

"I thank you, sir, and the gentlemen of this Association, for the honor you have conferred upon me. I take it as an evidence of American interest in the Republic of Liberia, and as a compliment to the college with which I am connected in that country. I need not say, sir, how deeply interested I have been in the two reports which have been read this afternoon; and for the zeal which has been manifested in behalf of my brethren in your Southern States. I am an American negro; and I feel the deepest interest in everything which pertains to the welfare of my race in this country. A citizen of that infant Republic which has been planted by American beneficence on the west coast of Africa, my heart and all its sympathies still linger with the deepest regards upon the welfare and progress of my brethren who are citizens of this nation. More especially am I concerned, just now, by the great problem which comes before you in the elevation and enlightenment of the 1,000,000 of my brethren who have just passed from a state of bondage into the condition of freedmen. The black population of this country have been raised by a noble beneficence from a state of degradation and benightedness to one of manhood and citizenship. The state upon which they have entered brings upon them certain duties and obligations which they will be expected to meet and fulfill. But in order to do these they must be trained and educated by all the appliances which are fitted to the creation of superior men. The recommendations which have been suggested in the report just read are the best and most fitting. Colored men are, without doubt, the best agents for this end. Teachers raised up from among themselves—

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men who know their minds—men who have a common feeling and sympathy with them—these are the men best adapted to instruct, to elevate, and to lead them. And it is only by such teaching and culture that the black race in this country will be fitted for the duties which now devolve upon them in their new relations. These people are to be made good citizens. It is only by a proper system of education that they can be made such citizens. The race, now made freedmen among you, owes a duty to the country—a duty which springs from the great privileges which have been conferred upon them. Some, perhaps, would prefer to use the word “rights” instead of privileges, and I have no objections to that word; but I am looking at the matter rather in the light of the divine mercy and goodness. As a consequence of receiving such a large gift and boon as freedom, my brethren owe great obligations to this country which can only be met by becoming good, virtuous, valuable citizens, willing and able to contribute to the good and greatness of their country. For this is their home. Here they are to live. Here the masses will likely remain forever. For no reasonable man can suppose it possible to take up four millions of men as you would take up a tree—one of your old oaks or an old elm, stems, roots, stones and earth—tear it up from the sod, and transplant it in Europe or Asia. The black race in this country are to abide; and to meet the obligations which will forever fall upon them in this land, and to prove themselves worthy of the privileges to which they have been advanced, they need schools, instruction, letters and training. But not

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only do the black race in this country owe duties to this country: they owe a great duty to Africa likewise. Their fathers were brought to this country, and placed in bondage; and their children, in subsequent generations, notwithstanding all the evils they have endured, have been enabled to seize upon many of the elements of your civilization. Fourteen thousand of my brethren, American black men, have left this country, and carried with them American law, American literature and letters, American civilization, American Christianity, and reproduced them in the land of their forefathers. We have gone out as emigrants from this Republic to the shores of heathen Africa, and re-created these free institutions, and a nation modeled after your own.

“Sir, I might stand here, and speak of wrongs and injuries, and distresses and agonies; but I prefer rather to dwell upon those adjustments and compensations which have been graciously evolved out of Divine Providence; and which have fitted them to a great work for good, not only here in this country, but likewise in Africa. The black race in this country, as they increase in intelligence, will have to think of that vast continent; will have to consider their relation to the people of Africa. And thus it will be that while you are educating my brethren for their duties in America, you will be benefitting Africa. The black men in American are an agency in the hands of the American people, by whom they are enabled to touch two continents with benignant influences. For not only through them will they be shedding intelligence and enlightenment abroad through *this* country, but they will also in this manner raise up a class of

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[At the close of his remarks, there was loud, long, and enthusiastic applause.

Professor Crummell is just from Liberia, where he has been as Professor of Liberia College for thirteen years. He is a minister of the gospel. He will return to that country shortly.]

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