erie; J. Lott, of Geauga; D. L. Moss, of Pickaway; J. P. Underwood, of Jefferson; J. Purnell, of Madison; S. Jones, of Mercer; W. H. Burnham, of Muskingum; G. W. Evans, of Pike; N. Morgan, of Clark; G. Hilton, of Morgan.

It was then moved by L. D. Taylor, that W. H. Day, of Lorain, be Chairman of the Business Committee. Mr. Day asked to be excused on account of his being expected to report the daily proceedings of the Convention for the Cleveland True Democrat and other papers.

J. Mercer Langston was then chosen Chairman.

On motion of Dr. C. H. Langston, a Financial Committee consisting of three, was appointed. The following gentlemen composed the said committee:—C. H. Langston, W. H. Burnham and J. Booker.

The Convention then adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock P. M.

SECOND SESSION, WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON.

The President in the Chair. The Minutes of the morning were read, corrected and approved.

Calls were made for some one to address the Convention.

After several calls from the audience, W. H. Day rose and made some very interesting remarks. He concluded by reading a letter from a gentleman of high standing in the State, concerning the Convention of the Colored People of Ohio.

Mr. Adams, of Champaign, made some interesting remarks also. Mr. J. Watson, of Lorain, likewise addressed the Convention at some length.

Mr. J. L. Watson, of Cuyahoga, made a lengthy speech on his *happy escape* from slavery, and the necessity of all colored men saying and doing all they can to elevate themselves and liberate the slave.

The Business Committee having returned, reported through their Chairman, J. Mercer Langston, resolutions for the consideration of the Convention.

The Committee recommended the same declaration of sentiments adopted by the last Convention.

Dr. C. H. Langston moved that the resolutions be laid on the table, and taken up, one by one and discussed; which was carried.

The first, second and third resolutions were then taken up, and indefinitely postponed.

The fourth resolution being under discussion—Mr. Poindexter said he hoped that some gentleman would convince him of the truth of the resolution. He could not favor the resolution until he heard more from gentlemen who advanced it.

Mr. W. H. Day, upon being called for, remarked that, though he was in favor of the principle set forth in the resolution, and thought it could be demonstrated to be correct, yet he came to this Convention for one principal object:—the securing for the colored man a vote in the State. The resolution seemed to him to detract the attention from the great end of the Convention. He would move the indefinite postponement of it. He felt more at liberty to do this, on account of the resolution being penned by

his constituents; and, being about to make the motion, he yielded the floor to D. Jenkins, who said he was in favor of the resolution.

Mr. Burnham said he thought there was no necessity for adopting such a resolution.

Mr. Divine said he would go heart and hand for the resolution; and concluded with some pithy remarks.

Mr. Poindexter said he was misunderstood; he prayed as fervently for the downfall of slavery as any man. He said his wishes should not overrule his better judgment.

Dr. C. H. Langston moved that the resolution be laid on the table; which was carried. He then moved that rules be adopted for the government of the Convention, as to the time of meeting and adjourning.

Whereupon the Convention decided to meet at 9 o'clock A. M. and adjourn at 12 o'clock M.; and meet at 2 o'clock P. M., and adjourn at 5 o'clock P. M.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the Convention adjourned to meet at 7 o'clock P. M.

THIRD SESSION, WEDNESDAY EVENING.

The President in the Chair. Rev. Mr. Underwood read a portion of the Scriptures.

The President arose, and made some remarks.

D. Jenkins moved that the Convention take up the fourth resolution for consideration.

After a spirited discussion between Messrs. Poindexter, J. M. Langston and others, Dr. C. H. Langston offered a resolution which was adopted. He moved that the Convention take up the resolution referring to the competency of persons from a distance, to participate in the Convention.

After some discussion, it was indefinitely postponed.

Dr. C. H. Langston moved that the Convention adopt a rule not to allow any gentleman to speak more than fifteen or thirty minutes at a time on any one subject; which was adopted.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the Convention then adjourned to meet on Thursday morning at 9 o'clock A. M.

FOURTH SESSION, THURSDAY MORNING.

The President in the Chair. Prayer having been offered by the Rev. J. D. Pattison, the Minutes of the preceding session were read, corrected and approved.

Mr. Copeland, of Franklin, raised the question of the legality of last night's proceedings.

The President decided that the proceedings of last evening were not the legitimate business of the Convention.

Mr. Douglass took an appeal from the decision of the Chair. The decision of the Chair was not sustained.

Mr. Artis asked to be excused from serving as one of the Secretaries, which was granted, and Dr. C. H. Langston was appointed in his place.

J. Mercer Langston, Chairman of the Business Committee, proceeded to lay before the Convention business for the order of the day.

A motion was made to lay the whole on the table, and dispose of the items one by one, which was carried.

Resolution 5th was then taken up, and after some discussion, the Convention appointed a committee to draft a Constitution.

The Committee consisted of the following gentlemen: W. H. Day, L. D. Taylor and T. Brown.

On motion of Dr. C. H. Langston, the 6th resolution was then taken up. Mr. H. F. Douglass presented the following amendment:

"That each County in the State be hereby requested to employ efficient men to canvass its respective districts and towns, as may be deemed best."

The vote being taken on the amendment, it was negatived—Yeas 8, Nays 46.

The original resolution was then adopted.

The 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th resolutions were taken up and adopted.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the Convention adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock P. M.

FIFTH SESSION, THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

The President in the Chair. Prayer having been offered by the Rev. Mr. Stewart—

The minutes of the preceding session were read, corrected and approved.

The 18th resolution being called for, Mr. Williams made an interesting speech; and, among other things, he said he thought that the colored people of the State amounted in number to 25,000, and were abundantly able to support an organ of their own; and they would do it if it was commenced upon a proper basis.

He remarked that the colored people of Cincinnati, for instance, were not awake to their true interest; for they supported the Pro-slavery Press in that city to an extent which was evidence to him that the Cincinnati people did not have their own elevation at heart as much as they ought to have.

Mr. Jenkins, of Franklin, also spoke in favor of the resolution; referred to the advantages of a paper devoted to the interest of the colored people of Ohio. He said that Ohio, with a population of twenty thousand, *could sustain* a newspaper devoted to their interest.

Mr. Burnham said that the Convention ought to appoint an Agent to collect funds to establish a newspaper—an organ strictly devoted to the interests of the colored people of the State. He thought the North Star was not "*the People's*" paper, but strictly an *Eastern* paper.

Mr. Lott said he thought the paper must "go down."

Mr. Divine said he was sorry to hear gentlemen predict the downfall of the contemplated paper.

J. Mercer Langston then arose and advocated the immediate establishment of an organ devoted to the interest of the colored people. He instanced the progress of the intellectual condition of the colored people. He

thought the objections urged by those gentlemen who had just left the floor, groundless. He said the growing intelligence of the colored people demanded that a paper should be established. He said that the "North Star," edited by the *immortal* Douglass, had proved recreant to the assertion of its editor, at the Cleveland National Convention. He said further, that the "North Star" was the only paper in the United States conducted by a colored person, in whose columns it is *especially* desirable for us to be noticed; and *it* fails to notice the articles of western colored men. He also said that colored men were becoming cultivated; that they were being educated; that they possessed the germ of a peculiar literature; that they had poets, statesmen, reviewers, printers and philosophers, who could fathom Baconian Philosophy and solve Newtonian Problems; and who should have an outflow—a manifestation of their genius and their talent. He thought the "Christian Herald" was not the colored people's paper, but strictly a Methodist organ. He said the intellectual attainments of the colored people of Ohio, were not inferior to any in the Union.

Dr. C. H. Langston said he did not intend making a speech; but he wished to explain the whole matter, as to the former failures of newspapers. He said that *talk* would never support a paper. He thought that our people had too many old prejudices and predilections peculiar to slavery, and they were too frequently looking up to the "white man" for every thing.

J. M. Brown remarked, that he thought the gentleman from Cuyahoga, Mr. Langston, had been personal in his remarks concerning the Methodist denomination.

Mr. Nooks said, his feelings had suffered from the remarks made by Mr. Langston, from Cuyahoga.

Dr. C. H. Langston, moved that the resolution be laid on the table, which was carried. Dr. Langston then moved that a committee of three be appointed to devise means for sustaining the lecturers.

The following gentlemen were chosen for the said committee,—viz:

J. I. WATSON,
C. H. LANGSTON,
J. JACKSON.

Dr. C. H. Langston then moved that the 12th resolution be taken up again. He explained the reasons why the editors engaged in publishing newspapers for the colored people had failed formerly; he thought if men would use their purses more than their lips, the newspapers "*would live*."

The resolution was then adopted; a committee of seven being appointed by the convention, to fill up the blank in the resolution, composed of the following gentlemen,—viz.

J. MERCER LANGSTON,
W. H. DAY,
D. JENKINS,
C. H. LANGSTON,
G. R. WILLIAMS,
W. H. BURNHAM,
WM. COPELAND.

The 13th resolution was taken up, and on a motion for its adoption, an amendment was offered by W. H. Day, to add an address to the voters, and an other to the colored people; which was adopted.

A Committee of five to prepare the addresses, was then appointed by the Convention, consisting of the following gentlemen:...

W. P. MORGAN,
J. N. STUART,
W. H. DAY,
F. WILSON,
J. W. DELANY.

The 14th resolution was read. Calls were made for Speakers. W. H. Day was called for, he declined; but repeated calls brought the gentleman to the stand. He referred to the privileges enjoyed by the colored people of Massachusetts, and the manner by which they were gained. He referred to the suffrage question in the State of New York, and also the benevolent action of Garrit Smith, in making three thousand voters. He thought the privileges of the colored men in New York, were not in so imminent danger as those of Ohio. He thought we ought to act so as to be a model to the colored people in the surrounding States; he also referred to the principles laid down in the Constitution of the U. States. He said the people of Ohio must strike the word "*white*" out of the State Constitution, if they would be consistent. He said that the colored men in his own town were able to control the elections; that men now place "*Free Soil*" over the heads of their papers, to secure patronage; concluding his remarks, he thought the signs of the times gave full evidence that there was a "good time coming." The question being put, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

A petition was offered to permit certain persons to participate, and vote in the convention. The petition was, by the President, decided to be in opposition to the standing rules of the convention. An appeal was taken from the decision of the chair; and the chair was sustained.

The 15th resolution was called up. J. W. Stuart offered a substitute.

The 16th and 17th resolutions were read and adopted.

The 18th resolution, or the subject matter of the letter of L. N. Minor, was referred to a committee of three, composed of the following gentlemen.—viz:

C. H. LANGSTON,
WM. COPELAND,
J. GEE.

The Chairman of the business committee announced that the first resolution in series (six) would be the order of the Evening Session.

Mr. W. H. Burnham offered a preamble and resolutions, setting forth the pro-slavery character of the Methodist denomination.

Jas. Monroe Jones moved that the preamble and resolutions be indefinitely postponed. While the motion was pending, a motion was carried for an adjournment to 7 o'clock, P. M.

A song was then called for, which was responded to with cheers.

SIXTH SESSION, THURSDAY EVENING.

President in the chair. Prayer having been offered by the Rev. Mr. Nooks, the convention proceeded to the business of the evening, namely, the Election of Lecturers. W. Copeland nominated W. H. Day, J. M. Langston, H. F. Douglass, D. Jenkins, Dr. C. H. Langston, as speakers, to canvass the State.

[The Secretary cannot tell how the motion was disposed of.]

Mr. D. Jenkins moved that the convention proceed to ballot for a suitable person to address the constitutional convention.

Messrs. W. H. Day and J. Mercer Langston were candidates for this office.

The vote stood as follows:

For W. H. Day, 46, J. Mercer Langston, 6, C. H. Langston, 1. Mr. Day being called for, made some pithy remarks.

It was moved that the convention proceed to ballot for six Speakers to canvass the State.

Mr. Poindexter said he wished to examine this question with great care; that an important crisis had come upon us.

The question to reconsider, being put, was carried.

It was then moved to appoint a committee of five to select Speakers to canvass the State, which was withdrawn. It was moved that J. L. Watson, W. H. Day, Dr. C. H. Langston, J. M. Langston, be Speakers. Dr. Langston declined; J. M. Brown and several others declined serving. Mr. Douglass was also nominated--motion was withdrawn. Mr. Sampson P. Lewis was chosen also. Mr. Divine declined. Jas. Monroe Jones also declined, but who, on further consideration, consented to serve. The lecturers then came forward and made some remarks. J. P. Underwood was chosen as one of the Speakers.

The resolution of Mr. Burnham was then taken up; and after some discussion, in which Messrs. Jas. M. Jones, J. M. Langston, and Mr. Burnham, participated, the main question was put, for its indefinite postponement, which was carried by a large majority.

The hour having arrived for an adjournment, the convention adjourned, to meet Friday Morning, 9 o'clock, A. M.

SEVENTH SESSION, FRIDAY MORNING.

President in the chair. Prayer was offered by Mr. Underwood. The minutes of the preceding session were laid over until the committee on business, could make a report. Resolution, No. —, was taken up and adopted.

The minutes were then read, corrected and approved.

Mr. Gee moved, that the minutes stand with the exclusion of Mr. Burnham's Preamble and Resolutions.

A discussion then arose, in which J. M. Langston, and others participated. J. L. Watson said, that if the delegates looked upon the subject as he did, they would think differently. Some confusion arose, and a point of order was raised.

J. L. Watson said that gentlemen ought not to impeach the chair in the exercise of his serious convictions.

J. Mercer Langston said, he did not wish to be misrepresented; he wished to be correctly reported before the people of the State of Ohio, and the delegates of the convention. He said he opposed the Methodist E. Conference, on the ground of their not being sufficiently anti-slavery.

J. M. Brown said, he did not wish to be reported at all; all knew his views very well. He thought it unkind to speak in such terms of his denomination, (the Methodist.)

Mr. Gee, then, with the consent of the convention, withdrew his motion, provided the subject was not agitated any more; and provided the minutes stand as reported by the Secretary.

On a motion of Dr. Langston, the minutes stood as they were read.

Mr. Jenkins announced that the members of the House of Representatives, in the Ohio Legislature, had passed a resolution, granting the Hall to the convention, by a vote of 51 to 17; which was received with applause.

Resolutions No. 19 and 20, were taken up and adopted.

On a motion, a new State Central Committee was appointed, consisting of the following gentlemen---viz:

D, JENKENS,
J. M. BROWN,
W. COPELAND,
L. D. TAYLOR,
JOHN BOOKER,
JAS. POINDEXTER,
A. M. TAYLOR.

The 21st and 22d resolutions were taken up and adopted.

The 23d was taken up, and after some consideration, was referred to the Rev. J. M. Brown, for revision.

The 24th and 25th were also adopted.

Mr. J. M. Brown, then came forward, and reported the 23d resolution revised; the report was received and adopted.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the convention adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock, P. M.

EIGHTH SESSION, FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

President in the chair. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Mr. Underwood.

W. H. Day proposed a resolution appointing J. M. Langston, L. D. Taylor, and J. P. Underwood, as speakers in the evening, in the Hall of the House of Representatives. Being strongly urged to withdraw the resolution, he did so.

A resolution was brought forward to appoint W. H. Day, J. L. Watson, and J. M. Langston, to speak to the members of the Legislature this evening, Jan. 11th, 1850, at 6 o'clock; which resolution was adopted.

The minutes being called for, two of the secretaries were absent, and

the proceedings could not be read. The resolution in relation to an adjournment was taken up, and after discussion, it was so amended that the convention adjourned at 6 o'clock, instead of 11 o'clock.

On motion, a committee of five was appointed to receive and disburse the funds which may be collected for the men to canvass the State. Messrs. J. Poindexter, Jenkins, C. H. Langston, J. Booker, and Wm. Copland, were appointed said committee.

The select committee of seven appointed to take into consideration, the propriety of establishing a PAPER, reported through their chairman, J. M. Langston.

The committee appointed to draft a constitution for the league, reported through their chairman, W. H. Day, which was laid on the table.

On a motion, a select committee of five was appointed to revise and print the proceedings of the convention, consisting of the following gentlemen,---viz:

D. JENKENS,
C. H. LANGSTON,
G. R. WILLIAMS,
WM. COPELAND,
J. MERCER LANGSTON.

On motion of D. Jenkins, the question to print the proceedings in pamphlet form, was reconsidered. He moved to amend it by inserting the Ohio Standard.

Mr. Douglass said, he was opposed to printing the proceedings in the Ohio Standard; he wished every man in the State should read them, so that they might see that we were not insensible to the demonstrations in favor of liberty, now shaking the entire nation. He further contended, that, if they were printed in pamphlet form, they would be more durable,---he would have them handed down to posterity as a lasting memento of the struggle for our rights.

J. J. Pearce, said that he was in favor of pamphlet form, and that he wanted the people of this State to know what we are doing for ourselves.

Mr. Yancey then moved to amend the resolution by inserting "circular form," which motion was lost.

The question on printing in pamphlet form, was carried by the casting vote of the President.

The select committee on sustaining the speakers, reported through their chairman, C. H. Langston, a plan for dividing the various parts of the State. The report being under consideration—

On a motion of W. H. Day, the words "and no longer," were stricken out; the report was then adopted.

Mr. W. H. Day reported a constitution for the government of the League, which was then taken up and adopted.

CONSTITUTION.

Whereas, three millions of our brethren and sisters are yet in bonds; and Whereas in the free States, the colored man is only nominally free; and Whereas, the elevation of the colored man must depend mainly upon himself; and believing, that by union, we can better attain the liberation of our brethren in bonds, and the elevation of the colored American, half-free, we hereby agree to form ourselves into a State Society, to be governed by the following articles:---

1st. This Association shall be styled, The Ohio Colored American League.

2nd. Its object exclusively shall be to forward the objects contained in the Preamble, namely, the liberation of the slave and the elevation of the colored American, half free.—And, laying aside all jealousy, we will “help the cause along” to the best of our ability.

3d. Any man or woman subscribing to the principles of this League, as above expressed, shall become a member, by paying into its treasury or the treasury of its auxiliaries, annually, not less than the sum of fifty cents.

4th. County Associations or Leagues, auxiliary to this, may be formed in each county of the State, and shall be entitled to a representation in the Annual Meeting of the Association.

5th. A certain portion of the funds of each Auxiliary, shall be paid into the Treasury of this League, on or before the day of its annual meeting; otherwise, the representatives of such Auxiliary shall not be entitled to vote in said Annual Meeting.

6th. The officers of this League shall be a President, two Vice Presidents, a Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer, who, with seven chosen from the remaining members, shall constitute the Executive Committee, and shall all hold their offices one year, or until others are chosen.

7th. The duties of the President, Vice President, Secretaries and Treasurer, shall be those usually attaching to their respective titles, the Treasurer giving bonds in the sum of \$500. The duties of the Executive Committee shall be, in the interim of the meetings of the League, to take charge of the particular and general interests of the League, be wide awake to promote them, either by helping the fugitive or otherwise—by encouraging or discouraging lecturers in the State, and to perform any duties which this League may reasonably and constitutionally impose upon them.

8th. The Annual Meetings of this League, for the election of officers, hearing the annual report of the Executive Committee and Treasurer, and transacting business for the Association, shall be held on the last Wednesday of October in each year.

9th. All Agents and Lecturers in the service of this League, shall be employed and directed in their labors, by the Executive Committee; and to them alone shall be accountable.

10th. Whenever undue sectional influences, in the doings of this League, are apprehended by any ten of its members, any number of members from any county shall be entitled to no greater number of votes than the number of representatives of such county in the State Legislature.

11th. This Constitution may be altered or amended, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at the Annual Meeting.

The Officers of the League were then elected, which were as follows:

J. L. WATSON, President.

J. WATSON, Vice President.

LEWIS ADAMS, do.

J. MERCER LANGSTON, Recording Secretary.

WILLIAM H. DAY, Corresponding Secretary.

JOHN GEE, Treasurer.

J. W. STUART, }
G. R. WILLIAMS, } Executive Committee.

The following gentlemen, appointed to receive the funds for Lecturers, were then voted a part of the Executive Committee of the Colored American League:—

J. POINDEXTER, L. D. TAYLOR, D. JENKINS, C. H. LANGSTON, and JOHN BOOKER.

Mr. William H. Day informed the Convention that he was now in the employ of the "Oberlin Colored American League," and would have to be governed to a great extent by their decision, as to where he should go, and how long he should occupy the field. He stated this to avoid being misapprehended; but he thought the League for which he was acting would coincide in the decision and recommendation of the Convention.

A Letter was received from Mrs. Scurry. It was moved that it be inserted in the minutes of the Convention.

Mr. G. R. Williams moved that the resolution in relation to adjournment, be reconsidered, which was carried.

On motion, the Convention adjourned to meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives, at 7 o'clock, to listen to speeches from the gentleman appointed for that occasion—Messrs. Day, Watson and Langston.

The Convention adjourned to meet on Saturday morning, at nine o'clock A. M.

NINTH SESSION, SATURDAY MORNING.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. The President in the Chair.

Prayer was offered by Elder Jones.

The reading of the Minutes of the preceding session was omitted.

The subject of the Press came up, and gentlemen were called on to subscribe what they would pay for the support of the paper.

A committee of one from each county, was appointed to make arrangements for the speakers, as they travelled through the various counties.

H. F. Douglass was appointed for Cuyahoga County, J. L. Watson for Lorain County. Afterwards it was agreed to leave the appointment to the State Central Committee.

A letter was then read from Henry Hurd, the substance of which was ordered to be inserted in the minutes of the Convention.

A motion was made that the Secretaries prepare the minutes for publication in the Ohio Standard; which was adopted.

A letter was read from Justin Holland, the substance of which was ordered to be inserted in the minutes of the Convention.

On motion, D. Jenkins was appointed to ascertain the cost of publishing the proceedings. Mr. Jenkins, having made an inquiry concerning the cost, said that the amount would be about thirty dollars, if no larger as to size and number of copies (500) than the proceedings of the last Convention.

The Financial Committee reported that they had collected \$33 58 cents.

The report was received and adopted.

The Committee appointed to take into consideration L. W. Minor's letter, reported through their chairman, C. H. Langston, that, should there be any moneys left or received, after printing the proceedings of the Convention, the said money should be applied to the liquidating of the said claim.

Mr. Nichols, of Franklin, arose on permission of the Convention, and stated that there was no necessity of the colored people establishing an independent paper at this time, as the Editors of the Ohio Standard were willing to devote a part of their columns to the interest of the colored people of the State.

Mr. C. H. Langston asked, if the Editors were willing to change the name, so as to read, "Ohio Standard and Voice of the Oppressed?"

Mr. Nichols said he thought they would let that or any other name be over the columns devoted to their interest.

The report was adopted.

The Ladies attending the Convention proposed to defray the expenses of the house for the sitting of the Convention.

Whereupon, W. H. Day moved that the Convention tender their sincere thanks to them for their genuine patriotism.

A vote of thanks was also tendered to the Trustees of the A. M. E. Church.

L. D. Taylor then moved that the committee on the Press be instructed to confer with the Editors of the Ohio Standard, and make such arrangements as they may deem best; which was adopted.

The Convention having resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, J. M. Langston in the Chair; the committee, after a few minutes sitting, arose and reported that the gentlemen on the old statistical committee were unable to report.

Whereupon a motion was then made that the same committee act for the ensuing year.

The following gentlemen were added to the old list:—

REV. SAMUEL JONES, of Mercer County.

JOHN JACKSON, of Hamilton County.

J. PURNELL, of Madison County.

H. FORD, of Champaign County.

F. WILSON, of Warren County.

D. ROBERTS, of Seneca County.

T. CRAWFORD, of Delaware County.

Dr. C. H. LANGSTON offered the form of a petition to be presented to the Legislature; which was adopted.

It was voted to fill the blank, as to Superintendent for the Colored Schools, with the name of WILLIAM H. DAY.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*.

RESOLUTIONS.

The resolutions are not placed in the order in which they were acted upon, but more according to the subjects contemplated in each.

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS.

WHEREAS, we the free colored people of the State of Ohio, are cursed by the blighting influence of oppression in this professedly free State, to which many of us have fled for refuge and protection; and whereas, the history of the political world, as well as the history of nations, clearly shows, that "who would be free, himself must strike the blow;" and whereas, both the old and new worlds are shaken throughout their length and breadth, by the uprising of oppressed millions who are erecting firm foundations and stupendous platforms, on which they may unitedly battle for that liberty which God has benignly given to all his creatures, and which will be wrested from them only by vampire despots; therefore,—

Resolved, That we adopt the following as our Declaration of sentiments, as to State and National policy, and in harmony with these we will ever fight, until our rights are regained. It is our purpose,

I. To sternly resist, by all the means which the God of Nations has placed in our power, every form of oppression or proscription attempted to be imposed upon us, in consequence of our condition or color.

II. To acknowledge no enactment honored with the name of law, as binding upon us, the object of which is in any way to curtail the natural rights of man.

III. To give our earnest attention to the universal education of our people.

IV. To sustain the cause of Temperance in our midst, and advocate the formation of societies for its promotion.

V. To leave what are called menial occupations, and aspire to mechanical, agricultural, and professional pursuits.

VI. To respect and love that, as the religion of Jesus Christ, and that alone, which in its practical bearings, is not excitement merely, but that which loves God, loves humanity, and thereby preaches deliverance to the captive, the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound, and teaches us to do unto others as we would have them do to us.

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, 1. That all persons present during the Session of this convention, be hereby requested to participate in the discussion of the questions which may come before the convention.

Resolved, 2. That it is the duty of every colored man, to do every thing in his power, to secure to himself and brethren, their political rights.

Resolved, 3. That we re-affirm the great and unalterable doctrine, promulgated by the State convention of last winter, that we are men, and as such are entitled to all the privileges and immunities granted to other men, and that we will fight and fight ever until these privileges are granted to us.

Resolved, 4. That we hail the signs of the times, as clearly indicating the downfall of that monstrosity, and sum of all villainies, American Slavery; [amended as follows, by Dr. C. H. Langston.]

Resolved, That the signs of the times indicate, that slaveholders and their abettors, are determined at all hazards, to perpetuate forever, that monstrosity, "the sum of all villainies," American Slavery; regardless of the cries of their outraged victims or the agitations of christians and philanthropists.

WHEREAS, our 3,000,000 brethren and sisters are yet in bonds; and Whereas, in the Free States the colored man is only nominally free; and Whereas, the elevation of the colored man must depend mainly upon himself; Therefore—

Resolved, 5, That, for the sake of *united effort* in this respect, the business committee would recommend the formation of a State society for these ends alone, and the appointment, immediately, of a special committee, to draft for it a Constitution.

Whereas, the Elective Franchise is a right of inestimable value, and a liberty that the citizens of all well regulated governments should enjoy and cherish; and Whereas, it is of the highest importance that every one should be prompt and energetic in the acquirement and defense of all such natural and inalienable rights; and, Whereas, we are taxed without representation, and deprived without just cause, of enfranchisement, which is the birthright of human ity; and, Whereas, a Convention for amending the Constitution of the State is to be holden during the ensuing year; and believing that, by vigorous and energetic action, we may induce the Convention to alter the Constitution in such a manner as to give to all the citizens of the State without discrimination, this heaven bestowed and inalienable right; and, Whereas, we believe that the best way, in which this result may be brought about, is by agitating the public mind in regard to our claims to all rights in common with other citizens, *and especially to the right of suffrage*; Therefore—

Resolved, 6. That we appoint and support six able and intelligent lecturers, whose duty it shall be to canvass the State forthwith, laying before the people the justice and propriety of securing to us our just and equitable right to vote as do other men according to their wishes and their choice.

Resolved, 7. That we instruct our lecturers to oppose before the electors of the State, the proposition to submit in a separate clause, the elective franchise, to the consideration and disposal of the people; unless as a last trial for the right we claim.

Resolved, 8. That the lecturers be employed until the Delegates to the Constitutional Convention be nominated and elected.

Resolved, 9. That a committee of three be appointed to consider and lay before the Convention a plan whereby the charges and expenses of the lecturers may be settled and defrayed.

Resolved, 10. That the Convention select a Speaker to address the Constitutional Convention touching the interests and claims of the colored people of the State.

Resolved, 11. That we deem the elective franchise and its associate privileges, of the highest importance to our happiness, and future prosperity, and our lawful birthright under the established principles of freedom, which are the true foundation of law in our common country, and that we will cordially co-operate in such systematic counsel and action as shall be deemed best suited to their attainment and full enjoyment.

Resolved, 12. That the Convention appoint a committee of seven to consider the propriety of establishing a paper devoted to the interests and claims of the colored people of the State, and that said committee, if they see fit, suggest a plan for its establishment and support.

Resolved, 13. That the Convention appoint a committee of five to prepare addresses to the voters and colored people of the State.

WHEREAS, there is no object so dear to a freeman as the right of suffrage, and that no man can be free without it; therefore,

Resolved, 14. That this Convention will make *that* the permanent object of their deliberations, and that they will show to the people of Ohio that they are capable of appreciating and sustaining that right.

Resolved, 15. That there be appointed by this Convention one man in every county to take the number of voters in his county, to make arrangements for public meetings, and to see that a fair tax is laid upon and paid by the people for the support of delegates to their Conventions; and that it be recommended to every community that they do what they can to make it obligatory upon every person who votes for a delegate, to help defray his expenses.

Resolved, 16. That the delegates be instructed to urge upon the people in their respective counties the propriety and necessity of forming auxiliaries to the Colored American League of this State; that, by that means they may secure a *union* politically and socially, among the oppressed of the State.

Resolved, 17. That the Convention recommend to our people not to employ incompetent teachers, nor such as cannot bear examination as district school teachers, nor such as do not sustain a good moral character.

Resolved, 18. That the merits of the letter of L. W. Miner to J. Mercer Langston, be considered by this Convention.

Resolved, 19. That a committee of one be appointed to confer with our friends in regard to obtaining the House of Representatives, in which to hold our Anti-Slavery meeting; and further, that D. Jenkins, Esq., constitute said committee.

Resolved, 20. That we recommend to our brethren throughout the State, the adoption of some plan by which to communicate with each other, and thus interest all in promoting a more complete system of education—obtaining a more solid and substantial acknowledgment of our political rights—and such measures as shall insure more rapidly the social elevation and civil freedom of our people.

Resolved, 21. That the delegates of this convention and others be requested to circulate in their respective counties a petition, asking for the abolition of the remaining *laws* of the State, making *distinction* on account of color—and that this petition be forwarded to the Legislature at its next session.

Resolved, 22. That the Ohio Standard of this City, is worthy the confidence, and that it should receive the encouragement and support of the colored citizens of Ohio, and of the Union.

Resolved, 23. That the Convention petition the Legislature to appoint a Superintendent of the colored schools of the State, and that we recommend W. H. Day, as the person.

Resolved, 24. That we tender our thanks to the Legislature of last winter, for what they did in repealing those odious Black Laws, that existed against us, and we pray their successors that they wipe out the remnant.

MR. W. H. BURNHAM'S PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTION.

WHEREAS, The Methodist Conference of the colored Church has passed silently over the subject of American Slavery, and has by that means given sanction to an institution that tramples on the necks and liberties of three millions of human beings, and these very beings have the same hopes and fears, and are identified with these men who are saying nothing in behalf of their cause, by color and suffering, prejudice and wrong; and whereas, according to the words of the exponents of their faith and order, they are thus silent in order that they may extend their connection into Slave States, and thus have power over, and get money from the poor, worn, and heart broken slave; in this *unchristian* and *cruel* operation, they are keeping the slave from purchasing his liberty, and tightening the chain on his posterity yet unborn; and whereas they have established a newspaper entitled the Christian Herald, edited by one Rev. A. R. Green, which they deem too sacred to admit the subject of human rights in its columns, or they are too mean, pro-slavery, and time serving, to come up to the work and thus assist in "loosing the bands of *wickedness*, unloing the heavy *burthens*, and letting the oppressed go *free*, and breaking every *yoke*;" and whereas, we believe that this convention, being the assembled representatives of the colored people of the State, should speak out against all such monstrous *evils*; Therefore—

Resolved, That we recommend to the annual Ohio Conference, of colored people, to pass resolutions defining their position on the subject of slavery; and we further recommend that they enquire into the conduct of said A. R. Green, in prohibiting the discussion of slavery in his paper, and see if he acts in accordance with the instructions received at the general conference; and by so doing, they will show themselves on the side of *liberty*, and their oppressed and down trodden brethren.

REPORT.

The committee appointed to devise a plan for establishing a paper in the State in behalf of the colored people, having had the same under consideration; would respectfully report, as follows:—

That in their judgment, the peculiar condition of the colored people of the State imperiously demands that we establish such an organ, that we may talk to each other, and to the world.

We are brought to this conclusion from the following considerations:—

We are scattered over so large a territory, and while we have increasingly important interests, we have not a single paper of our own west of New York, and in those there, we do not consider ourselves properly represented, neither can we be fully represented in the papers edited at the west by our white friends, for we have interests peculiar to ourselves. This is our condition. But the establishment of a paper must depend upon the available means to sustain it. Among the 25,000 colored persons in the State, there certainly are sufficient to give it a handsome support, to say nothing of the thousands of our white friends in the State, who stand ready to-day to welcome such a periodical. In this connection, we would not forget the expected support of our western *brethren*, whose interests, like ours, need to be advocated.

Your committee would therefore respectfully recommend the adoption of the following plan for the establishment and support of a paper:—

I. To find out from each person present interested, how much he or she will pledge, if it be needed to support the paper one year.

II. The appointment of a committee of nine from those who pledge money, the business of which committee shall be to manage the publishing and all the financial concerns of the paper.

III. The issuing immediately of a prospectus, to be circulated by the lecturers upon the suffrage question, for subscriptions, payable upon the receipt of the first number of the paper.

IV. *Columbus, Franklin County, as the place for issuing the paper

V. William H. Day, and Dr. C. H. Lagston, Editors.

VI. The principles of the paper shall be the advocacy of the rights of the colored man, urging his liberty, and his moral, mental, social and political elevation.

VII. The name, "Voice of the Oppressed."

All which is respectfully submitted.

J. M. LANGSTON,
WM. H. DAY,
WM. COPELAND,
WM. H. BURNHAM,
DAVID JENKINS,
GEO. R. WILLIAMS,
DR. C. H. LANGSTON.

LETTER FROM JUSTIN HOLLAND.

Cleveland, Ohio, Jan. 5th, 1850.

Gentlemen of the Convention:—Dr. J. McCune Smith delivered an address to the members of the Legislature of New York, on the subject of removing the property qualifications, which applied to colored persons. So great was the array of statistics and facts, so conclusive were his arguments and deductions, and so successfully were they presented, that at the close, the meeting unanimously adopted four resolutions, the second of which reads as follows.

"*Resolved*, That the charge of ignorance which was urged in the convention of '27, as a reason to deprive a large class of our citizens of the privileges of the elective franchise is no longer tolerable; as their advancement in the arts and sciences, in intellectual and moral culture, does abundantly testify."

It seems to me, that something of this sort would do us good, if properly carried out. Let us by an overwhelming show of facts, deprive the trading politicians of even a decent excuse for further opposing our enfranchisement. Again sirs, the question of our enfranchisement, I think, should be settled by the convention to revise the Constitution. The proposition to submit it, in a separate clause to the people, no doubt originated in a desire to escape all odium that might arise from vindicating a measure that is daily receiving the condemnation of an enlarging number of the citizens of the State. Would it not be well, sirs, to send men well qualified, to that convention—men having a knowledge of our history, furnished with ample statistics of our progress and present condition, to hold meetings between its sessions, and lay before the members of that convention our claims to political equality? I have but little faith in the honor and justice of the masses when they come to decide a question like this for us, swayed by their prejudices and the exaggerations of designing demagogues. Therefore I think every effort should be made to have it settled in the convention. The future quiet and progress of the State require it.

JUSTIN HOLLAND.

LETTER FROM H. HURD.

CARTHAGENA, MERCER COUNTY,
NEAR NEW BREMEN, AUGLAIZE COUNTY, JAN. 1, 1850.

Gentlemen of the Convention: There are small hands as well as great ones which have to do with this subject, [the welfare of the colored people,] and among them, you are assembled to deliberate. With me it appears that we should be deliberative, mild and manly, in our decisions. The opinions of others must be respected. Our weapons should be inoffensive and our conclusions impartial, while we should vigorously prosecute them. We are a part of the citizens of Ohio, to the number of some twenty thousand, and our condition, though greatly bettered from what it was, is yet one of the worst for freemen: though the burthen has been removed to some extent; yet the yoke is not broken. The repeal of the Black Laws has not removed all our oppressions; yet we must approve of what is done, and appreciate the privileges we have, by properly enjoying them, while we petition the Authorities for equal laws in every respect. The enslavement of our colored brethern in the South, and the long oppression of the colored freemen of the North, may have (for reasons which we cannot comprehend!) induced a portion of those who now form the sovereignty, to draw such a conclusion as they allege, that we cannot rightly exercise the elective franchise or appreciate full political rights! This may answer as an excuse for them; but, let it be so or not; the great strides made, and which are still making, by the oppressed of all Europe, for Liberty, warn us not to be indolent, while the deep and goading abuses imposed on three millions of colored Americans in the South, with the prejudicial stigma it reflects upon us, imperatively demand of us to arise and plead our own cause, and prove to the oppressors that they are wrong. I believe that we have the ability, as it is our duty, and the mass must help the few who are willing to breast the storm. Guided by truth and shielded with facts, we must canvass the State and appeal to the philanthropy and calm reason of the people. Let us appeal to the sense of the Electors of Ohio, and make known our wants as citizens; and their votes will answer the question. Did not God make all the nations of the earth of one blood? Did not our Savior declare "all brethren?" Should we be then as one people? Surely if any person denies these things, he rejects the word of God and rebels against his designs. Will the Christian professors and republicans of Ohio do this? I hope not; but time will prove the truth. The Declaration of American Independence heralds to the world that "All men are born free and equal;" and the Constitution of Ohio does the same, and farther proclaims the rights of man.

When we ask for equal political rights, we know that God and Nature are with us. Then let us be honest in our advocacy, calm in our address, and unchangeable in our purpose.

Will any man of sense pretend to say that the colored freemen of Ohio cannot vote for officers as well as the German and Irish emigrants who never read the Constitution or Laws of the State? Can we not exercise our judgments as correctly as nine-tenths of the voters of Ohio? No one with ordinary sagacity can doubt it. We are not to be held in contempt because we are yellow or black, or because our condition may not be in every respect as it should be. Did not God make our colors? And did not our white brethren enslave our fathers and mothers, whom they bought and sold like the cattle of the fields? There are men, apparently in respectable standing, who have, through their blind prejudice, concocted a plan, by which they are in hopes to exile a large number of the colored citizens of this country, in the form of colonization. We should look upon such men as our worst enemies. For, under a pretense of friendship for the colored people,

they expect to accomplish their hellish intentions. "They are wolves in sheep's clothing." I claim that we are native Americans; and in America I intend to remain—equal laws, or no laws. Here we are, and here let us remain and plead our cause for justice.

I am your obedient servant,

HENRY HURD.