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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

STATE CONVENTION

OF

COLORED PEOPLE,

Held at Albany, New-York,

ON THE

22d, 23d and 24th of July, 1851.

ALBANY:

CHARLES VAN BENTHUYSEN, PRINTER.

1851.

STATE CONVENTION.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK :

Be it hereby known, that the undersigned Committee, by the expressed wish of the citizens of Troy and Albany, publish and apprise the citizens and inhabitants of the State, that a Convention is called and will assemble in the city of Albany on the 22d day of July, 1851.

The paramount object of this Convention is, to assemble the disfranchised and aggrieved portion of the people of the State of New-York, to deliberate upon, and propose, then and there, the course to be pursued in the future and onward prosecution of our interests and rights.

We are not insensible to the fact that the public mind has been deeply aroused throughout the length and breadth of this great country, and that those important and agitating questions comprehend and involve our interests and the perpetuity of the government.

And most solemnly are we impressed with this truth also, that the denial of our rights is the overthrow of the rock foundation principles of the country; for the Declaration of Independence, in the language of the late and lamented John Quincy Adams, recognizes no despotism, monarchial, aristocratic, or democratic, declares that individual man is possessed of rights of which no government can deprive him.

With this view and understanding, two great questions present themselves for adjustment, the first of which is the recent edict enacted and sent forth by Congress, called the "Fugitive Slave Law;" and the second in character, is the coercive and barbarous Colonization Scheme; either of which questions is characterized with infamy sufficient to libel christianity or sink a nation. There are other questions of local and State character that demand our immediate attention, viz: "the School-Question;" a system or law of the State for the general education of all classes of children, without distinction or proscription. This philanthropic and far-seeing law has been suspended in its natural and defined course, and hundreds of children are thereby violently ejected from schools, and this in open violation of the law, and for no reason save that of God's giving them a different complexion from those in power.

A second subject for consideration, but first in importance, is the "Suffrage Question." A special law of the State requires every colored voter to be in possession of two hundred and fifty dollars worth of real estate as a qualification. These local and general subjects require the people to act with promptness, union and energy, to effect the desired ends.

Therefore, fellow citizens, in consideration of these important subjects, however remote from the Capital, or humble and secluded in your position, we ask you, in the name of humanity, posterity and freedom, to stop and consider the importance of your presence and co-operation. Let it not be said that ye are insensible and dead to all the interests and motives that stimulate and enhance life; but come up in your sturdy simplicity from the cultivated fields, from the workshops, and from all your different avocations, and make one great heart, whose pulse has the life and force of the whole people. Thus inseparably bound in interests, and standing upon the vantage ground of the declared principles of the government, we have nothing to fear; "and are doubly armed, for our cause is just." Look forth upon the green and luxuriant fields, the umbrageous forests, and mountains that aspire to arrest the sun in his downward effulgence, and then say will you forsake these glories and blessings, hearth-stone and roof-tree, and deliberately give up yourselves as unworthy of these blessings? If not, then let there be but one expression coming in multiplied force—omnipotent, because ye are resolved; and let it be this:

NO PROSCRIPTION—NO SLAVES—UNION—FREEDOM AND EQUALITY !!

WM. P. MCINTYRE,
EDWARD FREEMAN.
WM. RICH,
C. EDWARD SETH,
HIRAM JOHNSON.

PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, July 22d, 1861.

Pursuant to a call, the Convention assembled in the room of the Court of Appeals, on the morning of the 22d of July, at 9 o'clock. The house was called to order by Mr. Stephen Myers, who moved the appointment of Richard Wright, Esq., of Albany, as chairman pro tem., and H. Hicks, of Catskill, as Secretary pro tem.

By invitation, the Rev. E. N. Hall, of Brooklyn, N. Y., addressed the Throne of Grace.

On motion of Wm. P. McIntyre, of Albany, the call for the Convention was read by the Secretary, after which the Convention proceeded to enroll the names and residences of delegates, as follows:

Albany.—Stephen Myers, Wm. P. McIntyre, Hiram Johnson, William H. Topp, Francis Douge, Charles E. Seth, Wm. C. Gardiner, Benjamin Cutler, Richard Wright, James P. Johnson, John Springsteel, Abr'm Johnson, James M. Williams, Henry Johnson, Primus Robinson, James Youngs, F. Van Vranken, Peter Vanderveer, Jacob Ennis.

Troy.—Wm. Rich, Edward H. Bishop, Wm. Jones, Abraham Stanley, Daniel Hall, Loyd Hasper.

Catskill.—Henry Hicks, Martin Cross.

Brooklyn.—Eli N. Hall, John N. Stiles.

Whitehall.—Henry Williams.

Ithaca.—Wm. F. Johnson.

New Haven, Ct.—Amos G. Beman.

Mr. C. E. Seth, of Albany, offered the following resolution, seconded by Hiram Johnson, of Albany.

Resolved, That all persons present, who have come from those places where no regular delegation to the Convention is appointed—who concur with the spirit of the call of said Convention, and are desirous of participating in its proceedings, shall, by having their names enrolled, be considered as delegates.

This resolution created a spirited and protracted discussion, which was participated in by Messrs. Wm. H. Topp, Hiram Johnson, Charles E. Seth, Henry Hicks, John N. Still, Wm. P. McIntyre, and others, when after an expression from the Convention, the resolution was declared lost.

After which, W. H. Topp offered the following resolution, seconded by S. Myers:

Resolved, That all persons present, who are really the aggrieved, and identically the disfranchised, and are desirous of participating in the proceedings of this Convention, may, after enrolling their names, be considered delegates. And all such other persons, who wish to participate, may do so by invitation from the Convention.

After a short discussion, the question was taken on this resolution, and declared adopted.

By motion of Mr. S. Myers, seconded by Mr. Seth, it was

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to nominate permanent officers of the Convention.

The following gentlemen were appointed nominating committee: C. E. Seth, Francis Douge, and Stephen Myers; who, upon their return, reported the following list:—

For President, William H. Topp, of Albany.

For Vice-Presidents, Anos G. Beecham, of New-Haven, William Rich, of Troy, and James Morris Williams, of Albany, recently from Coxsackie.

For Secretaries, Rev. Henry Hicks, of Catskill, Greene Co., and Charles E. Seth, Esq., of Albany.

Finance Committee—W. P. McIntyre, S. Myers, and F. Douge.

Business Committee—John Johnson, Stephen Myers, Richard Wright, William P. McIntyre, C. E. Seth, Henry Hicks, John N. Still, and Eli N. Hall.

The President was conducted to his seat by Mr. John N. Still, of Brooklyn, and W. P. McIntyre, of Albany.

President Topp, on being conducted to his chair, arose and addressed the Convention, in a brief and happy manner, referring to the main objects for which the Convention was called, and concluded by hoping that good order, harmony, and disinterested humanity might characterize all its deliberations. He resumed his seat amidst the spirited applause of the Convention.

After which, a motion prevailed, that a committee of three be appointed to draft rules for the government of the Convention. The following gentlemen were appointed: C. E. Seth, Francis Douge, and John N. Still, who retired, and on their return, reported the following rules:

RULES.

1. **Resolved**, That each session of the Convention be opened by addressing the Throne of Grace.

2. At the time appointed for the assembling of each session of the Convention, the President shall take the chair and call the Convention to order.

3. The minutes of the preceding session shall be read at the opening of each session, at which time all mistakes, if there be any, shall be corrected.

4. The President shall decide all questions of order subject to an appeal of the Convention.

5. All motions and addresses shall be made to the President, the member rising from his seat.

6. All motions, except those of reference, shall be submitted in writing.

7. All committees shall be appointed by the chair unless otherwise ordered by the Convention.

8. The previous question shall always be in order, and until decided shall preclude all amendment and debate of the main question, and shall be put in this form, "Shall the main question be now put?"

9. No member shall be interrupted while speaking except when out of order, when he shall be called to order by or through the chair.

10. A motion to adjourn shall always be in order, and shall be decided without debate.

11. No member shall speak more than twice on the same question, without the consent of the Convention, nor more than fifteen minutes at each time.

12. No resolution, except of reference, shall be offered to the Convention, except it come through the business committee; but all resolutions rejected by the committee may be presented directly to the Convention if the maker of such wishes to do so.

13. Rules as amended. Sessions of the Convention shall commence at half-past 9 o'clock, A. M., and shall close at 1 o'clock, P. M.; to commence at half-past 2 o'clock, P. M., and close at 6 P. M. Evening session shall commence at half-past 7 o'clock, and close at the discretion of the Convention.

On motion of Mr. McIntyre, seconded by Mr. Hicks, the report of the committee on rules was received. The hour for adjournment having arrived, a motion prevailed that they be laid over for the consideration of the Convention at its next session. By motion, the Convention was adjourned until the hour of half-past 2 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Convention assembled pursuant to adjournment. President in the chair. Prayer by the Rev. James M. Williams. After which the minutes were read and approved.

The President announced, as the first business in order, the rules reported by the committee at the previous session, which were read by the Secretary, and a motion proposed, that they be adopted; pending which Mr. William P. McIntyre made some slight objection to the 11th rule, proposing that it be so amended as to allow members debating thirty minutes instead of fifteen, as the rule directs; a brief discussion revealed the merits of the rule, and the question was taken on the amendment and lost.

Mr. McIntyre also proposed that the thirteenth rule be so amended, so as to direct that the sessions shall open at half-past 9 A. M., and close at 1 P. M.; and at half-past 2 P. M., and close at 6 P. M.; and at half-past 7 P. M., and close at the discretion of the Convention. After which the question was taken as amended, and adopted. Main question was then called for, and without discussion the rules were declared adopted.

Whereupon Mr. Wm. P. McIntyre introduced the following resolution:

Resolved, That all motions or resolutions voted upon and lost, shall not be recorded upon the minutes of the Convention, unless so agreed upon at the time. A brief discussion ensued, and the question taken, and declared lost. A recess of five minutes was granted, and by solicitation Mr. Wm. F. Johnson, of Ithaca, (who it may not be amiss to remark, is totally blind,) favored the Convention with a song, entitled the "Fugitive Slave." After which, the business committee returned, and reported a series of resolutions, which report was, by motion of Mr. Myers, seconded by H. Hicks, received.

RESOLUTIONS.

1. *Resolved*, That the colored citizens and inhabitants of the State of New-York will support all law that comprehends the interest of the people, and the welfare of the State, without regard to condition or complexion.

2. *Resolved*, That the exercise of the rights of franchise is a duty incumbent upon, and appertaining to every freeman, and any and every violation of a uniform rule or law, is inimical to the rights of the people.

3. *Resolved*, That the imposed conditions which are required of every colored citizen or voter, is an imposition in consequence of its proscriptive character, and

unwise distinctions, generating contempt for those who are thus imposed upon, and leaving them no escape from degradation.

4. *Resolved*, That for the purposes of elevating the masses, a proper system of education is of paramount importance, and that any system of common or high school education, which teaches superiority of races, or creates distinctions based upon complexional differences, is opposed to the true interest of all classes by inflating the one with the false notions of their greatness, and crushing the other by such influences, as teaches them submission and inferiority.

5. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of every good citizen, and especially every colored person, to discountenance, in every practical way, the erection or maintenance of separate schools for colored children.

6. *Resolved*, That we regard the common school law of this State with the most profound interest, conceiving it to be a great means for the Christian and civil advancement of the State, in consequence of the uniform character in the education of all classes of children.

7. *Resolved*, That the trustees or commissioners in usurping the right to wrest this wholesome law in its natural tendency and just course; exhibit a morbid prejudice moving in a sphere far beneath the enlightened policy that clothes them with limited power.

A motion upon the second reading of the committee's report prevailed, that these resolutions be taken up by numbers for adoption.

Resolution 1st was then called for, read, and a motion proposed for adoption; pending which, the following gentlemen engaged in a spirited discussion: Messrs. Wm. P. McIntyre, Hiram Johnson, both of Albany, and Mr. Wm. F. Johnson, of Tompkins county, also Mr. Cutler, of Albany. After which the yeas and nays were called for, and resolution 1st declared adopted.

Resolution 2d was then called, read and submitted to the pleasure of the Convention, which was freely discussed by Messrs. Still, of Brooklyn, Myers, of Albany, and J. P. Johnson, of Albany. Question was then taken, and the 2d resolution adopted.

Resolution 3d was then called for, read, and by motion submitted to the pleasure of the house, which without discussion, was adopted unanimously. After its adoption Mr. A. G. Beeman, of New Haven, proposed its reconsideration. A motion being stated to that effect, was overruled by the house.

Resolution 4th was then taken up, and a motion offered that it be adopted; pending which the following gentlemen engaged in a warm and interesting discussion: Messrs. Wright, of Albany, and Wm. F. Johnson, of Ithaca, opposing; and Wm. H. Topp, Wm. P. McIntyre, S. Myers, of Albany, and H. Hicks, of Catskill, sustaining. Hour for adjournment having arrived, a motion prevailed that the session be extended fifteen minutes. Discussion was resumed by Mr. Still and Cutler opposing, and Hiram Johnson and Myers sustaining. After which the Convention adjourned until 7-1-2 P. M.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention assembled pursuant to adjournment. Prayer by the Rev. E. N. Hall. After which the minutes of the previous session were read and approved. The president announced as the first business in order, the consideration of the 4th resolution, which was under discussion at the time of adjournment, which resolution was discussed with increased warmth and ability, by Messrs. Topp sustaining, and R. Wright and others opposing. Yeas and nays were then called for, and the resolution declared adopted.

Resolution 5th was then called, and by motion submitted to the house, which, without much discussion, was adopted, by Messrs. R. Wright of Albany, W. F. Johnson of Ithaca, and J. N. Stills of Brooklyn, dissenting.

Resolution 6th was read, and a motion being proposed for its adoption, the question was taken without debate, and unanimously adopted.

Resolution 7th was then taken up, and by motion submitted to the pleasure of the house, which resolution created a spirited and lucid debate, in which the following gentlemen freely participated: Mr. Richard Wright and Benjamin Cutler opposing, and W. H. Topp, C. E. Seth, S. Myers, Wm. P. McIntyre and J. W. Williams, sustaining. Pending which, a motion was proposed to adjourn, which was overruled by a second motion to extend the session fifteen minutes. After a short discussion the yeas and nays were called for on resolution 7th, and it was adopted.

Rev. Amos G. Beeman then offered the following resolution:

Resolved, That there be a committee appointed, to report upon the following questions, viz: three on Colonization, three on Elective Franchise, three on Schools, and three on the Fugitive Slave bill. The following gentlemen were appointed:

C. E. SETH,
B. F. CUTLER,
W. C. GARDNER,

Colonization.

WM. H. TOPP,
S. MYERS,
E. N. HALL,

Schools.

A. G. BEEMAN,
J. N. STILL,
J. P. JOHNSON,

Fugitive Slave Bill.

H. JOHNSON,
R. WRIGHT,
WM. RICH,

Suffrage Question.

The fifteen minutes extension of the session having expired, on motion the Convention adjourned.

SECOND DAY.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, July 23d, 1851.

The Convention assembled agreeable to adjournment. President in the chair. Prayer by H. Hicks. After which the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. The President announced as the first business in order, the consideration of the remaining part of the series of resolutions reported by the business committee, or the reconsideration of resolution seventh which was pending at the time of adjournment. Seventh resolution was then read, and Mr. McIntyre arose and sustained the resolution in a very happy and able manner. He was opposed, however, by Mr. R. Wright. Mr. Hiram Johnson also sustained the resolution in an eloquent address of fourteen minutes, showing the injustice and usurpation of the course of those to whom the resolution refers, and hoped that gentlemen seeing it in the light it had been represented would give that resolution their unanimous and uncompromising support.

Mr. J. N. Still arose and begged leave to correct an opinion that grew out of a remark he made yesterday during the discussion on resolution fifth. He "stated that he acquiesced with the spirit and principle of the resolution, but was compelled to dissent from the opinions of gentlemen who considered it practicable." The vote was then taken on the resolution and declared adopted.

At this stage the business committee reported resolutions, to wit: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. By motion of Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Hicks, the report of the committee was accepted, and a motion prevailed that they be taken up separately for adoption.

RESOLUTIONS.

8. *Resolved*, That we look with the same feelings of abhorrence and contempt now as ever upon the scheme of the American Colonization Society in their efforts to expatriate the free colored people of this country, as a scheme fraught with incalculable evils to them as a people, and we record our unalterable protest and condemnation against the project, as unjust and impracticable.

9. *Resolved*, That we regard with solemn interest the admonition of Marquis de La Fayette in his farewell address before Congress, 1783, and recommend a serious contemplation of the same to all true Americans. "May this great monument raised, to liberty serve as a lesson to the oppressor and an example to the oppressed."

10. *Resolved*, That we believe it to be the determined policy and premeditated intention of a large portion of the people of this country to keep us debased and dependant, making our condition as unhappy and us to appear unworthy, with the view of forcing upon us one of two alternatives—emigration or alienation.

11. *Resolved*, That this Convention views with deep sorrow and regret the many evils that flow through society from the use of intoxicating liquors as a common beverage, and that it urges upon all in the most earnest manner the importance of discountenancing intemperance in all practicable ways.

12. *Resolved*, That it is the duty of this Convention to urge and encourage with all their power the occupation of the Garret Smith grants as one of the most safe and speedy means of alleviating our condition in this state, and also of giving character and respectability to our people through the United States.

13. *Resolved*, That this Convention appoint a committee of three to investigate and report on this subject.

14. *Resolved*, That the delegates will encourage the investigation and report of this committee in their respective vicinities.

15. *Resolved*, That this Convention recommend as worthy of the patronage and important as auxiliaries in the attainment of the rights of the colored people, and of their moral improvement, the efficient support of the "Impartial Citizen," edited by Rev. S. R. Ward, in Boston, Mass., and of the "Telegraph," edited and published in Albany, N. Y., by Stephen Myers, agent of the Delavan State Temperance Union, and "Frederick Douglass' paper," published at Rochester, N. Y.

Resolution No. 8 was then called for, read, and a motion being stated for its adoption, Mr. Wm. F. Johnson arose and sustained it elaborately, but made some slight objections to the incongruity of the term "impracticable." Mr. R. Wright thought that this word expressed too much, for with his understanding of the right application of this word it was "practicable" for man to emigrate to all most any part, and therefore he would prefer as a substitute the word proposed by Mr. Wm. F. Johnson "contemptible."

Mr. Wm. H. Topp sustained the resolution as original offered, also Mr. McIntyre. The amendment was overruled and the question taken on the main resolution, and adopted,

9th resolution was then read, and by motion submitted to the pleasure of the house. The question was then taken without debate and adopted.

10th resolution was then read, and a motion proposed for its adoption, pending which Mr. Still arose to make some explanations of its merits, which explanation created a lengthy and spirited debate, which drew out many interesting observations on both sides, all agreeing in repudiating the principle at which the resolution aimed, but differing in modes as to the surest way of success. The question was taken, however, and it was adopted.

11th resolution was, then read, and by motion submitted to the pleasure of the house. Mr. Wm. F. Johnson thought that a resolution of this character was rather uncalled for, in consideration of the main object of the Convention. This remark aroused the native talents, and latent eloquence of S. Myers, who in a speech of 15 minutes, detained the convention agreeably, Yeas and nays were called for, and the resolution declared adopted.

At this stage, a motion prevailed that the 8th resolution be reconsidered; at which point Mr. R. Wright arose and desired to speak, but was objected to, on the ground of having twice spoken upon the same question. Whereupon, a motion was entertained that he be allowed five minutes, but by an expression from the house, was declared lost. Mr. Wm. H. Topp then spoke with great interest upon the question Mr. Cutler, and Mr. Jones, of Troy, each warmly sustaining the resolution.

Mr. McIntyre said he would, by permission from the chair, correct what he conceived to be a wrong impression entertained by some of the delegates, in the use and application of the term "impracticable." Mr. Hiram Johnson spoke to this effect, upon the reconsideration of the resolution: "That by an unceasing discussion of the nefarious American colonization scheme, invested the subject with an unwarrantable importance, that the practical effect of the scheme does not justify; and the love of home in the colored man repudiates. Therefore", he said "by constant discussion of the subject, made it appear feasible to the minds of many of our people, when it deserves nothing more than an expression of silent or sovereign contempt." Therefore he recommended that to remove the shadow of the practicality of this unchristian scheme, it was only necessary to engage in the business pursuits of the day."

Hour to adjourn having arrived, Convention adjourned until half-past 2 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Convention assembled as per adjournment. President called the house to order, and by invitation, the Rev. P. Vandivere addressed the Throne of Grace. Minutes of the morning session were read and approved.

The President announced that the business first in order was the resolution 1st, as pending when the morning session adjourned. Mr. Hicks hoped the question would be taken on this resolution without further discussion, for he was of the opinion that to argue it, was to attach importance to it. Mr. Myers, and Wm. F. Johnson, however, thought to the contrary. Mr. Still said the subject of colonization was increasing in interest in his vicinity, and referred to a communication published in the N. Y. Tribune, by Augustus Washington, which article was justly censured by the Convention. The question was then taken, and the resolution adopted.

The 12th resolution was then called for, and read, and by motion, submitted to the pleasure of the Convention. Mr. Still sustained this resolution lucidly, and without further discussion, by an expression of the house, it was adopted unanimously.

The 18th resolution was read, and by motion, submitted to the house. Upon which, Mr. McIntyre enquired the duty of the committee referred to in resolutions 12 and 18. After a satisfactory explanation given by J. N. Still, the question was taken, and it was declared adopted.

J. N. Still, Hiram Johnson, and Henry Hicks,

Committee referred to in resolution 18th.

Resolution 14th read, and a motion being proposed, was adopted without debate.

The business committee reported a resolution recommending the investment of monies in public stocks, as being feasible, safe, and promising much towards the amelioration of the condition of the colored people. After a protracted and spirited debate upon the preamble that preceded the resolution, as well as the resolution, a motion was offered and carried to the effect, that the resolution be returned to the committee for their further consideration of its merits, and report again.

On motion, a recess of five minutes was granted. During this short interval, Wm. F. Johnson sang, by invitation, an anti-slavery song, at the conclusion of which, Mr. E. Edward Seth, in accordance with a previous notice he gave to the Convention during the morning session, reported elaborately in behalf of the committee on colonization. He also availed himself of the opportunity to proclaim his dissent in toto from the opinions of some of the gentlemen advanced this morning, during the debate on the colonization resolution—of treating the subject with "silence," studied silence. "Why," he asked, "should we treat it with silence any more than we would slavery!" On motion of Mr. Stephen Myers, the report was accepted. After thrilling, forcible, and eloquent speeches from Messrs. Myers and William H. Topp, of Albany, and Wm. T. Johnson, of Ithaca, commendatory of the report, the question on its adoption was called for, and carried unanimously, to be printed in full, in the proceedings of the Convention.

The committee on finance lifted a collection, and report the result of \$1.25.

A motion was then offered by Mr. McIntyre, seconded by S. Myers, that the final adjournment of the Convention shall take place on Thursday afternoon, at 4 o'clock. Carried.

On motion, the Convention adjourned.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention assembled as per adjournment, presidents in the chairs. Prayer by Rev. E. N. Hall. Minutes of the previous session read and adopted; after which Mr. Hiram Johnson arose and reported in behalf of the committee on the Suffrage question. A motion then prevailed that the report be received; also, on a motion being proposed for its adoption, upon stating the question, Mr. Wm. F. Johnson arose and sustained the report in a most lucid and argumentative address of fifteen minutes. After which the question was taken for the adoption of the report and it was carried unanimously.

A letter at this stage was introduced, from Junius C. Morell, Esq., of Brooklyn, L. I., and read in the audience of the Convention; also one from Mr. A. Williams, of Salem, Mass., and passed to the file. After which, J. N. Still, Esq., reported in behalf of the committee on the Fugitive Slave bill. A motion prevailed that the report be received; also a motion being stated for its adoption, Mr. Still arose and supported the report in a brief and interesting address of fourteen minutes. Mr. C. E. Seth, also in a very feeling manner sustained the remarks of Mr. Still, accompanied with an interesting speech of fifteen minutes, condemnatory of the Fugitive Slave enactment. Mr. W. F. Johnson sustained the report in an eloquent address of thirty minutes; after which the question was taken on its adoption, and it was so declared unanimously.

Mr. Hiram Johnson then reported, in behalf of the business committee, the following resolution:

Resolved, That there be a committee of three appointed to draw up a petition, signed by the officers of this Convention, and submitted to the Governor of the State, with a request that he transmit the same to the Legislature, to so amend the Constitution of the State of New-York as to extend equal suffrage to colored men.

It was voted that this resolution be received, and on the question being stated for its adoption, Mr. Hicks proposed that it be so amended so as to read, send it to the Legislature, instead of the Governor. This proposition created a lengthy debate, in which the following gentlemen freely participated: Messrs. McIntyre, Myers, Seth, Jones, and W. F. Johnson, each sustaining their parts with great credit and good feeling. Mr. McIntyre and Mr. Hiram Johnson sustained the resolution as reported, and the other gentlemen as amended. After which the question was taken on the amendment and lost.

Mr. Topp begged leave to renew the amendment, and by motion his proposition was entertained. Mr. Topp showed clearly his reasons for repeating this amendment; he believed such a course to be without a precedent, to send a petition to the Governor for him to bear to the Legislature, and feared that adopting such a resolution would excite ridicule. Without further discussion the question was taken on the amendment to the amendment, and declared adopted: reading thus, That there be a committee of three appointed to draw up a petition signed by the officers of this Convention, and submitted to the Legislature of this State with a request that they so amend the Constitution, &c. &c. &c. &c. Main question was then taken and the resolution declared adopted.

WM. P. MCINTYRE,

J. N. STILL,

H. HICKS,

Committee on Petition.

At this stage the finance committee lifted the collection and reported as the result the sum of \$2.11. A motion to adjourn prevailed, to meet Thursday morning 9 o'clock.

The Convention adjourned harmoniously.

THIRD DAY.

THURSDAY MORNING SESSION, July 24th.

The Convention assembled as per adjournment; the house was called to order by Vice-President Williams. Prayer by Vice-President Rev. A. G. Beeman. Minutes of the previous session read and adopted. After which Mr. J. N. Still moved that resolution 10th be reconsidered. This resolution aimed at the refutation of a libel published in the Express of N. Y., and republished in the Express of Albany, reflecting upon the moral and social character of the colored people. This resolution called out a warm and elaborate discussion. Mr. Seth "hoped that the Convention would give attention to the observations of Mr. Still, in reference to the libellous communication referred to, for, said he, this Convention should give it its just and merited rebuke." Mr. McIntyre "thought the best method of rebuke would be to treat it with silent contempt, and he hoped the Convention would not consume time in discussing it, while there were matters of greater moment that claimed the consideration of the house, in view of its final adjournment at the hour of 4 p. m." Mr. W. F. Johnson "thought that silence upon that subject would tend to confirm and strengthen the prejudices of those who are really ignorant of the condition of the colored people

in the cities, &c.; he would therefore give it an elaborate consideration." Mr. Myers also sustained the remarks of Mr. Johnson, and pertinently referred to a number of circumstances, that would inevitably refute the communication in the Express. Mr. Hicks moved that the resolution be laid over, and all further debate relating to it, until the hour of half past 2 o'clock, p. m. The question was taken, and the resolution was laid over.

Mr. Topp gave notice that the committee on Schools and Education was ready to report. He (Mr. Topp) then reported in behalf of the committee. It was voted that the report be received. On a motion being proposed that the report be adopted, Mr. Topp gave an interesting narrative of the principles and condition of the McGrawville College, which was recommended in the report as worthy the patronage of all the friends of equality, and especially the colored people. Also Mr. W. F. Johnson warmly recommended that institution as being all that it professes to be, to all intents and purposes, and he could cheerfully endorse the sentiments of the gentlemen (Mr. Topp) in commending it to the patronage of the colored people. The question was then taken on the adoption of the report, and carried.

Mr. W. P. McIntyre gave notice that he was ready to report in behalf of the committee appointed to draft a petition to the Legislature. He then came forward and reported; and a motion prevailed that the report be received; and on motion the report was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Hicks moved that the Convention take a recess of thirty minutes, at the hour of 12; carried.

Rev. A. G. Beeman then moved that the rule be suspended for the time being, which relates to the report of resolutions through the business committee; carried. Mr. Still then by resolution, made reference to the Gerrit Smith's lands. Hour of recess having arrived, the Convention was suspended until 12 1-2.

THURSDAY, half-past 12 P. M.

The Convention reassembled as per suspension. Mr. Still resumed his remarks on the Smith grants in a happy manner, showing why the colored people should occupy them, which drew out remarks from several gentlemen, among which was Mr. McIntyre, W. F. Johnson and others. President Topp then gave notice that the hour had arrived to consider the suspended resolution, to wit, resolution 11th. After a brief but spirited discussion on this subject, the resolution was declared adopted.

Mr. J. N. Still offered the following resolution, which was entertained by the house:

Resolved, That upon the colored people depends, under God, the important duty of preserving the Christian church from idolatry, and the entire people from infidelity, and the republic from destruction.

Mr. Cutler said he could not go for this resolution, indeed he was opposed to it all together; he could not see the propriety of introducing it in this Convention; the subject to which it relates seems "begged;" besides that, the Convention had not time to consider such grave subjects at this time.

Mr. Hicks observed that if he was sure the discussion upon this resolution would end here, he would reserve his remarks; but he saw a disposition to extend the discussion, and he feared to the overthrow of the resolution, and disrespect to the principle involved; he could not agree with Mr. Cutler, that the Convention had not time to consider this "grave subject," for in his opinion, if the Convention had not time to consider a subject of such vital interest to the people of color, as that of guarding them from skepticism or infidelity, or in other words, saving men's souls,

he was at a loss to determine what they had time to consider. He hoped this resolution would pass with an overwhelming vote.

Mr. W. F. Johnson said he felt pained to hear gentlemen on this floor argue as did Mr. Cutler; if the gentleman could not see the merits of this resolution—if he could not appreciate its spirit, he must say he deeply sympathised with him, for he feared he was bordering to one of the principles which threatens the destruction of the church and people.

Mr. McIntyre said he regretted the necessity of detaining the Convention at this late stage, but he felt called upon to speak, even at the expense of being classed with Mr. Cutler, who has so warmly opposed the passage of this resolution. He would enquire if we would not be arrogating too much to the colored people, by endorsing the sentiments of that resolution; he thought we did, and he hoped before gentlemen voted on it, they would calmly consider what the resolution assumes.

Mr. Topp said the resolution met his approbation at once, and experience and observation combined to convince him that there was more truth than fiction in the resolution. He therefore hoped it would be adopted.

Mr. Hall said he saw clearly the providence of God in preserving the religion of Jesus Christ pure among his persecuted people, and those very persecutions were a means to that end.

The question was then taken on the resolution, and declared adopted.

At this period, the committee reported through Mr. Hiram Johnson, a series of resolutions, to wit: Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. A motion prevailed that the report be received; and also it was voted, that they be taken up by numbers for adoption.

At this point, the finance committee raised the collection, and reported 87 cents.

Resolution 16th was then called for and read as follows:

Resolved, That we recommend to all colored voters to cast their votes and to wield their political influence in favor of those men who in their public course have given the best proof of being in favor of universal and impartial freedom. Question taken, and it was declared adopted.

Resolution 17th was called for and read as follows:

Resolved, That there be a State Central Committee of nine appointed, whose duty it shall be to call a State Convention at such time and place as they shall judge expedient. Question taken and declared adopted.

State Central Committee.

W. H. Topp, S. Myers, Albany; Wm. F. Johnson, Ithaca, Tompkins co.; Wm. McIntyre, Albany; H. Hicks, Catskill, Greene co.; Wm. Rich, Troy; Hiram Johnson, Albany; George Weir, Jr., Buffalo; Charles B. Ray, New-York.

Resolution 18th was amended to read as follows:

Resolved, That W. H. Topp, C. E. Seth and H. Hicks be a committee to publish the doings of this Convention, and are hereby authorised to collect the necessary means, and that W. P. McIntyre and J. P. Johnson be added to the committee for the purpose of soliciting funds, said committee to furnish each member of the Legislature with a copy at its next session. Adopted.

19. *Resolved*, That this Convention return hearty thanks to the Governor and Trustees of the Capitol for the use of the same for the sitting of this Convention. Carried.

20. *Resolved*, That this Convention return thanks to Mr. Jenkins, the Superintendent of the Capitol, for the politeness and attention he has shown to the members of this Convention. Carried.

21. *Resolved*, That we the delegates tender our thanks to the President of this Convention for the able, dignified and impartial manner in which he has presided over its deliberations. Carried.

22. *Resolved*, That a vote of the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Secretaries, Mr. Seth and Hicks, for their valuable services during the sitting of the Convention. Question taken and carried

At this juncture the committee on finance reported as follows:

Received by collections,.....	\$5 91
Paid for circulars,.....	\$2 25
Paid for stationery,.....	88
Paid for postage,.....	1 00
Paid for sweeping hall,.....	1 25
	<hr/> 4 88
Balance on hand,.....	\$1 03

W. P. M6INTYRE,
F. H. DOUGE,
S. MYERS.

Finance Committee.

A motion prevailed that the balance in the hands of the committee of finance be paid to the publishing committee. A motion prevailed that the minutes be read, which was complied with, and by motion adopted. After which it was resolved that the Convention adjourn sine die. The Convention was adjourned by singing the doxology "Praise God from whom," &c., and by prayer from the Rev. E. N. Hall, and then dismissed in the most harmonious manner.

Signed,

W. H. TOPP,
President.

A. G. BEEMAN,
W. RICH,
J. W. WILLIAMS,
Vice Presidents.

C. E. SETH,
H. HICKS,
Secretaries.

Albany, July 24th, 1851

REPORT ON COLONIZATION.

The advancement which the Colonization Society has made in late years, though *haud passibus aequis*, through bequeathed legacies, through life contributions, and through the strenuous efforts of collective bodies, proves conclusively, though not alarmingly, the hold it has gained on the public mind; and of the paramount necessity of our calling the attention not only of the free colored people of this State, but of every state in the union where they can act individually, and collectively, to the detriment and discomfiture of the institution.

In the formation of this society, in the earliest period of its existence, when the principles, and object of its organization and government were promulgated, when its Proudfits, its Buchanans, its Ashmun, its Clays, its Cressons, its Gurleys, its Pinneys, and a host of others were sent into the field as pioneers, as Governors, as Lecturers, as Orators, and as Presidents, under the pretext as we know, and as we ever have and still believe, of ameliorating the condition of the colored people—of promoting their general welfare, by striving to send the nominally free portion of them to Liberia; but whose sole purpose in fact was, and is still, the accomplishment of a “happy riddance” of us, from this our native land, to be transported to the burning deserts of Africa.

This project for our removal, wholesale and retail, created in the mind and heart of every man and woman of us, a bitter contempt, and animosity toward such an institution, and all those who associated themselves with it.

The scheme was derided and mocked and repelled by the people of color and their friends, at every step diligently for a season, until, in the minds of some, the success of such an object seemed too impossible to give cause for any real apprehension of its working evil in the future; and the people appear to have folded their arms, and consigned their hitherto assiduous opposition to the keeping of a “masterly inactivity,” tacitly watching the movements of these pretended philanthropists.

But in the progress of time; through the diligent and unremitting efforts and untiring zeal of the colonizationists for the success of their “darling scheme,” we find at this stage of the society’s existence, of more than a quarter of a century, a resuscitation of life, still vigorous; still growing;

strengthening in its strength; accumulating in numbers; gaining in resources; and with a spirit of determination to effect the desire of its purposes, if possible, in the end. To facilitate the completion of this work, the "powers that be" have been invoked to engage in the mean calling—a calling adverse to the wishes and dispositions of nine hundred and ninety-nine colored persons out of every thousand; of urging them by gaudy pictures, to seek a new home in a foreign land, no more peculiar to their natures, (and assuredly repugnant to their inclinations,) than it is adapted to any other portion of the American people, or the European nations.

The idea that that country (Africa,) is more fitting to the constitution of the colored American, than to the white American, is nothing less, nothing more than sheer hypothesis. What human invention, what logic, can controvert the immutable laws of nativity.

Through the will of an all-wise Providence we were born in this country; consequently by virtue of that birth, this is our country, and the only one we claim as our own, and is in every respect suited to our natures wholly.

That on the color of a man, or of a nation, depends the civilization and evangelization of the same, is not only absurd but libellous of reason.

Not African complexion, or the descendants of Africa alone, but through the hazard of acclimation, foreigners of all complexions may, out of the unhewn material of the native intellect, by the process of civilization, education and evangelization, based upon God's laws—the precept and practice of his religion, not man's, work out that country's ultimate redemption and salvation from ignorance, and place her on the road to national eminence.

And we avail ourselves of the convenience here, to assert that it is not from any feeling of malignance, in the slightest degree whatever, towards Africa, and her rescue from darkness and oblivion, or any other country of heathenism and idolatry, (although the Liberians have suggested some infamous offers to this government in their eagerness to be nationally recognised, and which we shall allude to in the conclusion of this report,) that we denounce the American Colonization scheme; but from the fact, notwithstanding it ostensibly bears upon its face a kind of philanthropy; such skin-deep philanthropy that we spurn—that its primary and ending object is our complete removal to Africa, without the expressed application originally emanating from the intelligent colored people directly, themselves.

Then why should they assume a responsibility, unmooted and unauthorized by those whom it is calculated to affect injuriously; a scheme, the very essence of which is so palpably a wrong, and so impracticable, that it can never be accomplished. The intelligence, the spirit of humanity, the progressive moral sentiment of the age is averse to it. It is folly's foil to urge it. It is madness to contemplate its success.

And to tell us that we cannot rise to a standard of high, moral, social, and intellectual elevation with the white man of this country, throws no damper of timidity over our all exertions, and resolute perseverance, to pursue the attainment of these objects, with the indomitable spirit of Americans struggling for American rights.

Have we not many things to encourage us? have we not even amid all deprivations and degradations slowly, yet steadily made advances in the improvement of our moral condition and mental acquirements? The darkness of the past; the dawning light and developments of the present; and the bright hopeful future, all inspire us with confidence to go onward, aiming upward, trusting in the will of Providence, and the growing moral sentiment of the people, that the withheld rights of one portion of the American people will yet, sooner or later, be bestowed upon them.

The opposite of this, no man whose mind is freed and unfettered from the corroding effects of color-prejudice believes.

All our interests are indissolubly identified with the country through weal or woe. And it matters not if colossal impediments obstruct the way, they are but temporary, and we, by the help of God, intend to remain and work out our elevation, and the disenthralment of our brethren from slavery.

The slow movement of the emigration of free colored people, only 7,000 in 30 years, throws a gloom over the desired speedy accomplishment of the object of the society, and hence the effort made to increase its capacities, and extend its powers for operating more effectually. They have appealed to State legislatures, and have succeeded in getting several of these authorities to move in the matter, by passing resolutions commendatory of the scheme, and recommending the national government to undertake the expense of colonizing all who will go. Some of the most prominent statesmen have given it their approbation. One particularly, who indicates his willingness that the Land Fund should be so appropriated as to facilitate the *peaceable conclusion* of this project, to wit, *our banishment*. Virginia by a law enacted in 1849, appropriates \$30,000 for the benefit of this nefarious scheme. Maryland has too a fund of long standing for the same purpose.

But we must express our happy pleasure at the failure of the Colonization Society of this State, to obtain at the recent session of the Legislature, an appropriation of \$10,000 yearly, for two years, for the malicious purposes of sending the colored people from this State to Africa, and to procure the broad seal of approval of the Commonwealth to such a measure. We entertain no fear—however, should such a measure pass the Legislature. We have too much confidence in the good sense and love of home of the people.

We give below the result of the operations of the society, from its earliest state down to the year 1850. Not very flattering, surely, in view of the ratio of increase of the colored population in the United States. The entire number of emigrants sent to Liberia by the American Colonization Society, and its auxiliaries from each State, from 1820 to 1850, inclusive.

Massachusetts,	1
Connecticut,	10
Rhode Island,	32
New-York,	107
New Jersey,	1
Pennsylvania,	101
Delaware,	4
Maryland,	416
District of Columbia,	101
Virginia, ..	2,258
North Carolina,	846
South Carolina,	344
Georgia,	561
Alabama,	46
Mississippi,	506
Louisiana, ..	177
Tennessee,	244
Kentucky,	255
Ohio,	45
Indiana,	22
Illinois,	26
Missouri,	21
Michigan,	1
Iowa,	3
Total number sent by the Society,	6,116

RECAPITULATION.

Number born free,	2,315
Number that purchased their freedom,	165
Number emancipated in view of emigrating to Liberia,	3,686
Number of liberated Africans sent by the U. S. Government, including 756 by the Slave Ship, "Pons,"	1,044

Total number sent by the Society and U. S. Government, 7,160

Your committee invite your attention to the bold move of our adversaries, in the presentation of their "Briant" scheme, and "Stanton" report to the last Congress, in order to secure the co-operation of the General Government, which, (through such a compact,) shall become the chief colonizer, in sending from her shores to an uncongenial and unwelcomed clime, her native born citizens; citizens as loyal to the general interests and liberties of the country in '51, as their ancestors in '76; equally as faithful in their

allegiance to the government under a just, impartial administration of its constitutional laws now, as were their patriotic sires, whose blood moistened Bunker Hill, Red Bank, Valley Forge, on the lakes Erie and Champlain, and other noted memorable battle grounds, of the revolutionary and the last war.

In this last rally of the colonizationists, the gigantic proposition above mentioned, it is proposed that the government should build large mail steamers, (subject to be converted into war steamers,) to ply between the United States and the west coast of Africa, touching at intermediate maritime ports, to carry out emigrants at \$10 per head, just one-fifth of what the society now carries them for. Nothing said, of course, about bringing them back, should they be disappointed in the country, or finding the hot climate disagreeable and injurious to their health and life; for once there, there you must remain.

Let it not be said that none desire to return. We have proof to the contrary of this. The object is to get you out of this country by suasion and possibility, if it can be done; but not to bring you back under any circumstances whatever.

And for the completion of this, all kinds of chicanery and stratagem will be employed to allure the people thitherward; the eternal summer, and the earth's enduring verdancy; the salubrious climate, and the double crops of its fertile soil; its growing marketable productions, and the independence of its inhabitants; the enjoyments and privileges of its citizens, will be pictured forth in glowing colors, to deceive you.

We implore you, fellow countrymen, by reason of the associations that cling around you; by virtue of the interests that endear your attachment to your native land; because of the holy ties of consanguinity, identification, and the obligations of brotherhood, and humanity, you owe those in bonds, as bound with them, to let none of these delusive mirrors confound and entrap you.

Yet in the face of all this, we have noticed recently, movements among the people in Ohio, and Maryland, of a disposition to organize themselves into societies, (to their shame be it recorded,) for the purpose of emigrating to Liberia, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society. Pray what are the reasons assigned for deserting so cowardly, not only their nativity, but four millions of their countrymen, ground to the earth in the galling chains of slavery?

Is it because their faint hearts despair of ever seeing a brighter morn—of beholding the dawning era when the goddess of universal liberty shall proclaim equal rights to all men; or is it a disinterestedness in the welfare of Liberia?

If it is in sincerity the former, in view of their *modus operandi*, we cannot commend their course and action, because it exhibits such gross imbecility, and the extinguishment of that genius of freedom, which has struggled so long unparalleled in the breasts of colored Americans, from the days of the oppressed colonial settlements down to the present hour. If the latter, we cannot, without giving the falsehood and semblance of indifference to our earnest professions, and appeals for our rightful claims as American born citizens, sanction such pusillanimous proceedings; but on the contrary, knowing as we do, the real motives of the colonizationists; brand their conduct as infamous and contemptible.

Is it not worthy of us as citizens of New-York State; as we would war against slavery and intemperance or any other question, that locally and nationally affected the social, moral, political and religious concern of the people, alike keep pace with the renewed actions and efforts of the Colonizationists, and anew stamp this growing ill design and attack upon our domestic happiness, our hearth side, and our interests universally, with a burning reprobation, and contempt, commensurate with that in spirit and action which characterized the early laborers in this cause of humanity and right, against wrong and injustice? ought we not the more so when colored men turn "pliant minions," and insufferable dupes, at the bidding of a class of men who professedly are our friends, yet whose very system of philanthropy, were it possible to be put into operation successfully, would, our peace and harmony and felicity destroy; particularly ought we record our dissent, firm and utter condemnation, having not a particle of sympathy with the spirit and letters of a colored man, recently published in the New-York Tribune, in favor of "African Colonization," based upon spasmodic ebullition, a seeming panic and phrenzy of despair of the colored people ever securing their legitimate rights of enfranchisement, immunities, &c., in this country; which in every line of said communications, the observer will detect the egotist's proud disappointments, traitorous tendencies and the aspirations of unmerited political distinctions.

The inconsiderate hearer and reader must not wilfully deceive himself with regard to any apprehension we entertain, or at any time previously entertained, of the success of the colonization scheme; for we believe, as truly as we believe in the God of Heaven, the creator of the universe, that ere this object is gained, the clarion-tones of the Arch-angel will note the end of *all time*.

Our professed friends too, as some of them have done, may stigmatize our declarations of attachment to our native land as much as they choose, to their heart's tire content, as sentiments fictitious and imaginary; nevertheless, reason being our guide, and our judgment a responsible dispenser, and

accountant of all our expressions and deeds, we will ever claim this land as our home—our own native home; that we are deeply attached to it, and will labor on only to the end for the overthrow of slavery, and for the rights of colored Americans and their posterity.

Fellow citizens, let us resolve, and

“Re-resolve in all the magnanimity of thought,” combined with action, that we will never by any consent of our own, voluntarily and shamefully relinquish our birth-right by fleeing the country singly or in legions under the protection of such an institution.

With respect to the repeated assertion that it is morally, religiously, and politically a delusive idea we cherish, in looking forward to the future, for a hope of obtaining respectable and prominent positions in this land, in common with others of capability and merit, by virtue of the development of those holy and noble *triune* characters; but that we must remain as drudges upon society—as hewers of wood and drawers of water evermore, we consider, as all candid, honest men are bound to admit, the most impotent argument advanced for our extermination from these shores, and hyperbolic because unsubstantiated by evidence, practicable and conclusive.

Were it actually necessary—more than that, were it desirable here—we could enter into a statistical review, and instance several localities of colored people, and example very many individuals, (even though surrounded by disadvantageous embarrassments,) who have made and are still making rapid improvement in the highest development of their moral and mental capacities.

Fellow citizens, let no fascinating inducements—no eloquent rhetoric—no eulogistic encomiums of Liberia, draw you into the snares of your dear, philanthropic, and expatriating friends. But by every renewed means in your power, while you will do nothing intentionally and directly detrimental to the development, civilization, and evangelization of Africa, by opposing any man, or a body of men, who choose to emigrate there or elsewhere, under other influences than the Colonization Society of this country, battle against this hydra-head of iniquity—this subtle scheme and corruption, at all times, and under all circumstances, now, henceforth, and forever.

We now call your attention as members of this Convention, as brothers, as citizens, as countrymen, to a fact, though not generally known, is too true. We ask you, can you right heartily sanction the course proposed to be pursued by the Liberians in their solicitude to be recognized by the government of the United States? They are willing, in the language of Mr. Gurley's report, “in view of the peculiarities of the condition of the free colored people, and others of the African race” (meaning the slaves) “in this country, they well know and have no wish by any relations which may

be established between their government and the United States, to cause inconvenience or embarrassment."

They are willing, in substance, to bow slavishly to the worst sense, feelings, and views of the American government, by offering to clothe the white citizens of the United States with full diplomatic power to act as ambassadors, minister plenipotentiary, &c., &c., for Liberia, thus virtually remaining unrepresented, providing the United States confides to the citizens of that republic any business it might desire transacted in Africa with the authorities of said republic.

Was there ever such a treaty formed and ratified in the history of civilized nations? Has the United States government ever placed the nation's seal of honor and fidelity to such a negotiation? But she has refused to recognize the independence of Hayti, and she will refuse to recognize the independence of Liberia, according to the universal mode and manner of recognizing free and independent nations; the power of locomotion; the protection of citizens of each country, at home or abroad; the mutual interchange of ministers, counsellors; security to commerce, &c., &c.

No, fellow-citizens, we do not believe that you would as Americans, endorse such an inglorious negotiation. We believe, if the question were put to the entire colored people of the United States, for their consideration, we would hear, by way of response, one long, loud acclamation, rising up simultaneously from the city, the village, the valley, the mountain side, No! No! Never!!! Never!!!

C. EDWARD SETH,
BENJAMIN F. CUTLER,
WILLIAM GARDENER.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIVE FRANCHISE.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

Most sovereign citizens of the State of New-York, your motto is "excelsior," higher and still more high: inspiring as this sentiment must be to every intelligent inhabitant, you will therefore not be surprised at being addressed on the practical application of the principle contained in the above sentiment, though it should come from the most humble of its inhabitants. We, the colored citizens and inhabitants of the State, appeal to you in view of your supreme power, and the intelligence with which you are possessed, in behalf of our rights; a boon that must be ever sacred to men raised under a Democratic and Christian form of government. In the year 1821, unfortunately for us and unwisely for the State, the colored citizens of the State were left trammelled and humbled by the convention of the above date. For forty-five years the colored citizens enjoyed the rights of franchise in common with the white inhabitants of the State. But at this advanced and progressive period of the State's history, the wise and liberal portion of the citizens of the State realized a necessity for an alteration of the State Constitution, wishing thereby to have for an elective basis, the virtue and intelligence of the people in preference to *property* bases or qualification which was then a constitutional requirement. A convention was called for this important object, each county sending delegates to represent its interest, and those delegates receiving their election in part at the hands of the colored electors, met in convention to extend the area of freedom. But alas, fellow citizens, what was the result; the poor who stood in the greatest need of a stimulus to emerge from the condition in which they had suffered so grievously, were still left to struggle with the superincumbent embarrassment, while their white fellow citizens open up a political highway through which all might pass without the least obstruction, save that of a small minority designated by the external complexion which God gave them. This providence of God was used to condemn and fix upon them, to the extent of the circumstance, a disgrace, thus heaping wrong upon wrong, forgetting the many years that they stood side by side as the children of paternal ancestry; at Bunker Hill, Concord and Lexington, the colored man's blood was shed, Lake Erie and Lake Champlain, poured out, for the establishment of those sentiments that are

contained in the herald of the country's freedom : " We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created free and equal, and are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." The ark of the covenant was grounded and settled on these indestructible principles, and moreover, in after years, guaranteed by the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, art. 4, sec 2, clause 1, wherein it is declared " that the citizens of each of the states shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities as citizens of the several states." The colored man's constitutional rights as a citizen have never been questioned until recently, and that by those whose cupidity prompted them to make an effort to injure him in his strongest position, in the *unquestionable* and *avowed* protection that the United States Constitution throws around and extends to the whole free representative mass. The colored man's rights are not peculiar or extrenuous, but are in common with those of the whole people, and *incontestable* evidence to this effect may be found in the circumstances of the admission of Missouri into the Union in 1821.

The people of Missouri made overtures to Congress for admission into the Union as a sovereign, independent State, and at the same time submitted the Constitution they had framed. But their admission into the Union was resisted by a majority in Congress, on the ground that a clause of the 26th sec. of the 8d art. of the proposed Constitution, made it a duty of the General Assembly to pass laws such as might be necessary to prevent free negroes or mulattoes from coming to or settling in the State under any pretext whatever ; which it was maintained was a violation of the Constitution of the United States, art. 4, sec. 2, clause 1, wherein it is declared " that the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of the citizens in the several States." Hereupon a debate arose of great interest, which agitated the Union to the remotest extremity. The issue of this was as follows : the refusal to admit Missouri into the Union was not withdrawn until the General Assembly of that State, in conformity to a fundamental condition imposed by Congress had, by an act passed for that purpose, solemnly enacted and declared that this State, Missouri has assented and does assent that the 4th clause of 26th section of the 3d article of their Constitution should not be construed to authorize the passage of any law, and that no law shall be passed in conformity thereto, by which any citizen of either of the States shall be excluded from the enjoyment of any of the privileges and immunities to which such citizens are entitled to under the Constitution of the United States. (Ref. to Niles Congressional Reg., August 18th, vol. 22, pp. 338 and 339.) And Missouri, after having manifested her assent to the fundamental condition imposed by Congress, and having officially communicated the fact to James Monroe, President of the United States, he, in pursuance and under the authority of the resolution of

Congress, prescribing the condition aforesaid by his proclamation, dated August 10th, 1821, declared the admission of Missouri into the Union to be complete. Here then is incontestable proof of a common proprietary interest in the government and liberties of the country, colored with the white citizens. We need not be told after the above statement and proof, that the Convention of 1821, of the State of New-York, which altered or introduced into the Constitution the word "white," making the clause read "every white male citizen of the age of twenty-one years" should, on certain conditions specified, be entitled to vote, was an infraction of the rights of colored citizens. The elective basis of the State was not property, that being supplanted by the alteration, therefore all the male inhabitants of the State, in virtue of their locality and the alteration of the State Constitution, became citizens presumptive, and when in conformity with the amended conditions, were citizens in fact, no state being invested with the power to advance the interest and exalt one portion of the people over that of the other. Congress not being impowered to pass a bill of attainder, or ex post facto law, it is not reasonable to suppose or logical to admit that any one State could assume such authority. The resolution produced a change in all the free inhabitants of the United States; all the citizens of the several states became citizens of the United States. They were *subjects* of great Britain; they became citizens of the United States from the very nature of our government. In the case of *McIlvain v. Cox's lessees*, Cranch 293, it is asserted without contradiction, "It was, therefore, a political revolution, involving in the change all the inhabitants of America, rendering them all members of the new society, standing on one common basis as citizens of the new states." *Chan. Kent.*

The elective or representative basis of the general government is then the free people; each State an independent sovereignty as long as its laws and regulations do not conflict with the general government. Therefore in view of the foundation principles of the State and United States governments, we have sufficient reason to declare our united and uncompromising hostility to a mal-administration of the laws, whether it is of the State in which we are resident or of the several States of the Union, for every innovation upon the rights of the American people is fraught with destruction to the harmony which binds the several States. The objects of the confederation were to have a more perfect union, whereby and wherein the rights of the people might be more securely protected, and those rights are promised in the language of the Declaration of Independence, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." These are the ground principles of the country's stability; undermining or removing these, and the light of her glory is quenched, and all are merged into the condition of dupes and slaves. Casts or titles were no moving

motives to the uprising and attainment of American liberties, but are at variance with the genius of the government.

The elective franchise is the birthright and blessing of every American, of which he can never be legally deprived, unless he involves his right to the enjoyment of it by the commission of some penal offence against the laws of his country; and nearly 600 years have elapsed since the barons of England compelled their king to subscribe to the magna charta, which embraced and guaranteed to every Englishman an unqualified protection in the possession of his life, liberty and property; therefore, inasmuch as the advantages and true principles of the common laws of England were introduced into the United States when in their Colonial condition; received and adopted as standard principles and laws, they became the bulwarks of the American people's liberties. Property in man being denied and rejected by Lord Mansfield, 1772, from the king's bench, the highest authority in England, a monarchical government and the one from whence this emerged, set forth boldly and sustained two great principles, a trial by jury, and the right of every man to himself. The establishment of these principles by the mother country, and their re-adoption by this, made them the organic law of the nation, the natural right of every American. It was for these principles and more, that three millions people started up as voluntary offerings to be sacrificed on the altar of Liberty, to be ever venerated and loved for their successful triumph in the maintenance of right over wrong; the whole land is consecrated to freedom with a deep libation of freemen's blood; each and all were patriots and Americans in that day, who opposed their breasts to the foe, and secured successfully the triumph of these principles.

And now, has it come to this, that the descendants of those whose hearts beat true to their country, even unto death, that they, their offspring, are compelled to prove a claim to a common interest and right in those ever glorious achievements; that the man with a swarthy brow or black complexion is compelled to protest against the usurpations of his fairer brother, of the most flagrant and gross wrongs; and the mother cannot successfully vindicate her maternal and unalterable interest in the infant on her breast against the unchristian and inhuman laws of this degenerate land and people. It is enough to startle every christian American with a trembling apprehension that God has given the nation over to their abominations and pride, and that the hand writing of their overthrow is apparent. *Mene mene tekel upharain.*

**HIRAM JOHNSON,
RICHARD WRIGHT,
WILLIAM RICH,**

Committee.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON FUGITIVE SLAVE BILL

The undersigned appointed a committee to report on the FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW, beg leave to submit the following preamble and resolutions:

That we the colored citizens of the State of New-York believing that the dearest rights and liberties, belonging to us as freemen, are fearfully endangered by the *Fugitive Slave Law* recently enacted by our National Legislature, and having a tender sympathy with our brethren who escape from slavery—being assembled in convention to consider said law—do deliberately and seriously *resolve*,

1. That this law, in requiring the freemen of the north to deliver up fugitives from slavery to the iniquitous and oppressive bondage from which they have heroically escaped, is in direct and impious opposition to the command of the Supreme Law Giver—a command, like the moral law, obligatory in all ages from its very nature—“*Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee; he shall dwell with thee, even among you in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best; thou shalt not oppress him.*” That this law, in forbidding men under the penalty of heavy fines and imprisonment to harbor or assist fugitives from slavery, is in direct and impious opposition to those laws of God which command deeds of humanity and mercy;—that in both these respects this law is in direct and impious opposition to the essence and sum of “the law and the prophets,” declared by the divine Redeemer, “*all things whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,*”—and therefore that no man can, in these respects, obey this law, without palpable and flagrant disobedience to God.

2. That this law is plainly and essentially opposed to that self-evident truth in the Declaration of Independence by these United States, “that *all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;*” and that no man can approve or obey this law without contradicting this united declaration of the people of this Republic.

3. That this law directly and palpably violates those fundamental provisions of the Constitution of the United States which secure to “every person” the right of trial by jury, and in cases occurring under the laws of the Uni-

ted States, the right of trial by a Court of the United States, (which a Commissioner under this law is not) and the privilege of the *habeas corpus* act, and of counsel when accused, and therefore all citizens of the United States are bound by their obligations under the Constitution, not to obey, but to disobey, this law.

4. That the duties of men towards fugitives from oppression are plain—the duties dictated by humanity and mercy—the bestowment of comfort, sympathy, and needful aid; and we call, therefore, on the inhabitants of the state of New-York to imitate the noble example of the people of New Haven, Ct., who, in the days of the hunted and fugitive judges, who condemned to death an oppressive King of England, obeyed the exhortation of their pious pastor, the revered John Davenport, founded on the Divine command, *Hide the outcast; betray not him that wandereth; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler.*"

5. That we feel ourselves to be weak, needing help; and we earnestly ask of our white friends to give us their aid in our distress, and to show not only in private, but in public, that they have feeling hearts and willing hands.

6. That we believe that public opinion is the bulwark of all law, and that this ODISIOUS AND CRUEL LAW will be entirely inoperative, if the moral sense of this community speaks; and therefore we ask of this community, with the voice of our oppressed people, that they will give such an expression of their sentiments respecting this law as will protect this place from the step of the man-hunter, and their homes and hearts from the cries and tears of his victims.

7. That we are fully determined, here in our places, to wait the issue; to rest our cause upon God, upon the friends of religion and humanity, and upon our own manhood; to bear ourselves so as to prove that we are worthy, not only of liberty, but of the full privileges of citizens, some of which are now denied us; and to surrender life rather than to be taken into slavery.

8. *Resolved*, That the fugitive slave law is the law of tyrants.

9. *Resolved*, That disobedience to tyrants is obedience to God.

10. *Resolved*, That we will obey God.

AMOS GERRY BEMAN,

JOHN NELSON STILL,

J. P. JOHNSON,

Committee.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

Your committee cannot hope to embrace in this report, suggestions that will meet every case connected with the subject of Education; we can only deal with general principles.

First, in order that the general welfare of the *colored* people be improved—that the influence of vice and immorality be overcome—that they may become elevated from that condition of *self-degradation* in which ignorance and vice has engulfed a large proportion of the race, it is all important that *they* become educated; without education we cannot hope to be emancipated from the bondage of involuntary degradation, which we are placed under by the cruel and malicious system of prejudice and caste. By education must be effected the full developments of those hidden and important truths, which when brought to bear upon the hearts and consciences of mankind, shine forth in the beauty of their nature and illumine their minds, to the end that all members of the great human family shall have accorded to them their full and complete rank as such, regardless of any outward circumstances as denote birth or country.

Education here must be considered intellectually, morally and physically. There can be no harmonious development of character where attention is given only to the growth and strengthening of particular divisions of capacity, without reference to the entire man. A system of discipline which tends simply to improve the physical nature, or even the physical and moral without regard to the intellectual, produces at best but gigantic strength, the lowest type of man's excellency. And a superstitious religion is always debasing and even dangerous in proportion as it is removed from the light of reason and mental culture. This is not more philosophically true, than proven in the general history of the human race.

Education, then, properly understood, has to do with all the laws and principles that regulate our progress in this life, and only answers its legitimate duty when it seeks to elevate, to liberalize, to christianize. To this end, it gives to its subjects a clearer vision and a greater power to bring out hidden virtues and to combat those errors and prejudices that only live as they are able to pervert men's minds and to make them low and groveling.

These truths are clearly seen in the facts that surround us on every side, in the great struggle now being waged between the oppressor and the oppressed. In the community about us, we are realizing daily the bitter evidence, that an education given in a one-sided direction, and continued for a series of years from father to child, grows up into a system all powerful in the accomplishment of its ends, and subduing to its aims well nigh every mind that receives it. Dictated by that self-love that delights to claim superiority and to exercise rule, we see the social and school education of the land fattening upon the hideous error that God has created a noble and an ignoble race, and that by virtue of this he has given a right to the strong to tyrannize over the weak—to load his body with chains and shut him up from the revelations of light and love guaranteed to him in the very ground work of his being.

The history of slavery and caste in this country is so palpable that it needs no recapitulation here. It is a history written in blood and black with enormities and crimes. That it owes its origin and continuance to misdirected views is made evident in the fact that where a different system of culture has been adopted, the so called antagonistic races have grown up in terms of amity, and have moved on an equal platform, basking under a common civilization, and reaching out to a common destiny.

The fact made glaring by the education adopted, that there is a vast disparity in the standard of culture of the two classes involved in the argument, has been made a justifying cause for tyrannizing over those whose only crime has been, that where no food has been given them, they have not grown fat, and where light has been shut out from them, their sight has become dim and obscure.

Time, therefore, having sanctioned the erroneous doctrine that because there is a difference in development, the truth is evident that there is a difference in capacity. It rests with us to counteract the perverted teachings of the land, by filling up as soon as possible the chasm of mind that has separated us, and to bring to our mental storehouse those rich freights of thought and intelligence that really make eminent any people, and the want of which makes us yield too readily to such influences as cause us to remain the vassals and slaves of a more powerful clan, and pliant subjects to a system of education highly improper of itself, and which serves to render us less fitted to appreciate the advantages of a true system, and makes us willing instruments to embarrass and postpone the prospects of securing such as is proper.

The system of education most conducive to our advancement seems to be that which will most readily annihilate that weakening acknowledgment, that our means of elevation are to be ever distinct and separate from

those educational appliances that tend so rapidly to push onward the great American people. In other words, we must partake, as far as is practicable, in the advantages of those literary and religious institutions, where common rights are respected, and where manhood is acknowledged as an equal inheritance! Schools established by caste, while they may not be contemned where better reliances are not to be had, are depressing in their influences, and unfitted to prepare our children to assume an equality of position in the after severe lessons of life. We never may expect to claim, or our opponents to grant, full freedom in carrying out the great aims of life, where we are educated in acknowledgment of the fitness of that spirit of colonization that shuts us out from enjoying the advantages of the better schools of the land. This being our conviction, let us give good attention to securing for our children a liberal education, remaining steadfast in the determination to unceasing efforts to uproot the evil of proscription on account of color, wherever it is to be met with, either in school houses or in churches, ever maintaining perseverance in the right direction, and a dignity of demeanor that will characterize us as a people knowing our rights, willing to assert them, and to make sacrifices of present convenience to the end of securing their permanent possession.

In addition your committee recommend the passage of the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the character of Central College, in its principles, its ability and appointments, is such as we can cheerfully recommend to the support of the colored people.

Resolved, That the renewed evidence of firm adherence to the principle of the universal brotherhood of man, as given by the noble position maintained by that institution of learning known as "Central College," at McGrawville, Cortland county, which institution spurned the bribe held out to it by way of pecuniary aid from the State, on condition of the departure from its principles, entitles it to the full confidence and zealous support of every friend of impartial freedom.

WM. H. TOPP,
S. MYERS,
E. N. HALL,

Committee.

PETITION.

To the Legislature of the State of New-York :

Honorable Sirs,—A State Convention of the colored citizens of this State assembled at the Capitol in the city of Albany, on the 22d, 23d, and 24th of July, 1851; respectfully represent to your honorable body, that the Constitution of this State, in article 2d, sec. 1, burdens us with political inequalities, and deprives us of rights which the declared principles of our government hold to be natural and inalienable.

These invidious distinctions are unjust, and oppressive on the few that endure them,—ungenerous and anti-democratic in the masses that enforce them; as exhibited by the popular vote on the suffrage question in 1846.

We would further represent, that the colored citizens have ever been loyal to the government, and in the perilous times of 1812, when to shoulder a musket was to bare the breast to the weapon of an enemy; though placed by partial legislation beyond the compulsory power of the State, did with becoming promptness volunteer their services to defend our common country from the invasions and depredations of a ruthless and vindictive foe, and while by a mistaken stroke of political economy, the children of these volunteers are spurned and degraded, the successors of the very men who met them in mortal combat by sea and by land, you receive with open arms.

We submit gentlemen, that our proscription is unjust, and we appeal to your generosity as Americans—and your honor as men to do us justice in this matter.

By the reform convention of 1821, virtue and intelligence was made the elective basis to all white men, while the colored citizens in addition to being tramelled with the requirements of the old system, are doubly injured by the proscriptive character of the new, which impliedly places us beneath this elective basis,—encourages the baser feelings of the more favored class to be arrayed in opposition to us, and closes against us most of the avenues to emolument and honor.

The Constitution, in Article 13, sec. 1, provides for its amendment or alteration by the Legislature; we therefore respectfully, but earnestly pray your honorable body to repeal these anti-republican and proscriptive clauses of our State Constitution, and all others subjecting us to unequal restrictions, and as in duty we will ever pray.

W. P. McINTYRE, }
J. N. STILL, }
H. HICKS, } *Committee.*