

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Taking counsel of their hopes, and having faith in the pledge given by the President of the United States in his Proclamation of Sept. 22nd, the *Union Progressive Association* made arrangements for a due observance of this day, designated as the time for decreeing universal emancipation in all the rebellious States;—a prelude to a still brighter day, when, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, there shall not be found a tyrant to wield the lash, nor a slave to wear the chain.

In the early days of anti-slavery agitation in this city, I remember to have heard the eloquent Charles C. Burleigh illustrate a point by the following anecdote. Two men were discussing the keenness of a certain warlike instrument, which the owner declared would cut a man in pieces without his knowing it. The other ridiculed the idea, and challenged the test upon his own person. Whereupon the weapon executed its mission, but the skeptic only laughed, exclaiming that he did not feel much of any thing. But, said the other, the deed is already done; just shake yourself. He did so, and it was his last shake. He fell all to pieces. Symbolical of those who, even at this late period, and in view of the Proclamation, will not see that the battle-axe of Truth, wielded by the champions of Freedom, has already cloven asunder their refuge of lies.

Happily, a regenerated public sentiment is compelling the owls and the bats, the wolves and the tigers of pro-slavery to slink away to their coverts and dens; while the Emancipation policy of John C. Fremont and Charles Sumner, (cheers,) accepted and proclaimed by Abraham Lincoln, is every where, among the truly loyal, hailed with joy and thanksgiving, and will

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soon be triumphant over all opposition.

New Year's Day—proverbially known throughout the South as “Heart-Break Day,” from the trials and horrors peculiar to sales and separations of parents and children, husbands and wives—by this Proclamation is henceforth invested with new significance and imperishable glory in the calendar of time.

It is recorded in the history of our country's independence, that, on the memorable 19th of April, 1775, as the patriots, Hancock and Adams, were retiring from the field of conflict, the latter exclaimed—“O, what an ever-glorious morning is this!” considering the contest at Lexington as the prelude of events that were destined to secure the freedom and independence of his country. May we not, in like manner, accept the present crisis in our national affairs as a condition necessary to secure Liberty and Peace on an enduring basis?

President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and the Opinion of Attorney-General Bates, recognizing the citizenship of colored Americans, inaugurate a national era of fair play for the black man. What wait we for? Why content ourselves with sleeping at the base of the hill, when, by a vigorous ascent to its summit, we may obtain entrance to the Temple of Freedom, where, under the aegis of the American Eagle, we shall not only be safe from the spoiler, but may aspire to its noblest privileges and its highest honors?

It will ever redound to the credit of colored Americans that, in despite of all the wrongs and outrages so long and so cruelly inflicted upon them, they have ever evinced true devotion and bravery in the trial-

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hours of their country—from Crispus Attucks, the first martyr of the American Revolution, and others through that memorable struggle and the war of 1812, both by sea and land, down to the heroes, Tillman and Robert Small, in the present Slaveholders' Rebellion. Yes, they have ever proved loyal, and ready to worship, or die, if need be, at Freedom's shrine. The *amor patrie* has always burned vividly on the altar of their hearts. They love their native land, its hills and valleys green; for, O!

“There's a magical tie to the land of our home,
Which the heart cannot break, though the footsteps may
 roam;
Be that land where it may, at the line or the pole,
It still holds the magnet that draws back the soul;
'Tis loved by the free man, 'tis loved by the slave,
'Tis dear to the coward, more dear to the brave.
Ask if any the spot they like best on the earth,
And they'll answer with pride, 'Tis the land of our birth.”

[The above is but an abstract of Mr. Nell's address,
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