

Mr. President and gentlemen—I am happy to meet with you on this occasion, and to respond to the call on behalf of Nevada county. The object for which we have met is a good one, and I feel deeply my want of language to express my feelings in relation thereto; but I will endeavor, briefly, to present a few facts respecting the condition of our people in my county. There are about five hundred colored people residing there, variously employed. A few are farmers and mechanics, a small number are engaged in trading, but the majority of them are miners. It is with pride I say it, we are showing to our white fellow-citizens that we have some natural abilities; we are resolved to let them see that all we want is an equal chance, an open field, and a fair fight.

If they will dig the mountains down,
We will the rivers dry;
And if they can the color raise,
We certainly can try,

We intend to disprove the allegation that we are naturally inferior to them. The colored people of Nevada county possess property to the amount of 8300,000 in mining claims, water and ditch stock, and some real estate. We have one church, but no permanent school-house; a company is about forming to build one. Immediately upon seeing the call for this convention we came together, and after some deliberation, the people chose Mr. Emory Waters and your humble servant to represent them in the convention. Our constituents feel deeply the disabilities which we suffer. Under the present laws of this State, as they refer to our testimony and the school privileges of colored children, and they are willing to join you and do their part in the struggle for our rights. It is with regret I acknowledge that we have some among us who are indifferent to their condition, but I trust that all such will soon see and feel that every colored man is the victim of bitter prejudice and unjust laws, and that they can lend their influence to change the one and abate the other; to this end how important it is that we should be united; if it be true that “union is strength,” then is it also true, that

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Booth, E. A.

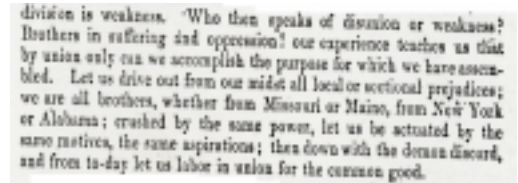
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of Colored Citizens of the State of California,*

Held in the City of Sacramento, December 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th

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division is weakness. Who then speaks of disunion or weakness?

Brothers in suffering and oppression! our experience teaches us that by union only can we accomplish the purpose for which we have assembled. Let us drive out from our midst all local or sectional prejudices; we are all brothers, whether from Missouri or Maine, from New York or Alabama; crushed by the same power, let us be actuated by the same motives, the same aspirations; then down with the demon discord, and from to-day let us labor in union for the common good.



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