

*Fellow Citizens of the United States:* — The Father of Mercies has given us an inheritance in a goodly land, and has scattered unnumbered blessings around us. He has given us a pleasant sky, and caused our fields to yield their fruits in abundance. The character of our institutions is such, that intelligence is disseminated among the majority of people. The Bible is placed in the hands of the free, and by an almost unanimous consent it is used as a school book. That sacred volume declares that “God is no respecter of persons,” and that “He has made of one blood all people.” In this land there are but a few who are unacquainted with the Declaration of American Independence, a paper which, in point of just sentiments, is held in respect next to the Bible, because it draws its leading principles from that book.

Here in this favored land, are thousands of ministers professing to be disciples of Him whose advent was to bring peace on earth and good will to men. From every valley I heard the voice of prayer, and songs of Zion ascending. There are a million of hearts among us that sympathize with the oppressed of every class in foreign lands. Uncounted treasures have been properly expended for the evangelization of the heathen abroad. When modern Greece stirred up her quenchless fires on the fields which had witnessed the exploits of her sons, when her name was potent, the American people hailed the event with joy. When Poland raised her arm against her oppressors, every heart wished her success, and when she could no longer contend

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against an unequal foe, you welcomed her exiled sons to your freer and more peaceful shores. You can point to the fields that have witnessed the most victorious achievements of our armies in the revolution. In the bosom of this soil rest the ashes of Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, and here are the tombs of Franklin, Adams, and Washington. So certain are we that we have a superiority over all other people, we have thrown aside a becoming modesty and proclaimed ourselves the freest nation of the earth.

But, fellow citizens, look at the truth. In the name of my brethren I entreat you not to turn from it with scorn, but view it calmly and fairly, however humiliating it may be to your national pride.

There are at this moment three millions of slaves in the United States. Merciful God, what a vast number is this! Our proud New England does not contain more inhabitants. Besides this number in actual slavery, there are more than a [ ...people of color in the non-slave-holding ...] scribed by law or abused by prejudice. Thus this government has place its feet upon the neck of three and a half millions of Africo-Americans. Where there has been one tear shed in consequence of the oppressions of our mother country, or the perils of the revolution, there have been a thousand shed on account of the bitterness of that slavery which you tolerate. And for every drop of blood poured out in defence of American liberty, you can be pointed to streams drawn from the lacerated bodies of the descendants of

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Africa.

During these hundred and twenty-five years, we have been doomed to suffer in this land all the cruelties common to a system of oppression, which in regard to wickedness, is not equalled by any in the world.

In consequence of this condition, a mighty overwhelming current of prejudice has set against us.

My brethren, many of whom are members of the church of Christ, are sold like beasts in the shambles, and every tie of relationship is ruthlessly torn asunder.

Sons have been compelled to behold the mothers who bore them, withering beneath the lash; aye and more, they have sometimes been forced to apply the scourge on the labor-broken frames of their aged parents.

Our sisters, daughters, and wives have been driven into prostitution, and concubinage, and their unhappy offspring have been sold by their Anglo-Saxon blood, the American slave law declares that the child shall follow the condition of its mother!

The Holy Bible is a sealed book to all the enslaved with a few exceptions. Hence they are the most unfortunate of all heathens. They sit in darkness while light surrounds them. They die of thirst while streams of salvation are flowing through the land.

In some parts of the country the most systematic efforts have been made to keep us in intellectual darkness; and the reason urged in favor

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Our sisters, daughters, and wives have been driven into prostitution, and concubinage, and their unhappy offspring have been sold by their unfeeling fathers; and in order to prevent these children from pleading the privileges of their Anglo-Saxon blood, the American slave law declares that the child shall follow the condition of its mother!

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of the course is, that knowledge would reveal our condition to us more plainly, and would therefore make us discontented.

Slaveholders and their apologists, say that we are ignorant and unprepared for freedom, and still they punish with imprisonment and death every attempt to prepare!

Our children that are born from day to day, and who might have as fair opportunity as any others to fill the most useful spheres in life, are thrown into the same ocean of degradation in which their father's rights have been engulfed.

The vast amount of mind which is crushed by the slavery maintained in this country, is the most fearful part of the system. It has deprived the land of at least two thousand educated ministers.

It has robbed us of our due proportions of professional men—physicians, lawyers, legislators, merchants, poets, and philosophers.

It has kept from the heathen three hundred missionaries.

It has given rise to prejudice, which proscribes us in church and in state.

All these inquiries are sanctioned by many of the professing Christians, and by many of the ministers in the land.

The government of the country is likewise against us, and the degradation of this class of American citizens is considered by our national law makers to be an object of their highest ambition.

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We complain that members of the church and

ministers thereof, many of whom are slaveholders, and dealers, and slavebreeders—are held in fellowship by the non-slaveholding portion of the church, notwithstanding it is generally acknowledged that their deeds are evil.

We complain that this connection with sin hinders the growth of pure and undefiled religion, and exposes the church to the ridicule of infidels.

We complain that the course of a large portion of the church furnishes the state with an excuse for the wrongs which it inflicts upon us.

WE complain that we are subjected to all these misfortunes and oppressions, without any crime whatever. Yes, we are hated without a cause!

In the name of humanity—for the sake of justice—in view of an approaching judgment—and in the name of an eternal God, we demand redress for these wrongs.

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We complain that those who sit in Moses's seat do not rebuke this sin in the spirit of Jesus Christ—but rather cry Peace, peace, where there is no peace.

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