

April 15, 1852
Johnson, H[enry] W.
Frederick Douglass' Paper

MR. PRESIDENT: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

—Perhaps I ought to apologise for presuming to occupy one moment of the precious time of this Convention, after the able and eloquent address, to which all have listened with so much pleasure and admiration. I am not so vain as to suppose that anything I can say will add to the interest which has already been excited. I feel that there lies before me a fearful task, and, were I to consult my own feelings, most gladly would I shrink from an attempt to perform it. Indeed, I could not expect to be heard with any degree of patience. Therefore, I am unwilling, with my own harsh and grating notes, to break that magic spell with which this audience has been bound.

The only ground upon which I claim your indulgence is, the fact that I sustain a near relation to those toiling millions in whose behalf that eloquent voice has been unlifted here to-night.

The few remarks I propose to make, will be upon the resolution which has just been read in your hearing. Sir, the subject embraced in this resolution, is one of great and absorbing interest to that unfortunate class with which I am identified in this country.— And the simple fact that we are called upon seriously to consider a proposition of this nature, presents to my mind a sad and melancholy picture of the dark and perilous times in which we live; and that, too, in a country boasting of the freedom of its institutions

MR. PRESIDENT: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:
—Perhaps I ought to apologise for presuming to occupy one moment of the precious time of this Convention, after the able and eloquent address, to which all have listened with so much pleasure and admiration. I am not so vain as to suppose that anything I can say will add to the interest which has already been excited. I feel that there lies before me a fearful task, and, were I to consult my own feelings, most gladly would I shrink from an attempt to perform it. Indeed, I could not expect to be heard with any degree of patience. Therefore, I am unwilling, with my own harsh and grating notes, to break that magic spell with which this audience has been bound.

The only ground upon which I claim your indulgence is, the fact that I sustain a near relation to those toiling millions in whose behalf that eloquent voice has been unlifted here to-night.

The few remarks I propose to make, will be upon the resolution which has just been read in your hearing. Sir, the subject embraced in this resolution, is one of great and absorbing interest to that unfortunate class with which I am identified in this country.— And the simple fact that we are called upon seriously to consider a proposition of this nature, presents to my mind a sad and melancholy picture of the dark and perilous times in which we live; and that, too, in a country boasting of the freedom of its institutions

and the superiority of its laws. But, sir, if nothing else is gained from the consideration of this subject, it will lead to the disclosure of one important fact that will expose our country to the jeers and taunts of the despots of every land, and hold her up to the contemptuous gaze of the civilized world!

It will tend more fully to develop the astounding fact, that, in the name of liberty, there exists in this country the most odious despotism that ever stained the dark annals of a nation's crimes, or crippled the energies, crushed the hopes, and blighted the fairest prospects of an oppressed and bleeding race!

Sir, it is a wonderful coincidence, that, while this whole nation seems to rise, as one man, in vindication of the rights of a foreign people—while illustrious exiles are welcomed to our shores and offered an asylum here—while a nation's tears water the grave in which lie buried the crushed hopes of a distant nation—the mangled form of Hungarian liberty—we are called upon gravely to consider whether native-born citizens of the country, guilty of no crime, except wearing the dark skin given them by their Creator, or of being the descendants of those who, for more than two hundred years, have been the victims of the most cruel wrongs, shall, in consequence of wrongs so grievous and oppressions too intolerable to be borne, be

and the superiority of its laws. But, sir, if nothing else is gained from the consideration of this subject, it will lead to the disclosure of one important fact that will expose our country to the jeers and taunts of the despots of every land, and hold her up to the contemptuous gaze of the civilized world !

It will tend more fully to develop the astounding fact, that, in the name of liberty, there exists in this country the most odious despotism that ever stained the dark annals of a nation's crimes, or crippled the energies, crushed the hopes, and blighted the fairest prospects of an oppressed and bleeding race!

Sir, it is a wonderful coincidence, that, while this whole nation seems to rise, as one man, in vindication of the rights of a foreign people—while illustrious exiles are welcomed to our shores and offered an asylum here—while a nation's tears water the grave in which lie buried the crushed hopes of a distant nation—the mangled form of Hungarian liberty—we are called upon gravely to consider whether native-born citizens of the country, guilty of no crime, except wearing the dark skin given them by their Creator, or of being the descendants of those who, for more than two hundred years, have been the victims of the most cruel wrongs, shall, in consequence of wrongs so grievous and oppressions too intolerable to be borne, be

forced to abandon their native country and seek a home in a foreign land, in order to escape from evils here, compared with which even the wrongs of Hungary rise to the dignity of the blessings of protection and freedom; or whether they shall remain upon the soil, continue to endure the wrongs, suffer on, and go down to their graves, perhaps, leaving no other legacy to their children but a continuation of their sorrows and the prospects of a dark and dreary future.

This, sir, is the great question now presented to the fifty thousand free colored citizens of the country, and, great and momentous as it is, I believe we are fully prepared to meet it now. After the most mature deliberation, after a cool and calm reflection, in view of all the perils with which we are surrounded, we are prepared to declare to the American people and the world, that we intend to remain upon this soil, to cling to our native country, and never to abandon the noble struggle in which we are now engaged, while a slave is left to clank his chains on the American soil.

In forming this resolution, we have not overlooked the fact that these are days of darkness and gloom; that clouds, "dark and lowering," seem to hang over the fairest prospects of freedom in this country, and which, to the eye of the superficial observer, seem to obscure the last lingering ray of hope.

forced to abandon their native country and seek a home in a foreign land, in order to escape from evils here, compared with which even the wrongs of Hungary rise to the dignity of the blessings of protection and freedom; or whether they shall remain upon the soil, continue to endure the wrongs, suffer on, and go down to their graves, perhaps, leaving no other legacy to their children but a continuation of their sorrows and the prospects of a dark and dreary future.

This, sir, is the great question now presented to the fifty thousand free colored citizens of the country, and, great and momentous as it is, I believe we are fully prepared to meet it now. After the most mature deliberation, after a cool and calm reflection, in view of all the perils with which we are surrounded, we are prepared to declare to the American people and the world, that we intend to remain upon this soil, to cling to our native country, and never to abandon the noble struggle in which we are now engaged, while a slave is left to clank his chains on the American soil.

In forming this resolution, we have not overlooked the fact that these are days of darkness and gloom; that clouds, "dark and lowering," seem to hang over the fairest prospects of freedom in this country, and which, to the eye of the superficial observer, seem to obscure the last lingering ray of hope.

Sir, I confess the times seem to portend great and appalling evil to my much afflicted race; therefore, I am not inclined to censure those among us who, despairing of success, are ready to abandon the struggle in which they are now engaged, to turn their backs upon their country and, after shaking the dust from their feet, as a witness against her, to bid adieu to this land forever.

Alas! sir, I have not escaped the blighting and withering effects of my country's prescriptive policy; but, in consequence thereof, have been driven to the very borders of despair. But, I thank my God the days of my despondence are gone. The rainbow of hope encircles the heavens, and its bright hues are visible to me, even through the darkness that overshadows the horizon of my country.

Therefore, I have resolved to buckle on my armor, to renew and continue the great struggle for the elevation of our race, and the liberation of my enslaved countrymen, until the banner of freedom shall wave in triumph over the last refugee from tyranny in our common country.

But, sir, the fact cannot be denied that there are many in our ranks who despair of the ultimate triumphs of our cause, and who, instead of attempting to avert, seem to lower beneath the storm, and flee in terror from the approaching tempest. Sir, this will not answer. If we expect to succeed, if

Sir, I confess the times seem to portend great and appalling evil to my much afflicted race; therefore, I am not inclined to censure those among us who, despairing of success,

are ready to abandon the struggle in which they are now engaged, to turn their backs upon their country and, after shaking the dust from their feet, as a witness against her, to bid adieu to this land forever.

Alas ! sir, I have not escaped the blighting and withering effects of my country's prescriptive policy; but, in consequence thereof, have been driven to the very borders of despair. But, I thank my God the days of my despondence are gone. The rainbow of hope encircles the heavens, and its bright hues are visible to me, even through the darkness that overshadows the horizon of my country.

Therefore, I have resolved to buckle on my armor, to renew and continue the great struggle for the elevation of our race, and the liberation of my enslaved countrymen, until the banner of freedom shall wave in triumph over the last refugee from tyranny in our common country.

But, sir, the fact cannot be denied that there are many in our ranks who despair of the ultimate triumphs of our cause, and who, instead of attempting to avert, seem to lower beneath the storm, and flee in ~~terror~~ from the approaching tempest. Sir, this will not answer. If we expect to succeed, if

we mean to triumph, we must breast this storm like men determined to be free—bear its loudest thunders, and be unmoved by the terrors with which we are surrounded.— Then, and not till then, will we be enabled, with the broad flash and bright sunlight of truth, to scatter the gloom that enshrouds the fairest prospects of my injured race.

Sir, it seems to be the settled policy of the slave power of this country to completely discourage the friends of freedom, and to force them to abandon all future efforts for the liberation of the slave. And, sir, I fear it has been already too successful in this respect. For he who believes, with James G. Birney, that the struggle in which the free colored people of this country are now engaged for equal rights and the elevation of their race on the American soil is hopeless, must also despair of the liberation of the slave. For deplorable as our condition is, cheerless as our prospects are, they certainly cannot be worse than those of the slave. If we cannot triumph, alas! for our brethren in bonds.

Sir, the doctrine of the American Colonization Society is, that the prejudice existing against the free colored people of this country is natural, inborn, and that no lapse of time, or change of circumstances, can ever

we mean to triumph, we must breast this storm like men determined to be free—bear its loudest thunders, and be unmoved by the terrors with which we are surrounded.— Then, and not till then, will we be enabled, with the broad flash and bright sunlight of truth, to scatter the gloom that enshrouds the fairest prospects of my injured race.

Sir, it seems to be the settled policy of the slave power of this country to completely discourage the friends of freedom, and to force them to abandon all future efforts for the liberation of the slave. And, sir, I fear it has been already too successful in this respect. For he who believes, with James G. Birney, that the struggle in which the free colored people of this country are now engaged for equal rights and the elevation of their race on the American soil is hopeless, must also despair of the liberation of the slave. For deplorable as our condition is, cheerless as our prospects are, they certainly cannot be worse than those of the slave. If we cannot triumph, alas! for our brethren in bonds.

Sir, the doctrine of the American Colonization Society is, that the prejudice existing against the free colored people of this country is natural, inborn, and that no lapse of time, or change of circumstances, can ever

eradicate this feeling from the breasts of the whites. Hence, we are told that we can never rise to the dignity of freemen here; that we can never surmount the obstacles that lie in our pathway, and impede the progress of our elevation; that we can never live upon this soil upon terms of perfect equality with the whites; that we must always occupy a subordinate position, remain a degraded class, and be "hewers of wood and drawers of water." But that if we wish to be men, and aspire to the dignity of freemen, we must abandon forever our native soil, and go back to our fatherland, where we, "who are so low, so humble and so debased." that we can never rise to a common level with the more favored of our fellow-citizens here, the moment our feet press the soil of that ill-fated land, will be immediately transformed into a nation of intelligent and high-minded freemen, destined by the immortal God to spread religion and law over that vast continent, light and civilization throughout those dark and benighted regions.— Hitherto, this doctrine has met with the united opposition of the free colored people of this country; but now there are indications of a disposition on the part of some to yield in a measure to the force of this sentiment.

This doctrine has been preached so long, and with such bare-faced effrontery and unblushing audacity, and inimitable perseverance, that many are inclined to receive it as

eradicate this feeling from the breasts of the whites. Hence, we are told that we can never rise to the dignity of freemen here; that we can never surmount the obstacles that lie in our pathway, and impede the progress of our elevation; that we can never live upon this soil upon terms of perfect equality with the whites; that we must always occupy a subordinate position, remain a degraded class, and be "hewers of wood and drawers of water." But that if we wish to be men, and aspire to the dignity of freemen, we must abandon forever our native soil, and go back to our fatherland, where we, "who are so low, so humble and so debased." that we can never rise to a common level with the more favored of our fellow-citizens here, the moment our feet press the soil of that ill-fated land, will be immediately transformed into a nation of intelligent and high-minded freemen, destined by the immortal God to spread religion and law over that vast continent, light and civilization throughout those dark and benighted regions.— Hitherto, this doctrine has met with the united opposition of the free colored people of this country; but now there are indications of a disposition on the part of some to yield in a measure to the force of this sentiment.

This doctrine has been preached so long, and with such bare-faced effrontery and unblushing audacity, and inimitable perseverance, that many are inclined to receive it as

truth.

I, sir, do not belong to this number.— They who maintain that we can never rise to the dignity of freemen here, draw their conclusions from the present state of public sentiment in this country, and especially as manifested by the enactment of those odious and oppressive laws of which we have been, and still are, the bleeding victims. In the first place, we are reminded of the fact that all are identified with a class of men who occupy a low and degraded position in this country. In the next place, as an evidence of the feeling against us, our attention is called to the odious Fugitive Slave Bill and all the inhuman atrocities that follow in its train. Then a dark and dreary picture is drawn of our present condition in this country, of thousands of our broken-hearted race fleeing in terror from their land, of others wandering in exile in a foreign country, subsisting on the bread of charity. Then we are referred to the constitution of Indiana, which prohibits free colored citizens of other states from settling within its borders—of a proposition before the Legislature of Pennsylvania and Ohio, having a similar object in view, and are reminded of the fact that the whole power of this government will be brought into requisition to crush us.

Sir, I am not unconscious of all these things. On the contrary, I believe it to be

truth.

I, sir, do not belong to this number.— They who maintain that we can never rise to the dignity of freemen here, draw their conclusions from the present state of public sentiment in this country, and especially as manifested by the enactment of those odious and oppressive laws of which we have been, and still are, the bleeding victims. In the first place, we are reminded of the fact that all are identified with a class of men who occupy a low and degraded position in this country. In the next place, as an evidence of the feeling against us, our attention is called to the odious Fugitive Slave Bill and all the inhuman atrocities that follow in its train. Then a dark and dreary picture is drawn of our present condition in this country, of thousands of our broken-hearted race fleeing in terror from their land, of others wandering in exile in a foreign country, subsisting on the bread of charity. Then we are referred to the constitution of Indiana, which prohibits free colored citizens of other states from settling within its borders—of a proposition before

the Legislature of Pennsylvania and Ohio, having a similar object in view, and are reminded of the fact that the whole power of this government will be brought into requisition to crush us.

Sir, I am not unconscious of all these things. On the contrary, I believe it to be

April 15, 1852
Johnson, H[enry] W.
Frederick Douglass' Paper

the settled policy of the slave power in this country, to either reduce us to the condition of the slave, or force us from the soil!

But, sir, there is a power mightier than the slave power of this country, within the seat of which, I cast the anchor of my hopes!

Mr. President, I am happy to say, that, notwithstanding all the discouragements with which we are surrounded, but few, if any, of the free colored citizens of this country, have so far yielded to the solicitations of the American Colonization Society, as to express even a reluctant consent to go to Liberia.— Therefore, I assume that our sentiments in reference to the principles, measures and objects of this Society, are unchanged—that any attempt, either on the part of this Society or the Government of the United States, to induce us, by persuasion or threats, or to force us from the soil, will meet with the stern, united and determined resistance of the free colored people of this country.

But sir, judging from a resolution recently adopted at a Convention of colored men, held at Cincinnati, and other manifestations of the kind, I perceive that many among us are discouraged, and despair, not of the ultimate triumph of our cause, but of living themselves to reap the fruits of that triumph.

In their estimation, the prejudices with which they have to contend, are too obsti-

the settled policy of the slave power in this country, to either reduce us to the condition of the slave, or force us from the soil !

But, sir, there is a power mightier than the slave power of this country, within the seat of which, I cast the anchor of my hopes !

Mr. President, I am happy to say, that, notwithstanding all the discouragements with which we are surrounded, but few, if any, of the free colored citizens of this country, have so far yielded to the solicitations of the American Colonization Society, as to express even a reluctant consent to go to Liberia.— Therefore, I assume that our sentiments in reference to the principles, measures and objects of this Society, are unchanged—that any attempt, either on the part of this Society or the Government of the United States, to induce us, by persuasion or threats, or to force us from the soil, will meet with the stern, united and determined resistance of the free colored people of this country.

But sir, judging from a resolution recently adopted at a Convention of colored men, held at Cincinnati, and other manifestations of the kind, I perceive that many among us are discouraged, and 'despair, not of the ultimate triumph of our cause, but of living themselves to reap the fruits of that triumph.

In their estimation, the prejudices with which they have to contend, are too obsti-

nate, the power arrayed against them too formidable, and the period of their triumph too remote!

Evidently, sir, these are not the men demanded by the spirit of the age in which we live. Sir, the times call for men made of sterner-stuff, for stout hearts and nerves of steel, for "heroes among our race!" And, shall the future historian record the fact, that among a population of 500,000 free colored citizens of the United States, this call was made in vain? No! No!! No!!!

Mr. chairman, I believe that the great battle for our rights and liberties must be fought on the American soil! And sir, he who is unwilling to remain, and continue the great moral struggle for our rights and liberties here, would be the first, to abandon, and the last to defend them when the assailed upon a foreign soil! The same reasons that would induce him to flee from oppression here, would also cause him to flee, when threatened by tyranny abroad.

Only have it understood that we belong to a race of men who, instead of attempting to breast the storm, run at the first sight of approaching despotism, and, sir, tyranny will haunt us, like "wandering fugitives," over the entire globe, until there is not a green spot, beneath the broad canopy of Heaven, upon which we can plant our feet, to battle against the legions of tyranny!

Sir, they who are unwilling to engage in a

nate, the power arrayed against them too formidable, and the period of their triumph too remote!

Evidently, sir, these are not the men demanded by the spirit of the age in which we live. Sir, the times call for men made of sterner-stuff, for stout hearts and nerves of steel, for "heroes among our race!" And, shall the future historian record the fact, that among a population of 500,000 free colored citizens of the United States, this call was made in vain? No! No!! No!!!

Mr. chairman, I believe that the great battle for our rights and liberties must be fought on the American soil! And sir, he who is unwilling to remain, and continue the great moral struggle for our rights and liberties here, would be the first, to abandon, and the last to defend them when assailed upon a

foreign soil! The same reasons that would induce him to flee from oppression here, would also cause him to flee, when threatened by tyranny abroad.

Only have it understood that we belong to a race of men who, instead of attempting to breast the storm, run at the first sight of approaching despotism, and, sir, tyranny will haunt us, like "wandering fugitives," over the entire globe, until there is not a green spot, beneath the broad canopy of Heaven, upon which we can plant our feet, to battle against the legions of tyranny!

Sir, they who are unwilling to engage in a

great moral contest for their rights and liberties, on their own soil, surrounded by their native hills, and animated by the very dust rising from the graves of their honored sires—sires who nobly fell in defense of liberty!—and who, in the darkest hours of our country's peril, side by side with the fathers of our oppressors, nobly breasted the storm of war, bared their bosoms to the steel, greeted death with a smile, and poured out their blood-like water on the American soil to fertilize a land of liberty. If the descendants of such men are not willing to engage in a great moral contest, to preach, pray, write and speak in defense of freedom, to endure the jeers and taunts, and encounter the prejudices of the enemies of liberty, for the sake of liberty here, on our own soil, they are not worthy to enjoy it in a foreign land, where it has been won by the christian's prayers, and wrung from the tyrant's grasp by the patriots toil.

Sir, we are told by our desponding friends that after all the efforts of the philanthropist, after all the time that has been consumed, money expended, talents employed and prayers that have been offered in our behalf, our condition is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago; that our cause is retrograding, instead of advancing; that new dangers await us in the future; that, however firm our stand, determined our resistance, or noble our struggle, we must be overwhelmed at last; that our oppress-

great moral contest for their rights and liberties, on their own soil, surrounded by their native hills, and animated by the very dust rising from the graves of their honored sires—sires who nobly fell in defense of liberty!—and who, in the darkest hours of our country's peril, side by side with the fathers of our oppressors, nobly breasted the storm of war, bared their bosoms to the steel, greeted death with a smile, and poured out their blood-like water on the American soil to fertilize a land of liberty. If the descendants of such men are not willing to engage in a great moral contest, to preach, pray, write and speak in defense of freedom, to endure the jeers and taunts, and encounter the prejudices of the enemies of liberty, for the sake of liberty here, on our own soil, they are not worthy to enjoy it in a foreign land, where it has been won by the christian's prayers, and wrung from the tyrant's grasp by the patriots toil.

Sir, we are told by our desponding friends that after all the efforts of the philanthropist, after all the time that has been consumed, money expended, talents employed and prayers that have been offered in our behalf, our condition is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago; that our cause is retrograding, instead of advancing; that new dangers await us in the future; that, however firm our stand, determined our resistance, or noble our struggle, we must be overwhelmed at last; that our oppress-

ors have the will to crush us, and the power to execute that will.

Well, sir, be it so. But shall we turn at the bare sight of tyranny? Shall we flee before we have convinced the world that we are in earnest—that we are worthy of freedom? Shall we imitate the disgraceful example of the Indiana regiment, which, at the battle of Buena Vista, fled at the bare sight of the Mexicans, without giving them a chance to try their courage, or to measure their glittering blades? No! ask us not to imitate this disgraceful example. It is only worthy of Indiana. Why, sir, I do not wonder that Indiana is anxious to drive all the black men from her borders. My only surprise is, that long since a law has not been passed there expelling all the rest of the brave men from the State, leaving none behind but cowards, who, instead of facing their country's foe, turn their backs upon a Mexican.—Why, sir, ignorant as are a large portion of her inhabitants, (for I believe the census shows that there are more untutored whites in that State than can be found in any other free state;) I repeat, ignorant as they are, they have certainly learned one fact—that is, that a dastardly act like this, black men never have, nor never can be made to do.

No! black men never have been guilty of the crime of turning their backs upon their country's foe; but have always been found in the front ranks of the contest, "where

ors have the will to crush us, and the power to execute that will.

Well, sir, be it so. But shall we turn at the bare sight of tyranny? Shall we flee before we have convinced the world that we are in earnest—that we are worthy of freedom? Shall we imitate the disgraceful example of the Indiana regiment, which, at the battle of Buena Vista, fled at the bare sight of the Mexicans, without giving them a

chance to try their courage, or to measure their glittering blades? No! ask us not to imitate this disgraceful example. It is only worthy of Indiana. Why, sir, I do not wonder that Indiana is anxious to drive all the black men from her borders. My only surprise is, that long since a law has not been passed there expelling all the rest of the brave men from the State, leaving none behind but cowards, who, instead of facing their country's foe, turn their backs upon a Mexican.—Why, sir, ignorant as are a large portion of her inhabitants, (for I believe the census shows that there are more untutored whites in that State than can be found in any other free state;) I repeat, ignorant as they are, they have certainly learned one fact—that is, that a dastardly act like this, black men never have, nor never can be made to do.

No! black men never have been guilty of the crime of turning their backs upon their country's foe; but have always been found in the front ranks of the contest, "where

the blows fall thick and heavy;" and those who have survived the conflict, "have come forth covered with honorable scars, all in front, on their broad bosoms and their manly brows.

Sir, I repeat, shall we imitate the example of the Indiana regiment, which fled at the sight of a Mexican, and run at the first sight of approaching despotism? No! planting our feet on the rock of eternal truth, we will breast this storm like men, bid defiance to oppression's power, and only bow our heads in humble submission to the unalterable decrees of fate.

Mr. Chairman, we are told it is madness to attempt to stem this tide of despotism, with which we are now threatened to be overwhelmed. Well, sir, we can at least show that there is some method in our madness.

Sir, I have never doubted that everything would be done that will tend to discourage us; that our pathway to freedom is beset with thorns, and leads through great tribulations; that new dangers await us in the future.

What, sir, if all this be true? Suppose we are imprisoned like Torry, Drayton, Sayres and others, who have been immured in the massive walls of a gloomy dungeon for the sake of liberty; can we not bear it as well as they? Suppose we are scourged, like Dresser at Nashville; are our backs better than his? Branded like Walker; did not the same God make our hands that made his?

the blows fall thick and heavy;" and those who have survived the conflict, "have come forth covered with honorable scars, all in front, on their broad bosoms and their manly brows.

Sir, I repeat, shall we imitate the example of the Indiana regiment, which fled at the sight of a Mexican, and run at the first sight of approaching despotism? No! planting our feet on the rock of eternal truth, we will breast this storm like men, bid defiance to oppression's power, and only bow our heads in humble submission to the unalterable decrees of fate.

Mr. Chairman, we are told it is madness to attempt to stem this tide of despotism, with which we are now threatened to be overwhelmed. Well, sir, we can at least show that there is some method in our madness.

Sir, I have never doubted that everything would be done that will tend to discourage us; that our pathway to freedom is beset with thorns, and leads through great tribulations; that new dangers await us in the future.

What, sir, if all this be true? Suppose we are imprisoned like Torry, Drayton, Sayres and others, who have been immured in the massive walls of a gloomy dungeon for the sake of liberty; can we not bear it as well as they? Suppose we are scourged, like Dresser at Nashville; are our backs better than his? Branded like Walker; did not the same God make our hands that made his?

Or, suppose we are murdered, like Lovejoy at Alton; is our life dearer, or our blood more precious than his? No! Think you, then, that we are not willing to endure for our own freedom as much as our friends have voluntarily suffered for us? Why, Mr. Chairman, all history proclaims the fact that the road of an oppressed people to liberty, lies through a dreary wilderness and a thorny desert, up hill, up stream, and against a strong current. But, by unyielding and uncompromising devotion to principle, untiring energy, undaunted courage and indomitable perseverance, they have always been able to pierce that deep, unbroken wilderness, traverse that thorny desert, scale that lofty summit, stem that impetuous torrent, and arrive in safety at the fair haven of liberty. Think you, then, sir, that, with such illustrious examples before us, we are to be intimidated by threats or discouraged by bonds? No!

Mr. President, abolitionists, yes, James G. Birney among them—would to God that my feeble voice could reach his ears to-night!—yes, you, James G. Birney, have whispered in the ears of the free colored people of this country the words of encouragement and hope. Oh! do not now tell us the chilling tale that there is an insurmountable barrier between our wilderness of oppression and wrong, and the promised land of freedom and equal rights. Tell us, if you please,

Or, suppose we are inured, like Lovejoy at Alton; is our life dearer, or our blood more precious than this? No! Think you,

then, that we are not willing to endure for our own freedom as much as our friends have voluntarily suffered for us? Why, Mr. Chairman, all history proclaims the fact that the road of an oppressed people to liberty, lies through a dreary wilderness and a thorny desert, up hill, up stream, and against a strong current. But, by unyielding and uncompromising devotion to principle, untiring energy, undaunted courage and indomitable perseverance, they have always been able to pierce that deep, unbroken wilderness, traverse that thorny desert, scale that lofty summit, stem that impetuous torrent, and arrive in safety at the fair haven of liberty. Think you, then, sir, that, with such illustrious examples before us, we are to be intimidated by threats or discouraged by bonds? No!

Mr. President, abolitionists, yes, James G. Birney among them—would to God that my feeble voice could reach his ears to-night!—yes, you, James G. Birney, have whispered in the ears of the free colored people of this country the words of encouragement and hope. Oh! do not now tell us the chilling tale that there is an insurmountable barrier between our wilderness of oppression and wrong, and the promised land of freedom and equal rights. Tell us, if you please,

that there is a Jordan, over whose stormy banks we must pass, and between which there flows a purple stream. But, ah! let us cherish the fond hope that, when we have passed that crimson tide and reached the opposite shore, we stand on the Canaan of liberty.

Mr. President, whatever ills may befall us, even if every friend desert us, solitary and alone, we will continue the struggle in which we are now engaged for the elevation of our race, and the restoration of our plundered rights and liberties on the American soil.— And, sir, if we are overwhelmed in the contest, if we are borne down in the conflict, if we fall in the struggle, like our fathers who fell before us in the great struggle for American liberty, we will greet death with a smile, and with our last breath utter a prayer for the elevation of our race and the liberation of our enslaved countrymen—bequeath our bones as a sacred legacy to our children, that they may know that “their fathers preferred to die freemen than live to be slaves.”

And, sir, over our graves will spring up no noxious weeds of tyranny; but there will bloom a lovely flower, whose fragrance, like incense from the altar of liberty, will be caught up by the winds of heaven, and wafted to every clime where freedom weeps over the fall of her noblest sons.

Over our graves will spring up a noble sapling of liberty, with its roots buried deep in

that there is a Jordan, over whose stormy banks we must pass, and between which there flows a purple stream. But, ah! let us cherish the fond hope that, when we have passed that crimson tide and reached the opposite shore, we stand on the Canaan of liberty.

Mr. President, whatever ills may befall us, even if every friend desert us, solitary and alone, we will continue the struggle in which we are now engaged for the elevation of our race, and the restoration of our plundered rights and liberties on the American soil.— And, sir, if we are overwhelmed in the contest, if we are borne down in the conflict, if we fall in the struggle, like our fathers who fell before us in the great struggle for American liberty, we will greet death with a smile, and with our last breath utter a prayer for the elevation of our race and the liberation of our enslaved countrymen—bequeath our bones as a sacred legacy to our children, that they may know that “their fathers preferred to die freemen than live to be slaves.”

And, sir, over our graves will spring up no noxious weeds of tyranny; but there will bloom a lovely flower, whose fragrance, like incense from the altar of liberty, will be caught up by the winds of heaven, and

wafted to every clime where freedom weeps over the fall of her noblest sons.

Over our graves will spring up a noble sapling of liberty, with its roots buried deep in

the soil, and which, strengthened with our ashes and watered with our blood, will grow and flourish there, until its stately head towers in grandeur to the heavens, until its broad branches, extending far and wide over our country, will form one beautiful shade, beneath which may repose, in peace, happiness and safety, a nation of freemen.

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot believe that the immortal God has in reserve for us such awful calamities as are seen through the distorted visions of our desponding friends. Sir, I believe there is a sunny side to this picture. Dark and dreary as are the times in which we live, the star of hope twinkles through the gloom. Sir, it is not true that our condition is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago. What! shall we be told that the condition of the colored people of the State of New York is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago, when they were slaves? Sir, the idea is preposterous.

Mr. Chairman, can it be true that, while all the world has advanced, we alone have remained stationary, or retrograded, instead of advancing? Is there no perceptible difference between our condition now and 25 years ago? Have we made no progress? Have we not risen in the scale of elevation? Have we not advanced, despite all the obstacles have been thrown across our pathway, to impede the progress of our elevation?—

the soil, and which, strengthened with our ashes and watered with our blood, will grow and flourish there, until its stately head towers in grandeur to the heavens, until its broad branches, extending far and wide over our country, will form one beautiful shade, beneath which may repose, in peace, happiness and safety, a nation of freemen.

Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot believe that the immortal God has in reserve for us such awful calamities as are seen through the distorted visions of our desponding friends. Sir, I believe there is a sunny side to this picture. Dark and dreary as are the times in which we live, the star of hope twinkles through the gloom. Sir, it is not true that our condition is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago. What! shall we be told that the condition of the colored people of the State of New York is worse to-day than it was seventy years ago, when they were slaves? Sir, the idea is preposterous.

Mr. Chairman, can it be true that, while all the world has advanced, we alone have remained stationary, or retrograded, instead of advancing? Is there no perceptible difference between our condition now and 25 years ago? Have we made no progress? Have we not risen in the scale of elevation? Have we not advanced, despite all the obstacles have been thrown across our pathway, to impede the progress of our elevation?—

Sir, twenty-five years ago, how many such men had we in our ranks as Douglass, Garnet, Ward, Remond and others whose mighty powers are destined to shake this nation to its very center upon this subject? Sir, they were almost as scarce as angel's visits are to the pulpits of the slaveholding christians at the South, and especially to those of the pro-slavery Doctors of Divinity at the North. Neither is it true that the cause of freedom is retrograding instead of advancing in this country.

Contrast the present with the past. Has our cause made no progress during the last twenty years? Go back to a former period. What, sir, was the condition of our country twenty years ago in reference to this subject, when William Lloyd Garrison first raised his trumpet-toned voice of freedom in behalf of the down-trodden, crushed and bleeding slave? Nothing but cold and unfaltering indifference was manifested in regard to this subject by the great mass of the American people. Scarcely one pulsation of the great American heart beat in unison with those that throbbed in his own generous bosom.

Well, sir, has nothing been gained by the discussion of this subject? Has our cause made no progress? Has no change been produced in the public sentiment of this country. Have no inroads been made upon dark and benighted oppression in our coun-

Sir, twenty-five years ago, how many such men had we in our ranks as Douglass, Garnet, Ward, Remond and others whose mighty powers are destined to shake this nation to its very center upon this subject? Sir, they were almost as scarce as angel's visits are to the pulpits of the slaveholding christians at the South, and especially to those of the pro-slavery Doctors of Divinity at the North. Neither is it true that the cause of freedom is retrograding instead of advancing in this country.

Contrast the present with the past. Has our cause made no progress during the last twenty years? Go back to a former period. What, sir, was the condition of our country twenty years ago in reference to this subject, when William Lloyd Garrison first raised his trumpet-toned voice of freedom in behalf of the down-trodden, crushed and bleeding slave? Nothing but cold and unfaltering indifference was manifested in regard to this subject by the great mass of the

American people. Scarcely one pulsation of the great American heart beat in unison with those that throbbed in his own generous bosom.

Well, sir, has nothing been gained by the discussion of this subject? Has our cause made no progress? Has no change been produced in the public sentiment of this country. Have no inroads been made upon dark and benighted oppression in our coun-

April 15, 1852
Johnson, H[enry] W.
Frederick Douglass' Paper

try? Why, sir, this subject, scarcely mentioned twenty-five years ago, is now the great absorbing topic of the age. It is discussed everywhere, on all our great thoroughfares. It divides our parties, makes our presidents. It is proclaimed from the pulpit, agitates the Senate, and shakes the nation.

Why, sir, even John C. Calhoun, that arch defender of slavery, that man who exhausted all the powers of a great and splendid intellect in defense of slavery, whose locks had become whitened, and brow wrinkled in its defense, was standing on the verge of the grave, was compelled to confess to the American Senate, the American people, and the whole civilized world, that the little spark of freedom which has been snatched from amid dying embers, and fanned into a lurid flame, by the hand of the immortal Garrison, is now blazing on almost every hill in this broad land.

Sir, shall the friends of freedom despair, while the advocates of slavery are discouraged. Have abolitionists read history in vain? have they learned no lessons from the experience of the past? Sir, in every age, freedom has seen her dreary hours. Her whole history presents one grand series of noble struggles for existence. Brilliant have been her triumphs—glorious her achievements! Yet, sir, she has seen her days of darkness and gloom, and her votaries have been driven to the very borders of despair.

try? Why, sir, this subject, scarcely mentioned twenty-five years ago, is now the great absorbing topic of the age. It is discussed everywhere, on all our great thoroughfares. It divides our parties, makes our presidents. It is proclaimed from the pulpit, agitates the Senate, and shakes the nation.

Why, sir, even John C. Calhoun, that arch defender of slavery, that man who exhausted all the powers of a great and splendid intellect in defense of slavery, whose locks had become whitened, and brow wrinkled in its defense, was standing on the verge of the grave, was compelled to confess to the American Senate, the American people, and the whole civilized world, that the little spark of freedom which has been snatched from amid dying embers, and fanned into a lurid flame, by the hand of the immortal Garrison, is now blazing on almost every hill in this broad land.

Sir, shall the friends of freedom despair, while the advocates of slavery are discouraged. Have abolitionists read history in vain? have they learned no lessons from the experience of the past? Sir, in every age, freedom has seen her dreary hours. Her whole history presents one grand series of noble struggles for existence. Brilliant have been her triumphs—glorious her achievements! Yet, sir, she has seen her days of darkness and gloom, and her votaries have been driven to the very borders of despair.

But her bright sin has again risen in the horizon, to cheer the hearts and animate the bosoms of the lovers of liberty in every land. Mr. Chairman, I confess we are engaged in a great conflict: one that requires stout hearts, and nerves of steel! But, sir, we must put forth exertions commensurate with the great struggle in which we are engaged. The times in which we live, are the legitimate fruits of a thorough discussion of the subject of slavery. Slavery recoils from the broad flash and bright sun-light of truth, and endeavors to conceal its hideous form behind the dark mist of error. Well, sir, abolitionists have been pouring anti-slavery truth, like living coals, on the naked heart of the monster for the last twenty years. Are we surprised that now, when the heat has became so intense, as to be almost intolerable to be borne, to see him writhe in agony, and summon all his energies to make one fierce struggle for existence? Are they terrified and alarmed at the frightful throes of his death agonies? Mr. Chairman, the pioneers of this great enterprise, having courted the costs, and surveyed well the field of their operations, enlisted for the whole war, and resolved to engage in, and continue the great struggle for the redemption of the slave—Many, sir, have run well for a season, and while the sky was bright, were loud in their professions in favor of freedom. But, suddenly, our pathway is beset with thorns, and

But her bright sun has again risen in the horizon, to cheer the hearts and animate the bosoms of the lovers of liberty in every land. Mr. Chairman, I confess we are engaged in a great conflict: one that requires stout hearts, and nerves of steel! But, sir, we must put forth exertions commensurate with the great struggle in which we are engaged. The times in which we live, are the legitimate fruits of a thorough discussion of the subject of slavery. Slavery recoils from the broad flash and bright sun-light of truth, and endeavors to conceal its hideous form behind the dark mist of error. Well, sir, abolitionists have been pouring anti-slavery truth, like living coals, on the naked heart of the monster for the last twenty years. Are we surprised that now, when the heat has became so intense, as to be almost intolerable to be borne, to see him writhe in agony, and summon all his energies to make one fierce struggle for existence? Are they terrified and alarmed at the frightful throes of his death agonies? Mr. Chairman, the pioneers of this great enterprise, having courted the costs, and surveyed well the field of their operations, enlisted for the whole war, and resolved to engage in, and continue the great struggle for the redemption of the slave—Many, sir, have run well for a season, and while the sky was bright, were loud in their professions in favor of freedom. But, suddenly, our pathway is beset with thorns, and

our sky is overcast with clouds. Thunders roll in the distance! lightnings flash across our pathway! our friends become pale with fear, their knees smite and tremble like Belshazzar: and, in the last agonies of their despairing souls, they tell us "all is lost, all is lost!" That we have no hope left, except those that can be dug from the burning sands of ill-fated Africa!

Mr. Chairman, let our desponding friends go with me to Niagara, and, from the phenomena that seem to bewilder, learn a lesson there. Behold huge fragments of that deeply-imbedded rock, over which, for centuries, have rolled the waters of that impetuous cataract; that rock, which, for ages, had baffled the storms, and bid defiance to the whirlwind,—suddenly impelled from the bosom of the earth, and, with an awful leap, go plunging down the dark depths below! Is there no moral in this? Year after year, beauty and fashion gathered there, and stood upon that rock, to view the varied aspects of that world-renowned wonder, never dreaming of the fact, that there were mighty causes noiselessly operating there, that were undermining and sapping the very foundation on which they stood. Such, sir, is the silent, slow, but sure progress of our cause. There are, even now, mighty causes in operation, destined to sweep slavery and prejudice from the face of our common country. And, sir, while the watchmen on the walls of despotism

our sky is overcast with clouds. Thunders roll in the distance! lightnings flash across our pathway! our friends become pale with fear, their knees smite and tremble like Belshazzar: and, in the last agonies of their despairing souls, they tell us "all is lost, all is lost!" That we have no hope left, except those that can be dug from the burning sands of ill-fated Africa !

Mr. Chairman, let our desponding friends go with me to Niagara, and, from the phenomena that seem to bewilder, learn a lesson there. Behold huge fragments of that deeply-imbedded rock, over which, for centuries, have rolled the waters of that impetuous cataract ; that rock, which, for ages, had baffled the storms, and bid defiance to the whirlwind,—suddenly impelled from the bosom of the earth, and, with an awful leap, go plunging down the dark depths below ! Is there no moral in this ? Year after year, beauty and fashion gathered there, and stood upon that rock, to view the varied aspects of that world-renowned wonder, never dreaming of the fact, that there were mighty causes noiselessly operating there, that were undermining and sapping the very foundation on which they stood. Such, sir, is the silent, slow, but sure progress of our cause. There are, even now, mighty causes in operation, destined to sweep slavery and prejudice from the face of our common country. And, sir, while the watchmen on the walls of despotism

April 15, 1852
Johnson, H[enry] W.
Frederick Douglass' Paper

are crying "all is well, all is well!" while the priests that administer at the unhallowed altars of despotism, are ready to offer new victims to this bloody demon; the props that uphold this dark system, will be suddenly swept away, and it will fall to the earth with a crash louder than a thousand thunders, and be deeply buried beneath its own ruins.

Mr. President, for the benefit of our desponding friends, permit me, for one moment, to call your attention to the West Indies.— Witness there the glorious example of a people conquering their prejudices." There was a time when the people of those Islands endured wrongs, infinitely greater than those of which we now complain; when they enjoyed no political rights whatever; when they were the victims of a malignant prejudice, as cruel as it was unjust. Their evidence was not allowed in a Court of Justice. They were denied the right of a trial by jury, in any case.— They were ineligible to office; could not hold over a certain amount of some kinds of real estate; were told that they belonged to an inferior race, and could never live upon those Islands upon terms of perfect equality with the whites. Not only were they subjected to the most cruel treatment on those Islands, but as late as 1823, a law was passed by the Legislature of Jamaica, expelling some of the leading colored men from that Island! Well, sir, after a fierce struggle, armed with no other weapons but the shield of faith, and the

are crying " all is well, all is well ! " while the priests that administer at the unhallowed altars of despotism, are ready to offer new victims to this . bloody demon ; the props that uphold this dark system, will be suddenly swept away, and it will fall to the earth with a crash louder than a thousand thunders, and be deeply buried beneath its own ruins.

Mr. President, for the benefit of our desponding friends, permit me, for one moment, to call your attention to the West Indies.— Witness there the glorious example of a people conquering their prejudices." There was a time when the people of those Islands endured wrongs, infinitely greater than those of which we now complain ; when they enjoyed no political rights whatever ; when they were the victims of a malignant prejudice, as cruel as it was unjust. Their evidence was not allowed in a Court of Justice. They were denied the right of trial by jury, in any case.— They were ineligible to office ; could not hold over a certain amount of some kinds of real estate ; were told that they belonged to an inferior race, and could never live upon those Islands upon terms of perfect equality with the whites. Not only were they subjected to the most cruel treatment on those Islands, but as late as 1823, a law was passed by the Legislature of Jamaica, expelling some of the leading colored men from that Island ! Well, sir, after a fierce struggle, armed with no other weapons but the shield of faith, and the

sword of truth, our brethren in the West Indies achieved a glorious triumph over the monster prejudice, that scourge of our race, and succeeded in burying his old bloated carcass so deep in the bowels of the earth, that not even a trace of his grave is left "to tell the passing traveler who lies there." Equal political rights were not extended to the free colored people of Jamaica, until 1828.— What sir, is their position in that Island, now? Who stand at the head of the Jamaica bar? Colored men! Who are the leading editors on that Island? Colored men! Who are her leading statesmen? Colored men! Who fill the most of the government offices? Colored men! Who form her regiments? Colored men!! What has become of that innate prejudice which they were once, and we are now told is implanted in the breasts of the whites, by the hand of the immortal God? It has become extinct. Neither the laws of nature, nor the will of Heaven has been able to preserve this feeling in the breasts of the whites, nor prevent the elevation of the blacks! Thus, we see that this mountain of prejudice that towered so high in Jamaica, as to almost darken the sun, was, in 1828, reduced to a mole, and since that time has continued to diminish and grow most beautifully less, until now, not even its shadow is left to curse the most desolate spot on that bright gem of the sea!

sword of truth, our brethren in the West Indies achieved a glorious triumph over the monster prejudice, that scourge of our race, and succeeded in burying his old bloated carcass so deep in the bowels of the earth, that not even a trace of his grave is left "to tell the passing traveler who lies there." Equal political rights were not extended to the free colored people of Jamaica, until 1828.— What sir, is their position in that Island, now? Who stand at the head of the Jamaica bar? Colored men! Who are the leading editors on that Island? Colored men! Who are her leading statesmen? Colored men! Who fill the most of the government offices? Colored men! Who form her regiments? Colored men!! What has become of that innate prejudice which they were once, and we are now told is implanted in the breasts of the whites, by the hand of the immortal God? It has become extinct. Neither the laws of nature, nor the will of Heaven has been able to preserve this feeling in the breasts of the whites, nor prevent the elevation of the blacks! Thus, we see that this mountain of prejudice that towered so high in Jamaica, as to almost darken the sun, was, in 1828, reduced to a mole, and since that time has continued to diminish and grow most beautifully less, until now, not even its shadow is left to curse the most desolate spot on that bright gem of the sea !

Sir, if the great earthquake that happened in Jamaica in 1692, had occurred about the period to which I have just referred, I would be strongly inclined to believe that this green-eyed monster, prejudice, that had so long infected that beautiful Island, and with his pestiferous breath blasting and withering all that was green and lovely there, had been swallowed up in that awful catastrophe, and had gone down, down, down to the dark world from which he came, there forever to mingle his death wails with the gorgon of perdition.

Mr. Chairman, with the light of such a glorious example reflecting upon us, think you that we can ever be induced to abandon one of the noblest struggles that ever enlisted the sympathies of an intelligent and high-minded people, and thereby crush the fondest hopes of those toiling millions that now pine in chains, beneath the stars and stripes of the American flag? No!! No!! No!!

Ask us not to go to Liberia. Tell us not of our father land; of the undying fame that clusters around the name of ancient Africa. Sir, we have a native land, in which are native cots, where we were born: around those cots are native hills, green and native fields, over which we have often roamed, in childhood's leisure hours! Sir, we love our native land: yes, with all her faults, we love her still. We delight to stand upon our native soil, and view our native hills and plains, our forests and our groves, our noble rivers, our

Sir, if the great earthquake that happened in Jamaica in 1692, had occurred about the period to which I have just referred, I would be strongly inclined to believe that this green-eyed monster, prejudice, that had so long infected that beautiful Island, and with his pestiferous breath, blasting and withering all that was green and lovely there, had been swallowed up in that awful catastrophe, and had gone down, down, down to the dark world from which he came, there forever to mingle his death wails with the gorgon of perdition.

Mr. Chairman, with the light of such a glorious example reflecting upon us, think you that we can ever be induced to abandon one of the noblest struggles that ever enlisted the sympathies of an intelligent and high-minded people, and thereby crush the fondest hopes of those toiling millions that now pine in chains, beneath the stars and stripes of the American flag? No!! No!! No!!

Ask us not to go to Liberia. Tell us not of our father land; of the undying fame that clusters around the name of ancient Africa. Sir, we have a native land, in which are native cots, where we were born: around those cots are native hills, green and native fields, over which we have often roamed, in childhood's leisure hours! Sir, we love our native land: yes, with all her faults, we love her still. We delight to stand upon our native soil, and view our native hills and plains, our forests and our groves, our noble rivers, our

inland seas! We delight to gaze upon those meandering brooks, that go laughing through our pleasant vales; whose waters seem to whisper of human rights, and sing of liberty, as they roll on with majestic beauty, and in silent grandeur to the sea! Sir, this land is bound to my heart by a thousand ties. For more than 200 years, it has been watered with the tears and blood of my crushed and bleeding race. Why, sir, all over this land, are hallowed mounds, where our fathers lie! And, sir, their memories are as sacred, and their ashes as dear to us, as are those of your revolutionary sires, your Pilgrim Fathers— And should we ever resolve to abandon our country, the graves of our fathers would give a groan! Their sacred dust would rise up from the soil, and administer unto us a withering rebuke! Yes, their mouldering graves would burst open, and their buried bones come forth to rattle in our faces a solemn protest against this base desertion of our holy cause, and the deeply wronged, crushed, and bleeding slave! Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot conclude without an expression of my thanks to you, for the kind and patient attention with which you have been pleased to listen to the remarks I have made upon this subject. In conclusion, let me say that, in view of all the bright examples before us, let none desert the standard of freedom, that broad streaming banner, red with the martyr Lovejoy's blood: radiant with the bond-

inland seas! We delight to gaze upon those meandering brooks, that go laughing through our pleasant vales; whose waters seem to whisper of human rights, and sing of liberty, as they roll on with majestic beauty, and in silent grandeur to the sea! Sir, this land is bound to my heart by a thousand ties. For more than 200 years, it has been watered with the tears and blood of my crushed and bleeding race. Why, sir, all over this land,

are hallowed mounds, where our fathers lie! And, sir, their memories are as sacred, and their ashes as dear to us, as are those of your revolutionary sires, your Pilgrim Fathers — And should we ever resolve to abandon our country, the graves of our fathers would give a groan! Their sacred dust would rise up from the soil, and administer unto us a withering rebuke! Yes, their mouldering graves would burst open, and their buried bones come forth to rattle in our faces a solemn protest against this base desertion of our holy cause, and the deeply wronged, crushed, and bleeding slave! Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot conclude without an expression of my thanks to you, for the kind and patient attention with which you have been pleased to listen to the remarks I have made upon this subject. In conclusion, let me say that, in view of all the bright examples before us, let none desert the standard of freedom, that broad streaming banner, red with the martyr Lovejoy's blood : radiant with the bond-

April 15, 1852
Johnson, H[enry] W.
Frederick Douglass' Paper

man's hope! If this banner must fall, let it repose on the weeping tomb of that great martyr of liberty, where its crimsoned folds can be bleached by the tears of his surviving widow, and his funeral dirge prattled by his orphan children! I believe the shade of that great martyr of freedom, is, even now, looking down from the battlements of Heaven, gazing, with an anxious eye, upon the deliberations of this Convention. Methinks I hear his sainted voice, whispering in our ear the words of encouragement and hope; saying unto us, friends of liberty, be not disengaged, but continue to "roll on the liberty ball," and the sparks of freedom, already fanned into a lurid flame, will continue to blaze and sparkle, until it has consumed the last link in that chain which binds the energies of an unfortunate race, and galls the limbs of 300,000 slaves!

man's hope ! If this banner must fall, let it repose on the weeping tomb of that great martyr of liberty, where its crimsoned folds can be bleached by the tears of his surviving widow, and his funeral dirge prattled by his orphan children ! I believe the shade of that great martyr of freedom, is, even now, looking down from the battlements of Heaven, gazing, with an anxious eye, upon the deliberations of this Convention. Methinks I hear his sainted voice, whispering in our ear the words of encouragement and hope ; saying unto us, friends of liberty, be not disengaged, but continue to " roll on the liberty ball," and the sparks of freedom, already fanned into a lurid flame, will continue to blaze and sparkle, until it has consumed the last link in that chain which binds the energies of an unfortunate race, and galls the limbs of 300,000 slaves !