

Mr. W. H. DAY, M. A., of Chatham, Canada West, (President of the General Board of Commissioners of the colored people, who sent out the Niger Valley exploring expedition), was then introduced, and delivered an address characterized by great power and eloquence. In the course of this remarks he referred to the great success which had attended the emancipation of 800,000 slaves in the West Indies, and said that with regard to the material prosperity of the country, all properties were now cultivated at a lower cost than under slavery. (Hear, hear.) Slavery was not merely an impoverishing, but a co[s]tly institution, and in Jamaica it was peculiarly costly, because the owners generally lived away from their property, and in their stead overseers, headmen, and others, had to be employed, and paid before they came to the ordinary [labourers], and this of course rendered cultivation more costly and the profits less. Now, however, the state of things had changed, and they were justified in saying that properties, which were [losing] matters before, were b[e]ing cultivated profitably and at less expense than under slavery. It might not b[e] known that slavery was so impoverishing that everywhere it cursed the soil upon which it was found. He had stood on the boarders of the Ohio river, and looked over into the slave land of Kentucky; he had seen the slaves driven from morning to night by the lash of the overseer, and in connection with this he saw the bare brown fields, although the labour was demanded at the price of the blood of the victim; but as he turned round he found on the free side of the river even the rock covered with vineyards, reminding him of the south of France. (Cheers.) And why, except that one was the land of slavery and the other of liberty? (Hear, hear.) Take Arkansas and Michigan—one a slave state and the other a free—both admitted into the Union in the same year. How was it that in the race for supremacy Michigan, the free state, had outstripped Arkansas, the slave state? In Virginia, too, where slavery existed, land sold at four dollars per acre, but in Pennsylvania, only divided from it by an imaginary line, free land sold for fifty dollars per acre? What was his argument?—that slavery impoverished the soil—(hear, hear)—and it did seem as if

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God had written it with His own almighty hand that the blood of the slave should be a blight to the soil, and that the slave's tramp should tread out the earth's vitality. (Hear, hear.) There was another great and important thing which had been accomplished; freedom had stepped in and stopped the overwhelming loss of human life. Slavery not merely impoverished the land, but it worked up the men, women, and children. In St. Annis, in 1817, the number of slaves returned was 317,230, but in 1838, when freedom really commenced (the four years of apprenticeship which began in 1831 having been terminated), there were only 310,368, or a decrease in the 21 years before freedom of 36,862 human beings, instead of an increase, as there ought to have been, of 100,000. Freedom stepped in and stopped that enormous decrease of human life—(applause)—and now they found the people increasing in proportion and in numbers more and more every year, just as they were progressing in other respects. (Cheers.) He felt, therefore, that they had a right to meet to celebrate the great work which was accomplished twenty-seven years ago. Not only for this purpose did they meet, but in the hope, if possible, of interesting their hearts in the welfare of the four millions of human beings, who were now suffering in the United States all the horrors and cruelties of the crowning despotism the world ever saw; and also to obtain their sympathy in their efforts to break down the slave system in America. (Cheers.) Mr. Day detailed at some length the indignities which were suffered by the coloured population even in the Free States; and after an eloquent denunciation of the cruelties of slavery, he said the question was, how were they to reach the system? They proposed to do so by means of the free fugitive slaves, and he would tell them briefly how. Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Troy, one at Toronto and the other at Windsor, were engaged preaching the Gospel, and also in supplying the bodily wants of those who escaped from slavery; and Mr. Johnson expected to be a medical missionary amongst the same people. They were now trying, by means of schools, chapels, the printing press, &c., to lift up these fugitive slaves, 50,000 of whom had gone into Canada. From them they hoped to obtain



a sufficient number of pioneers, who, with the lamp of liberty and the light of God's gospel, should go into Africa, the land of their fathers, and through the cotton, and palm oil, and dye-woods of that country lift the African continent and in a few years to produce a supply of cotton to set off against the American slave-grown cotton. They had sent commissioners into Africa—coloured men—(cheers)—who had been warmly received. They had made a treaty with the kings and chiefs of Abbeokuta and the neighbouring country for the land they required. They found a cotton country ten times as large in extent as that of the United States. (Hear, hear.) They also found that two crops could be grown yearly, instead of one; and that the plant required setting only once every seven years, instead of, as in the United States, every year. They also found a very industrious people, who did not require the lash to induce them to labour. Their Commissioners, moreover, found 35 miles of corn fields, stretching beyond like their grand western prairies, and showing the unbounded industry of the population. If they were thus enabled to create another cotton market, the price of cotton must come [down;] and if they were enabled to reduce it, say 1d. per lb., the slave-owners would be unable profitably to cultivate it. This was their plan; it might appear a long way round, but he believed it practicable, and, if carried out, would strike a fatal blow at the existence of slavery. (Applause.) Mr. Day [con]cluded by proposing the following resolution:—"That this meeting, whilst commemorating the abolition of slavery in our West Indian colonies, desires to express its conviction that [this] great experiment was a wise and righteous act—as the present-improved condition and the cheering prospects of our West Indian [possessions] most fully and satisfactorily show—and would [urge] the consideration of this great [fact] upon those countries where slavery still exists, inasmuch as it furnishes a powerful and [conclusive] argument in favour of emancipation."

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