

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Colored National Convention,

HELD IN

FRANKLIN HALL, SIXTH STREET, BELOW ARCH,

PHILADELPHIA,

OCTOBER 16th, 17th and 18th,

1855.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

SALEM, NEW JERSEY:
PRINTED AT THE NATIONAL STANDARD OFFICE.
1856.

A CONVENTION of the Colored People of the United States assembled in Franklin Hall, Sixth Street, below Arch, Philadelphia, pursuant to the following call, from a Committee appointed by the National Council, June 3d, 1855, to call a National Convention of the Colored People of the United States.

The Convention was called to order by Rev. STEPHEN SMITH, of Philadelphia; when on motion of Mr. STEPHEN MYERS, of Albany, Mr. SMITH was appointed temporary Chairman; and Mr. FRANKLIN TURNER, of Philadelphia, Secretary. The following call for the Convention was then read by Mr. ISAIAH C. WEARS, of Philadelphia, which was adopted:

A CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COLORED AMERICANS.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—The present aspect of the *times*, and the condition of our brethren in bonds, and our own peculiar position as Freemen, require of us some well directed effort to counteract the debasing influence that holds us in our present anomalous condition in this our native country; and in obedience to the demands of stern necessity for united action, the undersigned, agreeable to appointment and by direction of the National Council at its last meeting, held in the city of New York, May 10th, 1855, do call a Convention of the People, through *their* delegated representatives, to assemble in the city of PHILADELPHIA, Pa., on the 16th DAY of OCTOBER, 1855, under the form and title of a National Convention of the Free People of Color of the United States.

After close observation, and mature deliberation, we have

arrived at the conclusion, that the *Free People of Color*, if they would disencumber themselves from whatever tends to impede their march, and remove whatever obstacles are in the way of their progress—if they would fully subserve the cause of Liberty, which is the *cause of God*, they must take upon them the responsibility of doing and acting for themselves—of laying out and directing work of their own *elevation*. That so far from being mere aids and lookers-on, the time has fully come when they must be the guides, leaders and active operators in this great Reform.

Who, it may be asked, can lay a stronger claim to a cause, and who, having the power and ability, can better promote it, than the most deeply interested; and upon whom has the elevation of the People of Color in these United States a stronger claim, and who can better direct and promote the *work*, than the People of Color themselves? In our elevation lies the freedom of our enslaved brethren; in that elevation is centered the germ of our own high destiny, and the best well-being of the whole people.

Years of well-intended effort have been expended for the especial freedom of the slave, while the elevation of the free colored man as an *inseparable priority* to the same, has been entirely overlooked. But to every true friend of freedom it must now be too obvious, that the whole process of Operation against the huge and diabolical system of oppression and wrong, has been shorn of more than half its strength and efficacy, because of this neglect of the interests of the Free People of Color—interests so vital that we dare not longer permit them to remain in a state of neglect. If nothing else, then, these years of experience have taught every true friend of Liberty, that the elevation of the free man is inseparable from, and lies at the very threshold of the great work of the slave's restoration to freedom, and equally essential to the highest well-being of our own common country.

It is equally obvious that since the work of elevation of the Free People of Color is (so to speak) the lever by which the whole must rise, that work must now receive a vigorous and hearty support from all of those upon whom it has a claim.

The *work* thus foreshadowed for the consideration of the Convention, is various, and much of it difficult; yet, the power of its accomplishment lies in systemization and direction of it—and while we would make no direct specifications—while we

would be proscriptive in nothing, still we would recommend such a course as shall prepare us, and those to come after us, to take a manly part in all things in which we have an interest, in common with the rest of our fellow-citizens. We would have the Convention ascertain the precise point now reached in our present progress. We would call its attention to the state and character of Education and educational privileges among us, with a view to their improvement, or, if need be, change and adaptation to our demands. We would direct it to an examination of our *business relations* and *habits*, and devise such ways and means as will render them more available. We would have it give, if possible, to whatever of *mechanical* or *artistic* skill there is among us, impetus and extension.

To the department of Agriculture, also, we would have it direct its attention and encouragement; so that, in all, there will be begot in us, and in our youth especially, a strong and increasing desire for these pursuits. There are also Political and Social Rights that lie at the very foundation of our manhood, to be obtained and errors among ourselves to be corrected, and confidence to be strengthened or restored. Much of the *work* commenced in the *National Convention at Rochester* in '53, demands now a vigorous prosecution; other portions of it remodeled or shaped to meet our newer experiences; and the whole to receive a stimulus that will forward it towards its completion. The progress of events, too, may have given rise to exigencies that require additional agencies hitherto unforeseen, but now demanding attention and direction. In all this, then, *fellow-citizens*, there is enough to concentrate our united wisdom, and enlist our most hearty co-operation.

With these views, *fellow-citizens*, we again earnestly entreat you to come together in the true spirit of men having a clear conception of our needs, a just sense of our rights, and an abiding *determination* to do our *duty*. The election for members to the Convention will be held on the third Tuesday of September, 1855. The people in the various neighborhoods, Church organizations, Benevolent or Literary societies, are respectfully urged to meet on that day, and elect delegates to the Convention to meet at Philadelphia on the 16th day of October ensuing, at ——— o'clock.

WILLIAM J. WILSON,	} Committee.
STEPHEN SMITH,	
JOHN W. LEWIS,	

The following Committee was then appointed by the Chairman to examine the credentials of the delegates: Messrs. J. F. Williams, of Harrisburg, Pa.; Stephen Myers, of Albany, N. Y.; and Rev. Amos G. Beman, of New Haven, Conn.

A fervent prayer was then offered by Rev. J. C. Beman, of Middletown, Conn. While the Committee on Credentials were preparing to report, the Convention was addressed by Rev. Stephen Smith, Rev. J. Campbell, and Rev. L. A. Grimes.

The Committee on Credentials reported delegates present from the States of Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania.

ROLL.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Robert Morris,	Charles L. Remond,
John S. Rock,	William C. Nell,
Leonard S. Grimes,	Leo. L. Lloyd,
William Jackson.	

RHODE ISLAND.—George T. Downing.

CONNECTICUT.

J. C. Beman,	Samuel T. Gray,
George H. Washington,	A. J. Morrison,
Amos G. Beman.	

NEW YORK.

Stephen Myers,	J. McCune Smith,
James W. Duffin,	Peter A. Bell,
Jason Jeffries,	Edward V. Clark,
William H. Topp,	R. D. Kenny,
W. J. Hodge,	C. B. Ray,
Lewis H. Nelson,	Peter S. Porter,
Daniel Russel,	Henry Beverly,
J. J. Simons,	Charles L. Williams,
Joseph B. Smith,	J. W. Bowers,
George Le Verre,	J. J. Scott,
Janius C. Morrell,	J. W. C. Pennington,
James M. Williams,	Peter M. Gray,
W. J. Wilson,	David Rossell,
Robert Hambleton,	Charles S. Hodges,
Edward Crosby,	Fredrick Douglass,
Jacob R. Gibbs,	William J. Watkins,
Thomas J. White,	J. R. V. Morgan.

PENNSYLVANIA.

Stephen Smith,
 Robert Collins,
 Adam S. Driver,
 James H. Wilson,
 Ulysses B. Vidal,
 John C. Bowers,
 Charles L. Reason,
 Jesse Bolden.
 James Fell,
 Joseph C. Stevens,
 Alfred S. Cassey,
 Henry Ray,
 Jacob C. White,
 Francis A. Duterte,
 Samuel Van Brakle,
 Edward M. Thomas,
 Joel Ware,
 Davis D. Turner,
 Benjamin B. Moore,
 Franklin Turner,
 Rachel Cliff,
 Samuel Golden,
 Elizabeth Armstrong,
 J. J. Gould Bias,
 Isaiah C. Wears,
 Basil Macal,
 Daniel Morgan,
 Edward Young,
 Robert Douglass,
 Peter Burtou,
 James McCrummill,
 Grayton S. Nelson,
 Jeremiah Asher,
 William W. Whipper,
 Addison W. Lively,

Aaron L. Still,
 Charles H. Bustill,
 William A. K. Smith,
 William R. Decorderer,
 William Parker,
 Robert Purvis,
 Daniel Colly,
 John F. Williams,
 Jabez P. Campbell,
 Edmund Kelly,
 Thomas C. Burton,
 William P. Price,
 William T. Cato,
 Nathaniel W. Depee,
 G. W. Reed,
 Joshua Woodland,
 E. J. Adams,
 James Presser,
 John G. Dutton,
 Samuel Williams,
 Jacob W. Glasgow,
 Robert Jones,
 Thomas Charnock,
 James G. Frisby,
 Jonathan Lopeman,
 William Jackson,
 James Needham,
 William Douglass,
 Thomas P. Hunt,
 Samuel H. Amos,
 Augustus Dorsey,
 Ebenezer Black,
 Thomas Gibbs,
 William Moore,
 John Addison,

Thomas Kennard.

NEW JERSEY.

Joseph Reeves,
 E. P. Rogers.

Henry A. Thompson,
 E. H. Treeman,

Robert Stewart.

CANADA.—Mary A. Shadd.

A motion was then made to adjourn until two o'clock; but after some discussion it was withdrawn.

A motion prevailed that a Committee of one from each State be appointed to nominate permanent officers for the Convention. The Committee consisted of Rev. L. A. Grimes, of Mass.; Abram J. Morrison, of Conn.; Stephen Myers, of N. Y.; and John C. Bowers, of Pa.

During the absence of the nominating Committee, the following Committee was appointed on rules: J. C. White, J. S. Rock, J. C. Morrell, G. D. Washington and J. McCrummell.

The Committee on nominations for permanent officers then made the following report:

For President—REV. AMOS G. BEMAN, of Connecticut.

Vice Presidents—JACOB C. WHITE and JOHN F. WILLIAMS, Pa.; REV. L. A. GRIMES and WM. C. NELL, Mass.; J. W. DUFFIN and P. A. BELL, N. Y., and REV. J. C. BEMAN of Connecticut.

Secretaries—DR. J. S. ROCK, of Massachusetts; GEO. W. LEVERE, N. Y.; FRANCIS A. DUTERTE and ROBT. DOUGLASS, Pennsylvania.

The report was adopted.

A committee of two, consisting of Drs. J. J. G. Bias of Pennsylvania, and J. McCune Smith, N. Y., was appointed to conduct the President elect to the Chair.

On taking the Chair, the President returned his thanks for the honor conferred on him; and promised to discharge his duties in an impartial manner, and requested the aid of the members in carrying out the objects of the Convention, &c.

Mr. J. C. White was excused from acting as one of the Vice Presidents, and Dr. J. J. Gould Bias appointed to fill the vacancy.

The following committees were then appointed:

Business Committee—Professor C. L. Reason, of Pennsylvania; Dr. McCune Smith, N. Y.; C. H. Bustill, Pa.; Wm. H. Topp, N. Y.; Geo. H. Washington, Conn.; J. C. Morrell, N. Y., and Franklin Turner of Pennsylvania.

Finance Committee—Stephen Smith, of Pa.; Aaron Still, Pa.; Chas. L. Remond, Mass.; G. V. Nelson, Pa., and J. J. Simons, N. Y.

The committee on rules then made a report recommending "Cushing's Manual of Parliamentary Practice."

A motion then prevailed, after some discussion, to return the report to the committee, with instructions to report a few written rules for the government of the Convention. Whereupon all the committee resigned.

A Committee was then appointed to draw up a set of written rules. The committee consisted of Messrs. Wm. H. Topp, of N. Y.; S. Golden, Pa., and J. C. Morrell, N. Y.

Convention then adjourned for one hour.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention met according to adjournment, the President in the Chair.

Prayer was offered by Rev. Wm. T. Catts.

On motion, E. J. Marsh was appointed on the committee on credentials, in place of Beman, appointed President.

On motion, Edward Galpin, of Connecticut, was admitted a corresponding member.

Rev. Adam S. Driver and Rev. Stephen Smith, of Pennsylvania, Samuel T. Gray, Conn., and William C. Nell, Mass., were appointed a committee on statistics.

On motion, Mr. Reese, of New Jersey, was admitted a corresponding member.

The Chair then announced that he had a communication from Dr. J. W. C. Pennington, of New-York, which was referred to the business committee.

On motion, Mr. William Whipper, of Columbia, Pa., was admitted a corresponding member.

A communication from Mr. J. W. Lewis was referred to the business committee.

A motion to appoint a committee of three to read letters of correspondence, was lost.

Mr. Charles L. Remond, of Mass., moved that we admit Miss Mary A. Shadd, of Canada, a corresponding member. This question gave rise to a spirited discussion, after which the motion was passed.

Mr. F. Douglass, of N. Y., then moved a reconsideration. Carried.

The Hall being engaged for the evening; on motion, the Convention adjourned to meet at the Philadelphia Institute at half past seven o'clock.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention met in Philadelphia Institute, pursuant adjournment. The President in the Chair, the question on the admission of Miss Shadd was discussed, affirmatively by Messrs. F. Douglass and Wm. J. Watkins, N. Y., and Samuel T. Gray; and negatively by P. A. Bell, J. C. Wears, C. S. Hodges, Lewis H. Nelson, and J. C. Bowers. The yeas and nays were called for, and resulted as follows:

Yeas, 38—Nays, 23.

The Committee on Rules then made a report, which was accepted, and after some discussion adopted.

The Business Committee, through their Chairman, Professor Charles L. Reason, then made a report of some papers received through the New York and Philadelphia delegations.

The following is from the Philadelphia delegation:

Your committee appointed to report views relative to the Industrial School, respectfully submit as a report, that having carefully considered the subject in the varied aspects which it presents, have arrived at these conclusions:—

In a report like this, it will not be expected that this subject will be handled in the detailed manner which its great weight would seem to demand. We will therefore briefly give some of the reasons for discouraging the enterprise now under consideration.

The first difficulty to be met, is the capital required to carry out instruction to a successful issue. On this point your Com-

mittee are of the opinion, that to teach even a few of the trades, much more will be required than will be easily within our reach, and for which a fair return will be received. Besides it will be conceded, that unless a youth acquire a profession congenial to his mental and physical abilities, and to his tastes, the trade thus acquired will avail him but little. For says an author of some note, "The proper choice of a profession is one of the most important steps in life." If but few trades can be taught, owing to limited capital or other causes, this institution can be of use but to few; for if within the circle of professions taught in the institution, a pupil can find none suited to his peculiar demands, it would be worse than useless, and a loss of time and means, to endeavor to acquire one in which his nature forbids he should excel.

Thus we believe that our demand for a variety of employments, is only limited by the trades themselves.

Again, the plan of an industrial school combines the mental culture with mechanical training, which we conceive to be in part going over the ground already occupied. We have institutions of learning of the first stamp open to us, where the rising generation can draw from the fountains of knowledge side by side with the most favored of the land, and at the same time by their contact and influence help materially to do away with that deep-rooted prejudice of which we so bitterly complain. The Industrial School being necessarily (if not in theory, yet in fact) a complexional institution, must foster distinctions, and help to draw more definitely (so far as educational privileges are involved) those lines of demarkation which we have labored and still are endeavoring to eradicate.

The question will also arise, is it possible in the period allotted for a collegiate course, to afford time sufficient for the acquirement of a trade in such a thorough manner as to enable the learner to compete successfully with those who have been trained by the usual method? The time generally considered necessary to learn a mechanic art, is from three to five years,

working ten hours per day, and even after this there are many who have still wide room for improvement.

Considering, then, the necessity under which we labor of being at least equal, if not superior as workmen, in order to overcome the prejudice existing against us, we cannot believe that the disconnected hours applied to attaining the said trades will suffice, in the limited period, to give that proficiency of execution and workmanlike ability which we believe to be indispensably necessary to success in business, and the ultimate triumph of our enterprise.

An institution such as is now under consideration, will not be able to accomplish much for the masses. Our people are wide-spread as are the free states of this Confederacy, their wants are varied as their localities, and all demand that their requirements should be equally cared for. The great number of our people are poor, and in consequence would be unable to avail themselves of such advantages as the institution might afford, even if it was their wish so to do.

What then is to be done? What new means must we devise? From all sides we hear the demand for occupations that shall keep pace with the rising intelligence of our people. This then is the subject which is daily forced upon us, and it must be met with a determination to adopt such plans as will be most certain of success within our reach, and likely to do the greatest good to the largest number. Having objected to the plan proposed for the accomplishment of the desired object, it will of course be expected that we will suggest some substitute. This we will endeavor to do, and will present the skeleton of a plan, believing that the concentrated wisdom of the convention now about to assemble will be able to fashion it into such a "harmonious whole" as will meet the end we have so much desired.

Let the National Council, when duly organized, establish as a part of their operations a Mechanical Bureau, accumulating a fund to be employed in the promotion of the Mechanic Arts amongst colored men. They shall organize in the several

States, or any locality, Boards of Control, who, when they shall find a responsible person or persons having a knowledge of any desirable occupation, and willing for a fair remuneration as Agent or Foreman to impart the art to colored youth, shall report the same to the Bureau, giving all necessary information as to the amount of capital &c. required for carrying out the said object. The Bureau, after making such provision as may be necessary, and instituting such supervision as may be desirable, shall advance the amount deemed necessary, requiring such reports from time to time as will be consistent with the prudent management of financial affairs, and all profits from such enterprise shall go into the general fund.

By following out such a plan, we may hope for success; and in a few years, we doubt not, the benefits would be plainly perceived. We could then employ our capital and direct our efforts in each and every place where a favorable opening may present; and ere many years shall have rolled away, we may be gladdened with the sight of our people employed in walks of life ennobling in their tendency, and calculated to lead still higher and higher, until we have achieved such a character as will sweep away the dark clouds of prejudice and oppression which would now o'erwhelm us.

Mr. J. C. Wears moved that so much of the report as referred to the mechanical bureaus be adopted. The motion was defended by Mr. Wears, and opposed by Dr. J. McCune Smith and Rev. T. P. Hunt. The Convention adjourned to meet on the following morning at 9½ o'clock in Franklin Hall.

SECOND DAY—MORNING SESSION.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer was offered by Rev. E. J. Adams, Pa. The roll was called, and 109 delegates answered their names. The minutes of Tuesday's proceedings were read by the Secretary, and after being corrected were adopted.

Professor Charles L. Reason then read the following report:

REPORT

Of the Committee on Mechanical Branches among the Colored People of the Free States.

THE development of the physical energies of man, and their control for the weal of society, is one of the prime subjects of political economy. That which God once made in his own image is among the last in the order of creation. The formation of physical proportions come first, then the removal of the darkness which surrounds the practical workings of our physical creations, until there is light, and into that which is formed as the result of first beginnings, shall be breathed the life of superior intelligence. It is the nature of man to follow the order of creation. The physical world in its beautifully enchanting proportions are first spread out before him—he looks, admires, and then tries to imitate. This practice brings the power of thinking into active exercise, and impresses a steady but sure conviction of the necessity of mental culture. The rude tenements brought into existence by physical necessity, are rebuilt and improved upon as time, thought, and culture suggest.

The learning of the world has never been able to keep pace with the development and enlargement of physical power. The mass in the early ages of the world saw the most beautiful arches, dwellings and temples, while the knowledge of letters even was confined to the few.

The wealth of nations commences not in learning, but in physical energies. Learning comes as a necessity of growth. The thinking minds and the energetic wills have been the rulers of the earth; the masses have toiled under the servitude of their control and direction. The spirit of freedom, however, has overcome enslavement by the few, freedom has led to more general education, and hence there is more general intelligence as the result of freedom among the masses. A knowledge of the requirements of freedom, then, in developing the physical powers, must be a part of the foundation of modern civilized society. No people may expect to escape the performance of the duties thus imposed with impunity. It is a law which must be obeyed, or the penalties of its violations

suffered. There need be no cavil as to where society is to begin. The Builder of the Universe has settled that by the necessity which he has thrown around the superstructure of human progress. There must be a basis; Learning is a part of society—it must enter into the composition of society; but the masses cannot be deeply learned, in fact only partially developed. Common School education is all that even the most enlightened countries afford the masses. These are foundation facts with all peoples, so must it be with the colored people of these United States. We must begin with the tillage of the earth and the practice of the mechanical branches, with whatever learning we may have, or the best we can now get. The observations above presented are a natural result growing out of the investigations of your Committee on Mechanical Branches among the colored people. An examination of the meagre facts which your Committee have gathered shows that while some have realized the true nature of the necessities of our position, others have wholly neglected the means first to be used, or have been driven by public prejudice and the force of circumstances, into modes of living entirely inconsistent with the principles of human progression, viz: non-productive labor.

Your Committee beg leave further to state, that having been appointed by the National Council which assembled in the City of New York, May last, to report to the National Convention to assemble in the City of Philadelphia, October 16, 1855, and accepting the appointment, availed itself of the facility of addressing circular letters to such gentlemen, as we thought would aid us in collecting such information as might be used to advantage by the Convention, and to some extent reliable for reference as to the actual state of Mechanical existence of our people; believing in the idea of producing facts rather than sophistical coloring.

The circular was responded to in a satisfactory manner by many to whom it was addressed, and your Committee feel under many obligations for assistance and suggestions from Mr. Nell, of Boston; Mr. Johnson, of New Bedford, Mass.; Peck, of Pittsburgh, Pa.; Bowers, of Philadelphia; Woodson, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

And we thank the "Herald of Freedom," edited by Mr. Peter H. Clark, of Cincinnati, Ohio, for the very liberal course pursued in endeavoring to give us facts.

Living in the midst of progressive civilization as we do, the statistics show that we are not mixing sufficiently in the ele-

ments of that progress. Your Committee take pleasure in presenting the views of some gentlemen agreeing in the views of your Committee, and of others differing widely from it, your Committee deem it in keeping with the purpose of its appointment to give them.

Mr. Johnson, of New Bedford, says, "There does not appear any great desire on the part of parents to secure trades for their children. I think the chances for them to obtain situations as apprentices, very few and difficult. There is little or no disposition to encourage colored men in business, who have means to carry it on.

We have several colored men who possess their thousands, accumulated in California, and are anxious to start in some business, but from well-grounded fear of success, either do nothing here or return to California. Our colored mechanics are principally from the south."

Mr. Nell, of Boston, says, "There is a growing disposition among parents to secure trades for their children, and the avenues are daily being opened to them. The same is true in regard to colored men in business. The past five years a spirit has been very active for real estate investments, both by individuals and land companies.

"The Equal School Rights Reform having triumphed, a brighter day will soon dawn upon the prospects of colored citizens and their children."

Mr. Woodson thinks that white tradesmen think more of a black tradesman than they do of a mere black man, and they will do more for him as a tradesman than they will as a mere man. Where colored mechanics work and live among white ones, they are more regular in their habits, and economical in their expenditures, than where they work and live alone.

Mr. J. Bonner, of Chicago, Ill., says, "Although the best class of our people in this State, are farmers, they constitute much of the wealth and respectability of Illinois. Many of them, however, I am credibly informed, are desirous of giving their sons mechanical trades. The parents in our city are generally in favor of giving their sons and daughters trades; and I am informed that the same disposition is manifested throughout our cities and towns; but we have no facilities for thus procuring these trades, and hence the few mechanics among us.

Mr. Clark says, "A very large proportion of our population were mechanics before emigrating from the Southern States, but have ceased to follow their trades for want of encouragement."

These gentlemen being in different sections of the country, hold in some degree views differing from each other; but all showing a want of some great desideratum to advancement in this great element of national growth—and wealth and happiness. While in this connection, your Committee is willing to charge on the bulk of this nation all that guilt and wickedness entailed upon us, we would also invite your attention to the many evils among ourselves that do more to retard our movements, “crush out” our aspirations, and place higher and stronger hindrances in our way to obtaining trades, than can all the *whites* put together, notwithstanding their willingness, for circumstances of interest control them, whilst a narrow prejudice emanating from a low estate to a large extent controls us, in the general sense.

The whites taking their cue as they do from the government, we must expect it to be a kind of domestic article purely native in its proclivities, to discourage us. Even this can be removed as circumstances shall show it to be their interest to do so. All prejudice connected with the Yankee spirit is subject to moderation by the influences that might be brought to bear by a vigorous application of the trades within our reach.

We are a part of this great nation, and our interests cannot be entirely separated. We are now one inseparably by the decrees of God.

As a people we must not be dictated to by discouragement;—if discouraged by the whites, we must learn to avail ourselves of every legitimate means to encourage our own mechanics and professional men.

This would enable us to overcome the spirit, that we have inherited from the dark prison house of slavery, casting its pall around our very vitals, and we found to dwell on the inability of our professional men and mechanics or their extravagant rates, or some other pretence too hollow and frivolous to mention.

To remedy some of the evils practiced by us, your Committee recommend that Committees of practical business men, in the large cities, say Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Pittsburg, Cincinnati, hold a series of conversational meetings, and endeavor to cultivate a proper and correct estimate of interest to govern purchase and sale, and inculcate the idea that to encourage our own mechanics, we create means to learn our boys trades and render them more independent of the prejudices around them.

Your Committee would recommend private residences as the most suitable places to conduct these conversations as thereby we should get better access to the minds of our females. They could enter freely into the conversations, and correct ideas would finally be inculcated in the sentiments of wives and mothers as to the important part of the great duties which they are to perform in moulding the future character of our youth for improvement, and also by association and community of ideas the wives will be prepared to introduce more of the element of the German and French character in social existence carried into our "business relations," of mutual assistance by council, clerkship, and physical labor.

As a people, we must understand that all that is not *white* is black, and all that is not *black* is white, we would recommend our clergy, our teachers, and leading men, and above all our women on whom we must depend for our future leaders to inculcate a disposition for trades, agriculture and such of the higher branches of business as are necessary and requisite to develop persistence—our requirement to do something for the advancement of Society from the cradle to the grave! that each may leave his or her foot-prints upon the earth for good—tangible evidence that each has done somewhat to destroy caste—and to destroy the opinion that we raise our children to that sweet stage of life which prepares them for business (16 years) with no other aspirations than to be a waiter, we cannot hope for much until we shall advance the premium—and hypothecate coupons, on the qualifications of our youth.

Your Committee would further suggest the necessity of raising funds in the different cities, towns, &c., to be funded to the best advantage;—not upon the plan of the Franklin fund, but that if A or B learns his trade and continues sufficiently long at work to accumulate something, that the fund, or such part of it as the Trustees thereof shall deem fit, be loaned for a series of years sufficient to guarantee a hopeful success, provided the applicants can present the legitimate discharge of agreement of apprenticeship, and devotion to business, &c. It would have the effect to build up so many practical mechanics, that young men would not be compelled to turn in disgust from the trades they love and seek the employment of steamships.

This republic is yet in its infancy, and we must grow with it—let us follow in the footsteps of the whites in this respect, as the only tangible ground—we must use similar means to reach

similar ends, notwithstanding disabilities. If we can live in this country, bidding defiance to its wicked laws, we can do anything that prosperity requires at our hands.

As a further means of advancement, this Convention might recommend to the different cities, and towns, Trades Unions on a small scale, or as your Committee would call them, Co-partnerships, say from three to five in each business as the parties might prefer to engage; on the principle of division of labor and division of profits according to capability—looking to it that their financial man and book-keeper be looked up to as an index of security—and let all the partners in the Union work to make the Capital pay if possible 25 per cent.—and keep on until the investment becomes a paying one: and thus show the fallaciousness of the 6 per cent. idea of Savings Bank investments. A Thousand Dollars might in a judicious outlay in a lucrative business pay from 25 to 75 per cent.

Your Committee have seen sufficient, by clear evidence, to guarantee the opinion, that our people in Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan, in active business, (aside from Agriculture,) have \$1,500,000; in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, \$2,000,000; in New York and Pennsylvania, \$3,000,000; and California, \$200,000; saying nothing of the Six Hundred Thousand Dollars invested in Savings Banks in and around New York, and its vicinity, and also similar amounts around other cities.

The youth who has the spirit of accumulation, and is intelligent with figures and the Pen, having saved something as a beginning in life, ought like the whites buy goods and venture his turn in the stream of trade and business. They would find by perseverance that in time they would receive the reward they merit, and the true principle of personal elevation brought to the common stock to destroy the barriers around our feet.

With these remarks, your Committee submit the following statistics:

MAINE.

Working at their Trades and Professions.

Carpenter 1; Engineer 1; Tailor 1; Tailoresses and Seamstresses 5; Dressmakers 6; Captains 2; School Teachers 3; Clergymen 3; Musicians 3; Farmers 16; Shipbuilder 1;—
Total 41.

Not working at their Trades and Professions

Carpenters 3; Masons 3; Tailors 2; Milliners 2; Caulkers 1; Bootmakers 3; Bakers 3; Dressmakers 3;—Total 23.

NEW HAMPSHIRE,—No Returns.

VERMONT.

Working at their Trades, &c.

Dressmakers 3; Engineer 1; Machinists 2; Blacksmiths 3; Musicians 2; Farmers 7;—Total 18.

Not working, &c.

Carpenters 2; Ropemakers 3;—Total 5.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Working at their Trades, &c.

Blacksmiths 8; House Carpenters 9; Ship Carpenters 6; Boot and Shoemakers —; Dressmakers 26; Tailors 12; Horse Shoers 3; Sailmakers 3; Printers 5; Blockmaker 1; Painters 8; Caulkers 10; Jewelers 2; Gilders 4; Grain Inspector 1; Upholsterer 1; Masons 3; Stevedores 6; Milliners 4; Segarmakers 9; Store-keepers, (mostly clothing,) 22; Clergymen 11; Lawyers 3; Physician 1; Doctors 8; Clerks 6; Gymnastic Professors 2; Crayon Artist 1; Business Agent 1;—Total 187.

Not working, &c.

Blacksmiths 4; Marine and Landscape Artist 1; Boot and Shoemakers 4; Tailors 2; Masons 3; Printers 6; Musicians 22; Blockmaker 1;—Total 46.

RHODE ISLAND,—No Returns.

CONNECTICUT.

Working at their Trades, &c.

Blacksmiths 11; House Carpenters 6; Boot and Shoemakers 7; Dressmakers 20; Tailors 4; Vestmaker 1; Masons 6; Printer 1; Wheelwrights 2; Milliners 2; Painters 4; Coopers 6; Burnishers 2; Farmers 7; Gardener 1; Mates 6; Teachers 6; Clergymen 9; Doctors 2; Engineers 2; Merchant 1; Grocers 4;—Total 97.

Not working at their Trades.

Blacksmiths 6; House Carpenters 3; Boot and Shoemakers 6; Tailors 3; Tailoresses 3; Mason 1; Painters 2; Coopers 2; Printers 4; Milliner 1;—Total 31.

NEW YORK.

Working at their Trades and Professions.

Boot and Shoemakers 30; House Carpenters 15—Apprentices 5; Hat-Strawmakers 16; Cabinetmaker 1; Blacksmiths 6; Ship Carpenters 4; Machinists 10; Masons 7; Printers 4—Apprentices 2; Hatter 1; Milliners 2; Tailors 3—Apprentice 1; Second-hand Clothing Stores 27; Painters 4; Japanner 1; Chair-matters 6; Coopers 6; Merchants 4; Peddlers 6; Clergymen 21; Physicians 7; Drug Storekeepers 7—2 practical Chemists, the rest kept by Physicians—4 Drug Clerks and Chemists, and 3 apprentices; Tinsmiths 5—apprentices 3; Musicians 18; Engineers 2; Watchmakers and Jewelers 2—apprentices 2; Dressmakers 100; Tailoresses 10; Shirtmakers and Seamstresses 11; Preserve Manufacturers 4—2 Clerks, 2 Stores; Gold Watch-casemaker 1; Caulker 1; Upholsterers 2—one apprentice; Artist and Engraver 1; Straw Hat Presser 1; Soap Boiler 1; Horse Shoer 1; Baker 1; Confectioners 10; Tobacconists 2; Speculators in general Merchandise 7; Teachers 35; Ship Brokers 4; Stock and Land Brokers 4; Lawyer 1; Profesor in College 1; Silver Plater 1;—Total 419.

Not working at their Trades and Professions.

Boot and Shoemakers 45; Carpenters 28; Blacksmiths 24; Ship Carpenters 3; Machinists 8; Masons and Bricklayers 13; Wheelwrights 4; Printers 10; Hatters 4; Milliners 10; Tailors 15; Painters 7; Coopers 5; Sailmakers 4; Joiners 2; Musicians 15; Engineers 3; Dressmakers 35; Tailoresses 20; Caulkers 5; Upholsterers 4; Type Founder 1; Soap Boilers 3; Stone Cutters 4; Brass Founders 4; Horse Shoers 5; Bakers 11; Confectioners 13; Tobacconists 4; Caulkers 6; Shipbuilders 2;—Total 325.

NEW JERSEY.

Working at their Trades.

Blacksmith 1; House Carpenters 2; Dressmakers 5; Masons 1; Milliners 2; Cooper 1; Shingle Shavers 4; Patent Leather Manufacturers 2; Tinsmith 1; Engineers 2; Corset-makers 2; Clergymen 2; Doctor 1; Teachers 3; Musicians 4;—Total 33.

Not working at their Trades.

House Carpenters 1; Machinists 1; Horse Shoers 1; Cooper 1;—Total 4.

PENNSYLVANIA.

Working at their Trades.

Boot and Shoemakers 37; Bakers 10; Ship Carpenters 42; Blacksmiths 15; Joiners 4; Sailmakers 14; Clergymen 35; Painters and Glaziers 5; Dyers and Hatters 4; Confectioners 35; Musicians 37; Dressmakers 125; Tailoresses 14; Physician 1; Doctors 7; Plain Seamstresses 40; Speculators in Merchandise 12; Land and Stock-jobber 1; Merchants 10; Milliners 7; Engineers 4; Saddle Treemakers 1; Paper Hangers 2; Turners 6; Ornamental Chairworkers 2; Teachers 20; Masons 4; Practical Farmers 37; Lumber Merchants 4; Several gentlemen of Fortune reputed for their good breed of cattle;—Total 515.

Not working at their Trades.

Boot and Shoemakers 60; Ship Carpenters 2; Turners 7; Carpenters 30; Sailmakers 6; Painters and Glaziers 7; Musicians 15; Dressmakers 32; Tailoresses 4; Plain Seamstresses and Shirtmakers 10; Milliners 4; Horse Shoers 2; Machinists 2; Silver Plater 1; Mason and Bricklayers 4;—Total 186.

OHIO.

Working at their Trades.

House Carpenters 86; Blacksmiths 24; Ship Carpenter 1; Boot and Shoemakers 38; Dressmakers 49; Tailors 6; Carriagemakers 2; Horse Shoers 12; Machinists 4; Masons 12; Printers 2; Milliners 4; Painters 16; Composition Roofer 1;

Plasterers 8; Candymaker 1; Turners 3; Cabinetmakers 4; Tobacconists 30; Daguerreotypists 10; Coopers 6; Musicians 6; Teachers 10; Clergymen 16; Doctors 3; Engineer 1; Wagonmakers 3;—Total 308.

Not working at their Trades.

Blacksmiths 20; House Carpenters 25; Ship Carpenters 8; Dressmakers 20; Boot and Shoemakers 31; Masons and Plasterers 10; Milliners 6; Brickmakers 10; Coopers 9; Hatters 5; Tobacconists 15; Painters 6; Turners 6; Cabinetmakers 6; Engineers 2; Wagonmakers 4;—Total 167.

INDIANA,—No Returns.

ILLINOIS.

Working at their Trades.

Blacksmiths 8; House Carpenters 18; Ship Carpenters 2; Boot and Shoemakers 5; Dressmakers 25; Tailors 3; Horse-shoers 3; Machinist 1; Masons 15; Printer 1; Milliners 6; Painters 4; Cabinetmaker 1; Coopers 2; Turner 1; Farmers 15; Clergymen 4; Doctor 1; Teacher 1; Musicians 3;—Total 111.

Not working at their Trades.

House Carpenters 3; Dressmakers 4; Boot and Shoemakers 4; Tailors 2; Cooper 1; Masons 4; Printer 1; Milliners 4;—Total 23.

MICHIGAN.

Working at their Trades and Professions.

Blacksmiths 3; Carpenters 12; Boot and Shoemakers 8; Dressmakers 10; Tailors 3; Machinist 1; Masons 15; Painters 2; Milliner 1; Printers 3; Clerks 6; Bakers 4; Captains and owners of sailing crafts 4; Saddlers 2; Lumber and Wood Dealers 2; Coopers 6; Musicians 12; Engineers 3; Teachers 2; Farmers 7;—Total 110.

Not working at their Trades.

Horse-shoer 1; Boot and Shoemakers 2; Ship Carpenter 1;—Total 4.

CALIFORNIA AND OREGON.

Working at their Trades.

Blacksmiths 10; House Carpenters 10; Boot and Shoemakers 4; Dressmakers 12; Tailors 6; Masons and Plasterers 8; Milliners 3; Painters 4; Turners 2; Tin Plate Workers 2; Caulkers 10; Sailmakers 2; Soap and Candlemaker 1; Clergymen 8; Doctors 2; Musicians 27; Teachers 4;—Total 105.

Not working at their Trades, &c.

Blacksmiths 7; House Carpenters 9; Engineers 4; Machinists 4; Whitesmiths 3; Cabinetmakers 7; Dressmakers 16; Tailors 7; Masons and Plasterers 9; Painters 6; Caulkers 10; Sailmakers 4; Ship Builders 3; Tin Plate Workers 6; Artists 3;—Total 98.

Your Committee believe that the result of the Conversational gatherings in the different localities, will result in effecting immediate needful action in the several communities where our people are found.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

EDWARD V. CLARK.

On motion, the report was adopted.

On motion, Rev. Sampson White, of Washington, D. C., was admitted a corresponding member.

Rev. Stephen Smith then presented a memorial from the citizens of San Francisco, Cal., which was referred to the Business Committee.

Rev. Charles Birch and Mr. Fuller, of Conn., and Mr. Martin, of Ohio, were elected corresponding members.

Mr. Robert Purvis, of Pa., then said, that he desired to present three resolutions concerning Passmore Williamson. A motion was then made to suspend the rules so as to admit the resolutions. This motion occasioned some debate, and was finally lost.

The Business Committee then offered the following resolutions:

Resolved, That this Convention gladly seizes the opportunity of expressing towards Passmore Williamson their sincere admiration for his fidelity to their principle, and his heroic devotion to the cause of freedom, and they beg him to accept for himself and his injured and bereaved family, assurance of their deepest and most heartfelt sympathy.

Resolved, That Mr. Williamson, by his promptness on this, as on all occasions when called upon to fly to the aid of the slave when striving for his freedom, has entitled him to the highest regard and the warmest admiration of every man who has a heart to appreciate the value of freedom, or despise the chains of oppression.

Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to wait upon and present to Mr. Williamson this expression of the National Convention.

The resolutions were received with loud applause, and after some discussion were adopted.

The following persons were announced to form the Committee to visit Passmore Williamson:—Robert Purvis, Pa.; John S. Rock, M. D., Mass.; George T. Downing, R. I.; Stephen Myers, N. Y., and Charles L. Remond, Mass.

The following additional preamble and resolutions were subsequently read:

WHEREAS, every man and woman are by right the owners of themselves, and except under legal contract voluntarily entered into, or to appease justice violated by crime, this right cannot be alienated, all laws for the holding of slaves, and all Fugitive Slave Bills to reclaim them, to the contrary notwithstanding—therefore

Resolved, That this Convention approve of and honor the conduct of John Ballard, William Custis, John Braddock, William Still, James Martin and Josiah Moore, who bore off, in the face of difficulty, Jane Johnson and her children, from the steamer on the Delaware, and thus secured to her what she had been robbed of, her own and her children's freedom.

After some further debate, the foregoing preamble and resolutions were adopted.

The committee appointed at the former Convention to take into consideration the feasibility of founding an Industrial School for colored persons, reported adversely, as the com-

mittee deemed the subject impracticable. The committee recommend that a Mechanical Bureau be established in its stead.

On motion, Mr. J. Watkins was appointed to prepare a record of the names and post office address of each of the members.

The following resolution was offered by Rev. E. Kelly, through the Business Committee:

Resolved, That this Convention adopt the platform of principles laid down by the late Rochester Convention, with a view of referring the same to the Business Committee, with instructions to amend that document by striking out every prescriptive feature, and inserting others more liberal, and to simplify it as much as possible, so as to make it as a whole acceptable to this Convention, and to the people generally.

Pending the adoption of this, the Convention adjourned.

SECOND DAY—AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment. Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Bolden.

Dr. Jas. McCune Smith then read the following resolutions as a substitute for the report from the Philadelphia delegation.

Resolved, That this Convention recommend that in all communities where there is a sufficient number of colored people, that they form associations to be called Industrial Associations, with such rules and regulations as they may deem best for the purpose of encouraging colored artizans of both sexes in the pursuit of Mechanical or Artistic employment.

Resolved, That these associations be requested to correspond with each other, and publish the facts effected by them.

Resolved, That these associations shall hold a convention on the — day of October, 1857, in the City of —.

Mr. J. C. Bowers then moved that Dr. Smith's resolutions be indefinitely postponed.

After some discussion the President decided that a resolution offered by Rev. E. Kelly, before the close of the morning session, was in order. Mr. Kelly spoke in favor of his resolution. It was lost.

Dr. J. McCune Smith spoke in favor of his resolutions. They were opposed by Mr. J. C. Bowers.

Rev. Stephen Smith moved that each delegate pay one dollar to defray the expenses of the Convention.

Mr. Morrell moved to amend by saying that each delegate pay such an amount as he shall feel able. The amendment was carried. The roll was then called, and the collection taken up.

The Convention then agreed to hear a full report of the Finance Committee on the following morning.

The Convention then resumed the consideration of Dr. Smith's resolutions, which were discussed up to the hour of adjournment.

SECOND DAY—EVENING SESSION.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment, J. J. Gould Bias in the Chair.

Dr. Smith's resolutions being in order, Dr. J. McCune Smith, Dr. J. J. G. Bias, Wm. J. Watkins and Frederick Douglass spoke in favor of said resolutions, and Josiah C. Wears, Charles H. Bustill and Robert Purvis against them.

Dr. J. McCune Smith moved that the report of the Philadelphia delegation be amended by striking out of it so much as deemed the establishment of an Industrial School as inadvisable, and incorporating the resolutions as a supplement. It was adopted.

The Convention adjourned till the following morning at 9½ o'clock.

THIRD DAY—MORNING SESSION.

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

By permission, Rev. Thomas P. Hunt addressed the Convention on the advantages of Agricultural pursuits. After which the Business Committee reported a number of letters from delegates elected, but unable to be present. Communi-

cations from Rev. J. W. C. Pennington and Rev. C. W. Gardiner were read, and ordered to be printed with the minutes.

A letter from Mr. Jacob Handy of Baltimore, eulogizing the Republic of Liberia, and advocating the colonization movement, was opposed by Messrs. C. L. Remond, Geo. T. Downing, P. A. Bell, Thos. Gray and J. J. Simons. After several propositions to return the letter, respectfully and otherwise, Mr. Geo. T. Downing, unwilling to incur the expense of three cents, moved that the communication be burned, and called for the previous question. Yeas 33—Nays 20.

The Business Committee then reported the following resolution, which was adopted :

Resolved, That the Constitution of the National Council be referred to a committee of one from each State, to suggest such revisions or alterations as in their judgment they may deem best.

The following, offered by the Business Committee, were also adopted :

Resolved, That education, the great elevator of mind, is what we need, and what we must have, to place us on an equal footing with other men, and we will improve such opportunities as are afforded us to secure it for ourselves and our children.

Resolved, That in the first place our people be made to feel the necessity of securing real estate, and that it requires union with us as a people to sustain each other, that we obtain the great object which we have in view, viz : our social, civil and political rights, and that we encourage our people in agricultural pursuits on lands of their own.

The Convention then adjourned.

THIRD DAY—AFTERNOON SESSION.

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

Prayer was offered by Mr. S. Golden.

The Business Committee then reported the following resolutions :

Resolved, That we rejoice in the legislative act of Massachusetts, by which her common schools are open to every class

of her citizens, believing that the school-room is, when really free, the greatest leveller of all species of prejudice.

Resolved, That as no one class can elevate another, so we believe that all the general plans that may be adopted by this and other National Conventions will fail of their purpose, unless the people realize the necessity of individual application and effort.

Resolved, That we recommend to our mothers and sisters to use every honorable means to secure for their sons and brothers places of profit and trust in stores and other places of business, such as will throw a halo around this proscribed people, that shall in coming time reflect honor on those who have laid the corner stone to our platform of improvement.

Resolved, That we use our influence to prevent our boys from taking employment in cities at places of amusement, where marked distinction on account of color is made the order of exercises.

Resolved, That considering our relative position as a part of the nation, in the capacity of the real producers of the wealth of the nation and this country, we therefore recommend to all our youth to learn some useful trade or some mechanical art, as a means of doing away with prejudice against color, and thus show to the world that we aspire to, and can arrive at, the highest eminence from which slavery and social and civil oppression have debarred us.

Mr. Robert Purvis, Chairman of the Committee to visit Passmore Williamson in Moyamensing Prison, reported verbally that the Committee had waited upon Mr. Williamson, and tendered him the resolutions of sympathy; that Mr. Williamson received the resolutions, and tendered his best wishes to the Convention, and assured them that no matter what the consequences may be, he will not sacrifice a single principle upon the altar of slavery. The Committee have only to fear that Mr. Williamson's health will suffer from his long confinement.

The following address was then offered by Dr. J. McCune Smith:

AN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FELLOW CITIZENS:—In behalf of three millions of our brethren, held in Slavery, in the United States :

In behalf of two hundred and fifty thousand, so called, free persons of color, occupying various grades of social and political position, from equal citizenship in most of the New England States, to almost chattel slavery in Indiana and the Southern States :

In behalf of three hundred thousand slaveholders, embruted with the lawlessness, and drunken with the blood-guiltiness of slaveholding :

In behalf of the Constitution of these United States, during sixty years perverted and misconstrued, so as to read things for persons, and Slavery for Liberty :

In behalf of the religion of Jesus Christ, brought into shame and disrepute by the evil constructions and worse practices fastened upon it by the American Church :

In behalf of the sacred cause of HUMAN FREEDOM, beaten down and paralyzed by the force of American Example—

The undersigned, delegates to a Convention of the People of Color, held in the city of Philadelphia, October 18th, 1855, beg leave, most respectfully, to address you:—

We claim that we are persons not things, and we claim that our brethren held in slavery are also, *persons* not *things* ; and that they are, therefore, so held in slavery in violation of the Constitution, which is the supreme law of the land.* For the Constitution expressly declares, that all human beings, described under it, are *persons*,† and afterwards declares, that “NO PERSON shall be deprived of liberty without due process of law;”‡ and that the right of the people to be secure in their *persons* shall not be violated.§ And as no law has ever been enacted,¶ which reduced our brethren to slavery, we demand

* Art. 6. § 2.

† Art. 1. sect. 2. § 3. and sect. 9. § 1. and Art. 4. sect. 2. § 3.

‡ Amendments Art. 1. § 5.

§ Ib. § 4.

¶ Speech of Judge Mason on Fugitive Slave Bill in Congress 1850. “If it be required that proof shall be brought that Slavery is established by existing laws, it is impossible to comply with the requisition, for no such proof can be produced, I apprehend, in any of the slave States. I am not aware there is a single State in which the Institution is established by peculiar law.”—Aug. 19th, 1850.

their immediate emancipation, and restoration to the rights secured to every person under the Constitution, as the instant result of that personality with which the Constitution itself clothes them, and which it was ordained to protect and defend.

All human beings who may be born in this land, in whatever condition, and all who may come or may have been brought to this land, under whatever circumstances, are declared by the Constitution to be PERSONS: the idea that such may be property, or may become property, is no where recognized, but every where excluded by the Constitution.||

The Constitution, moreover, endows Congress with the power, and calls on Congress to exercise the power to abolish Slavery in the Slave States, when it declares that "Congress shall provide for the general welfare;" and announces that "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government;" and that "this Constitution, and the laws of the United States, which shall be made in pursuance thereof, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any thing in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding." (Art. 6, sec. 2.)

It is not needful to prove that slavery inhibits, obstructs and threatens to destroy the "general welfare," and is therefore an institution which Congress is competent, and in duty bound, to abolish everywhere where it may cause such obstruction. Nor is it necessary to show that slavery is a contradiction of the Republican form of Government, which the United States, that is Congress is constitutionally bound "to guarantee" to each and "every State in the Union:" which guarantee can only be accomplished by immediately abolishing slavery in every State where it may exist. These things contain their own proof in the very statement of them.

We claim, therefore, that the right and duty of Congress to abolish slavery in the slave States, is just as clear and well defined in the Constitution as the right to levy duties, declare war, or make a treaty.

To uphold a contrary view of the Constitution, requires that that instrument should contradict itself, and requires also that the idea of personal liberty, as defined by it, and on which you

|| "I deny that the Constitution recognizes property in man. I submit, on the other hand, most respectfully, that the Constitution not merely does not affirm that principle, but, on the contrary, altogether excludes it."—Hon. Wm. H. Seward's Speech in admission of California, in Senate, March 11, 1850.

all, fellow-citizens, so confidently rely, shall be entirely erased therefrom. The personality of the negro and of the white man stand therein side by side; you cannot destroy the one without also destroying the other; you cannot uphold the one without also upholding both.

We solemnly believe, fellow-citizens, that a vast majority of you ardently wish that slavery may be abolished, and are willing to join in any lawful movement to accomplish this great purpose. We call upon you, therefore, at once to set about this glorious work in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution which is the "supreme law of the land." Elect such a Congress, such a President, and thereby secure the appointment of such a Judiciary as will guarantee to each man, woman and child, in the land, the right to their own persons, which the Constitution guarantees. There is no other way, there never has been, there can be no other way to abolish slavery and the slave power throughout the land.

It is idle to talk of preventing the extension or circumscribing the limits of slavery: there is no foot of American Territory over which slavery is not already triumphant, and will continue triumphant, so long as there remains any foot of American Territory on which it is admitted that man can hold property in man. It is imbecile for you, fellow-citizens, with the gyves on your wrists, and your chains clanking audibly to the rest of mankind, any longer to boast the possession, or speak of the maintenance of your personal rights and franchises. During sixty-eight years you have suffered us to be robbed of these rights and franchises, in the belief that your own continued unimpaired. But now, after the experience of two generations, you find your own rights invaded and your own privileges taken away in like manner with ours. It is now, therefore, demonstrated, by incontrovertible History, that you cannot, by whatever neglect or suffered misinterpretation of the Constitution, imperil or abandon our rights, without, in like manner, imperiling and abandoning your own. It stands forth, in letters of living light, that there can be not one white free-man while there remains one black slave in the Union. And there can be no higher praise of the Constitution, than that its workings are absolute—if rightly interpreted, for Freedom—if wrongly, for Slavery—to all.

As at present misinterpreted and carried out, your own rights under the Constitution, fellow-citizens, are not a shade higher than those of the veriest slave in the South: your local elec-

tive franchises are exercised, your very territory occupied, your relations at home and abroad regulated at the bidding of the slave power; and you must either remain the willing victims of their atrocious institution, and hug the chains daily accumulating upon you, or you must at once rise and rend them, and regain your own liberties while you establish those of your brethren in bonds.

We earnestly call upon you, therefore, fellow-citizens, in behalf of the down-trodden slave, in behalf of your own imperiled liberties, in behalf of the cause of civil and Religious Freedom throughout the world, in behalf and in vindication of our glorious Constitution, we solemnly call upon you, peacefully, lawfully and constitutionally, to abolish slavery in the slave States.

Mr. F. Douglass moved the adoption of the address.

Messrs. J. C. Morrell and C. L. Remond opposed the address, and Mr. Robert Purvis read Mr. Wm. J. Bowditch's opinion of the pro-slavery character of the Constitution, from No. 1 of the series of Anti-slavery tracts.

Mr. F. Douglass and Dr. J. McCune Smith advocated the address. The yeas and nays were called for, and decided in the affirmative.

The vote to burn Mr. Handy's Communication was reconsidered, and it was agreed to return it to Mr. Handy.

The Convention then adjourned.

THIRD DAY—EVENING SESSION.

The Convention met pursuant to adjournment, the President in the Chair. Prayer was offered by Rev. Wm. Douglass.

The Committee appointed to revise the Constitution of the National Council, then made the following report:—

To the President and Members of the National Convention:

Your Committee appointed to revise the Constitution of the National Council beg respectfully to submit the following

REPORT.

Owing to the late hour of the appointment of your Committee, they have been unable to attend to the revision of the Constitution of the National Council. And the Committee

have unanimously agreed to recommend the Convention to empower the National Council to revise said Constitution.

J. S. ROCK,
J. C. BEEMAN,

C. L. REASON,
W. J. WATKINS.

The Report of the Committee was adopted.

The Committee on Statistics then submitted the following

REPORT.

1. That the Statistics presented to them in this Convention are entirely too few to make up a Report upon.

2. The Committee have in possession, however, copious statistics in relation to the colored population, free and slave, which they think it important should be published as a reply to the many slanders recently heaped upon us.

3. The cost of Printing 5000 copies of these statistics will be not less than two hundred dollars; and as the Committee have not the means for such publication, they respectfully request the direction of the Convention as to the best mode of procuring their publication.

Respectfully submitted.

A. S. DRIVER,

WM. C. NELL,

J. McCUNE SMITH,

STEPHEN SMITH,

SAMUEL T. GRAY.

The Report was adopted, and ordered to be incorporated in the Minutes.

The resolutions offered in the afternoon session were discussed by Messrs. F. Douglass, Wm. J. Watkins, Rev. J. C. Beman, and Messrs. J. C. Bowers, J. C. Wears, C. L. Remond and Dr. J. S. Rock, and were adopted.

The following resolutions were also discussed separately:

Resolved, That we recommend the colored people to turn their attention to inter-state traffic and trade, and to commerce with foreign countries. Adopted.

Resolved, That the devoted labors of the abolitionists of the land, to bring about immediate emancipation, endear them to us, and we give to all of them in these endeavors the right hand of fellowship. Laid on the table.

A vote of thanks was then tendered to Mr. E. V. Clark for his report, and it was ordered to be incorporated in the minutes.

After which the following resolutions were adopted :

Resolved, That we adopt "Frederick Douglass's Paper" as our Organ.

Resolved, That we print 1500 copies of the Minutes, and divide them equally among the delegates who have paid the expenses of the Convention.

Resolved, That the President appoint a Publishing Committee of five, to be located in the City of Philadelphia.

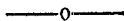
The President then appointed Messrs. Franklin Turner, Frances A. Duterte, Ulysses B. Vidal, Isaiah C. Wears and Robert Purvis.

A vote of thanks was tendered to the Philadelphia delegation for their kindness and attention to the delegates, and also a vote of thanks to the officers of the Convention, and to the Reporters of the press.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*, and the members and audience all joined in singing the doxology—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

APPENDIX.



COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CONVENTION

29 Sixth Avenue, New York, October 15, 1855.

To the Chairman of the National Convention at Philadelphia :

As a member of the New York Delegation, I deeply regret that circumstances unforeseen and beyond my control prevent me from taking my seat in your Assembly. Be assured, however, sir, that I am cordially with you in the object of this great meeting. I well remember, sir, to have been a member of the 1st, 2d, and 3d National Conventions of our people, held in the City of Brotherly Love, (held severally) in the years 1831, '32 and '33. Those were glorious gatherings, where our Bowerses, Sipkinses, Hamiltons, Jinnings, Shads, Pecks, Morrells, Whippers and Bells were chief men among our brethren; and in my humble opinion it was a great mistake on our part when, in 1834, we abandoned our National Convention for a mode of operation which disappointed us. But it is not too late to return to the good old path;—better late than never. I say, then, sir, let this be the beginning of a new series of National Conventions of our people. The time has fully come when a most vigorous and uncompromising stand must be made against the slave power on this vast Continent. We are competent to resist it; and, “we must do or die!”

The population of this Continent ranges between 50 and 60 millions. Nearly seven millions of that number are of African descent.

The Governments of this Continent, about 40 in number, are prevailingly Republican or liberal monarchies, or provinces under the government of liberal monarchies. Now, sir, the liberal parties of all the parties and races of this Continent must combine in order to withstand the slave power of *this* Republic. Nay, by such a combination alone can that huge power be overthrown. That power is making headway against all races; hence, of course, all races must combine against it.

Let there be a grand fusion Western Continent Anti-slavery

Extension Convention held. Let it be held at some place or point where gentlemen of talent from the British, French, Spanish and Danish Dominions, and also from Mexico and Central America—I say let such a Convention be held, and let it be held at some point where civilized law and order prevail—Jamaica, Hayti—and let it be a great Congress of Liberty, to be attended by all the friends of Liberty, who will unite to oppose the slave power of this Continent. Sir, this is a grand idea, worthy to be entertained by this Convention; and, sir, why not appoint a committee to mature this idea?

I tell you in this Convention, that if ever we compete successfully with the slave power of this Republic, we must now act with all the oppressed and insulted races.

Where are Walker and Kinney? Trampling upon the necks of portions of the inoffensive inhabitants of Central and South America.

I am sorry, sir, that the same causes which prevent my presence with you, also prevent me from elaborating these views.

In regard to the report of the religious state of the Colored people, which I believe was assigned me at the meeting of our State Council, I will state that my esteemed Baptist Brother, Rev. James Leonard of Rhode Island, is preparing a book on that subject, embracing all denominations. Mr. L. is a scholar of no mean order. The subject is safe in his hands. I have placed at his disposal such materials as I had. I commend his book.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in your deliberations remember PASSMORE WILLIAMSON. "I SPEAK AS UNTO WISE MEN—JUDGE YE WHAT I SAY."

Yours, as ever,

J. W. C. PENNINGTON,
Pastor of Shiloh Pres. Church, N. Y.

Newport, R. I., October 15, 1855.

To the National Convention at Philadelphia:

RESPECTED BRETHREN—It was not my lot to receive an appointment to your Convention, as the people of Newport, R. I., in most other cases took no action thereon. Nevertheless, I deemed it proper to lay my views before you.

Some 25 or 26 years since, we formed the parent society in Philadelphia. Eighteen years since I was chosen one of the assessors of Philadelphia, to ascertain the number of the colored inhabitants, &c., &c., in the city. At both of these periods I stated my views of our best mode of action, which I shall now lay before your body, viz:—That your Convention recommend to our people to submit to a taxation of \$1.00 per year, on all males of 21 years of age, (not excluding others that may see proper to pay it) or larger sums if preferred—that in every city or large village, where 200 colored persons are located, there be one assessor, or more if necessary, whose duty it shall be to assess the people and collect the money quarterly—that there be a committee of three in each city, &c., to whom he shall be amenable; and render his accounts quarterly, and they so do to the general Committee, who shall superintend the whole, and be located where your wisdom may direct. There would be little or no objection to such collections even in Slave States for educational purposes, when the persons were to be educated out of the State. There is no doubt in my mind that the sum of \$100,000 could be collected annually, which would afford a handsome sum after the necessary expenses were met, which fund should be appropriated after the order of the Presbyterian Board of Education, the candidates being subject to an examination by your Committee; and when recommended to your board let them receive such aid as your laws shall direct.

Thus having the funds on hand assistance can be given when and where it is needed. As to schools or colleges, though I have passed my three score years and ten I am certain if the support and qualifications were present that I could find doors open in High Schools, Academies, Seminaries and Colleges, for five hundred young ladies and gentlemen of color, within the States of New England, New York and Pennsylvania.

Respected brethren, you will see that my plan is simple and comatable, and must recommend itself to your honorable notice. I have given no argument or direction, believing and knowing that your united wisdom will be sufficient for all such purposes.

At the same time you will see that I do not approve of separate colored schools, believing that education is the right of all, and that the only plan to lay the sure foundation of true Republicanism is, as far as practicable to educate male and female, white and colored, rich and poor, together, and so teach them that they are all human beings, united in a common brotherhood of universal love.

All of which I submit to your united wisdom. And may the Great Spirit of Light and Truth preside in all your councils, and rule to his glory and the good of all men—

While I subscribe myself yours for universal advancement and education.

CHARLES W. GARDNER.