

For this enthusiastic welcome, for the high and enviable honor which you do me this day, and for the kind sympathy which you thus manifest towards me, under peculiar and trying circumstances, I return you my most sincere thanks. I thank you from my heart. But, whilst I most cordially reciprocate those sentiments of mutual regard which it has pleased you to express towards me, it would be doing violence to my own judgement, I would pay but a poor compliment to your sagacity, if I regarded the flattering testimonial entirely as a mark of personal esteem. For—however warm may have been the esteem which I have had the honor of reciprocating with you, for no short space of time, still that could not have warranted you in offering, or me in accepting, a tribute of respect which is justly reserved for those who are highly distinguished in some one of the pursuits of life. It is something unusual then, gentlemen, that has collected you round this festive board. It is to notice an event—the first of the kind that has ever happened in your free and happy land. O, may it be the last! An event in which I was more immediately concerned, but by which your presence here evinces that you feel yourselves to have been intimately affected. I mean the refusal of a cabin passage from the Broomielaw to New York, which I met with from an American captain, for no other reason than a complexion, which is no fault of

*Dr. Smith.*—“For this enthusiastic welcome, for the high and enviable honor which you do me this day, and for the kind sympathy which you thus manifest towards me, under peculiar and trying circumstances, I return you my most sincere thanks. I thank you from my heart. But, whilst I most cordially reciprocate those sentiments of mutual regard which it has pleased you to express towards me, it would be doing violence to my own judgement, I would pay but a poor compliment to your sagacity, if I regarded the flattering testimonial entirely as a mark of personal esteem. For—however warm may have been the esteem which I have had the honor of reciprocating with you, for no short space of time, still that could not have warranted you in offering, or me in accepting, a tribute of respect which is justly reserved for those who are highly distinguished in some one of the pursuits of life. It is something unusual then, gentlemen, that has collected you round this festive board. It is to notice an event—the first of the kind that has ever happened in your free and happy land. O, may it be the last! An event in which I was more immediately concerned, but by which your presence here evinces that you feel yourselves to have been intimately affected. I mean the refusal of a cabin passage from the Broomielaw to New York, which I met with from an American captain, for no other reason than a complexion, which is no fault of

mine. A refusal, in making which he not only insulted me—(that I pity and forgive)—but also insulted those with whom I have had the delight of associating, during the last 5 years, in the time honored walls of your ancient University, and those with whom I have had the honor of interchanging the courtesies of private life, since I have been in this country. Indeed, he flung an insult on this great country, no native of which would deny the social board to any man on account of the color of his skin.

In this view of the compliment which you have been pleased to confer upon me, I most sincerely and cordially thank you for it. I thank you for the sake of that man who is the cause of it, and upon whom it is a calm and triumphant rebuke. I thank you for the sake of my countrymen—that part of them, especially, who participate in such an unholy prejudice—for it must prove to them that you, who also have a complexion as fair, if not fairer than their own—that you are not only free from such a prejudice, but glory in being free from it. And be assured, gentlemen, that so long as I live, the compliment you now confer, will never be forgotten by me. Nay, amid the many insults, which I go, perhaps, to meet in my own country—insults which harm not the body, but which “enter the soul,” the memory of this evening will be a pleasing and a cheerful recollection. And whether it be the

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prejudice of the public walks, or the prejudice of the public conveyance, or that other more frightful and fiend-like form of it, which stalks unbidden into the American sanctuary—be it any one of them, or all of them combined, that shall at any time distress or embitter my mind—be assured that this happy moment will cross my recollection as[,]

“A green spot in memory’s waste.”

and will cheer me on, not only to endure with patience the ‘proud man’s contumely,’ and the ‘oppressor’s scorn,’ but also will invigorate me to struggle for the downfall, the total extirpation of that prejudice, and its parent Slavery, from the otherwise glorious Republic of the West.

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Various other toasts were given, and excellent speeches delivered in the course of the evening.