

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—

My object in bringing this subject before you is, to give proof positive, not mere assertions, that immediate and unconditional Emancipation is the only true and dignified platform to stand upon; and that liberty and education elevates the negro, as well as it does the Caucasian, the Anglo-American, the Anglo-Dane, the Anglo-Norman, or Anglo-Saxon races. Our reason, our power to retain and acquire knowledge; our heaven erected face, our habitudes, our hopes, our fears, our aspirations and our prophecies, plant between us and the brute creation a distinction as eternal as it is palpable.

Before discussing the main object that has convened us together, I will beg leave of the audience to read the following resolutions:

Resolved, That we, the colored citizens of California, have paramount reasons for thanking the Great and Wise Ruler of the Universe for His unbounded love, His unceasing protection and His unalloyed guidance, for sparing and prolonging the life of our long-tried friend and coadjutor, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, the determined and unflinching editor of the *Liberator*, the originator and builder of the anti-slavery enterprise in our own country, America; who promulgated for his motto: "My country is the world,

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my countrymen are all mankind.”

Resolved, That slavery is, and always was, a pestilential and withering curse to the land; a curse to the whole human family; a curse to the true principles of Christianity, and opposed to all reforms; opposed to freedom of the Press; opposed to all free and outspoken men; gags free speech—if it cannot rule it is detrimental to all Republican forms of Government.

What can I say, friends, worthy of such an hour and such an audience? and what has called us together on this occasion? On the first of August, 1838, 800,000 human beings were emancipated; their chains struck off, their shackles fell; they stood up as men, women and children—redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the mighty Genius of Universal Emancipation. On that day England caused many a wounded and injured heart to be healed, throughout all the British West Indies. The day was welcomed, and the songs of Jubilee were sung by the happy thousands that day, delivered from the hand of the ruthless oppressor and the tyrant’s rod. For long and bitter years had they drank the wormwood and the gall, and supped down the drugs of unrequited toil and hardship. The event which has called us to-

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gether this evening to commemorate, is an event to be recorded on the pages of history, long to be remembered by us, most especially as being an oppressed and a wronged people.

2d. Again, our pioneers in the anti-slavery cause of our own country, America—such as Wendell Phillips and Theodore Parker, (whose remains are mouldering in their mother earth,) Abby, Kelly, Foster, Charles L. Emond, Henry C. Wright. Mrs. Lucy Stone Blackwell, Fred. Douglas, Parker Pillsbury, Hon. Gerret Smith, Stephen S. Foster, Charles C Burleigh, Hon. Chas. Sumner, Hon. Joshua R. Giddings, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, Mrs. Earnestine L. Rose, Lucretia Mott, Dr. Tobias, and a host of others, who are immortalizing their names and talents, in this great struggle for human redemption; and our long-tried friend at the head, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, known as the determined editor of the *Liberator*, the originator and builder of the anti-slavery enterprise in this, our day. May our friend live long, and may his last days be his happiest days; may he live to see the day when the escutcheon of our country shall not wear the footprint of a single slave.

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He has lived to see the day, called “the good time coming,” and the doors of the dark, dreary prison-house of the

slaveocracy open, the slave's shackles knocked off, and the oppressed go free. May he live to see the day of universal redemption of man, woman and child, from the accursed system of American slavery. He has lived to see the day when freedom, in all of its manhood, walks abroad in the District of Columbia, the capitol of the United States of America; where God's image, God's creatures and His children, ere sold by the pound, on the auction block, to the highest bidder. May he live to glory in and appreciate his motto, which he brought into being and so nobly defended, and which shall cheer him on his way—"no Union with slave-holders." May he live to see the day when all of these wrongs, all of these usurpations, and these outrages shall be changed from wrong to right, and then cradled in the embrace and in the arms of liberty. Then, and not until then, will he be satisfied to say, "Now, Lord, can thy servant depart in peace."

3d. Again the Emancipation of 800,000 human beings, is an incident long to be remembered by those pioneers whose names I have mentioned. It will be handed down from one generation to another. How was this great system of iniquity of crime and of blood annihilated,—women and men, made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with

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glory and honor, raised, from a brute on the level with their fellow creatures? It was not by might, nor power, nor wealth, neither by station, but by the promulgation of truth, the wickedness of slaveholding was held up to their view, by humble men and women. their number were few, their resources poor and without influence. They were such as the world of mankind and those high in authority, brand as infidelic, eccentric and fanatical, intermeddlers with vested rights and disturbers of the peace. Yet having sympathy for the slave in his bonds, love to God in their hearts, and faith in the power of truth, they labored on against a formidable oligarchy, against the committed parliament and against the throne itself, till they overcome all opposition, emancipated 800,000 slaves, and caused the trump of Jubilee to be blown throughout all the British domains.

Many were the restless days and wearied nights that Clarkson and Wilberforce pondered over this gigantic evil. Wilberforce lived to witness its downfall, and the upbuilding of the wronged and injured thousands, whose cause he had so long and faithfully defended, side by side with Clarkson, Buxton, Pitt and Fox.

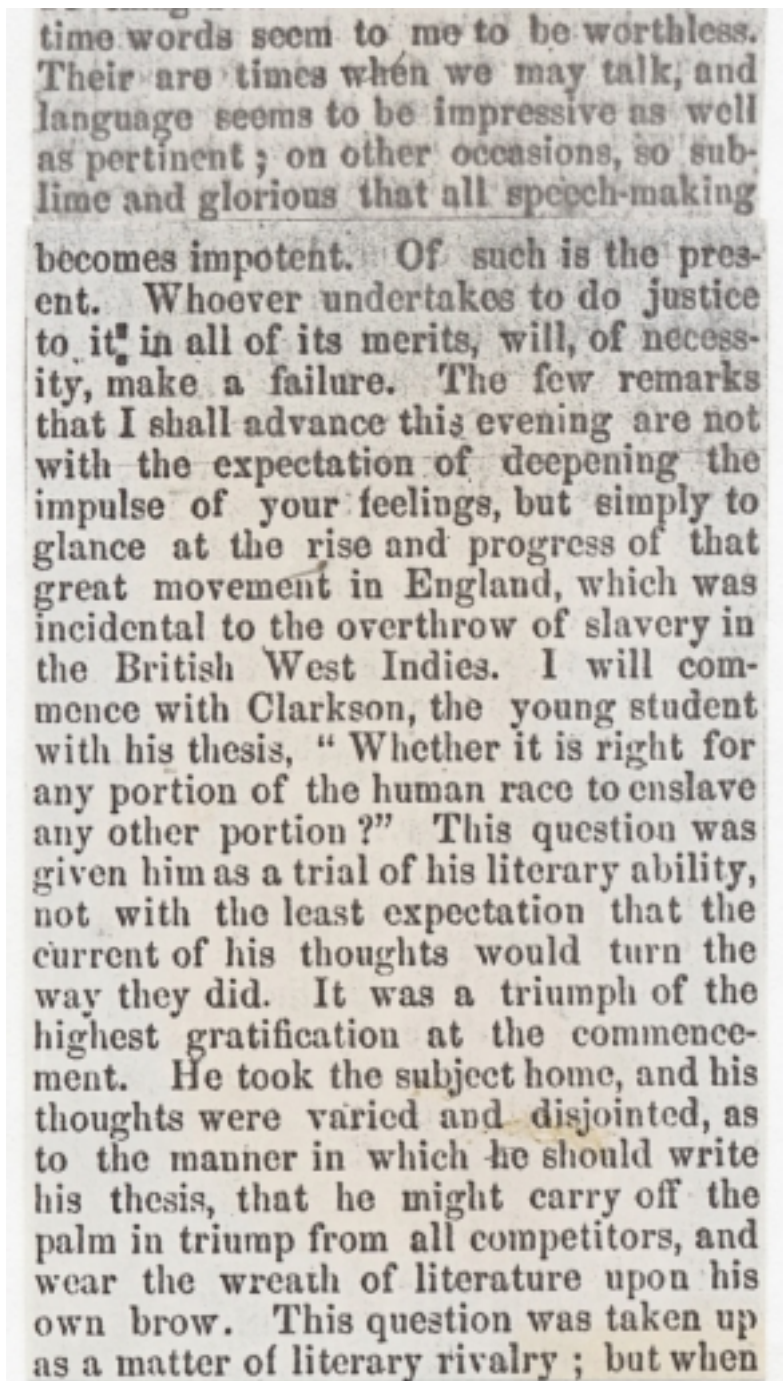
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time words seem to me to be worthless. There are times when we may talk, and language seems to be impressive as well as pertinent; on other occasions, so sublime and glorious that all speech-making becomes impotent. Of such is the present. Whoever undertakes to do justice to it in all of its merits, will, of necessity, make a failure. The few remarks that I shall advance this evening are not with the expectation of deepening the impulse of your feelings, but simply to glance at the rise and progress of that great movement in England, which was incidental to the overthrow of slavery in the British West Indies. I will commence with Clarkson, the young student with his thesis, "Whether it is right for any portion of the human race to enslave any other portion?" This question was given him as a trial of his literary ability, not with the least expectation that the current of his thoughts would turn the way they did. It was a triumph of the highest gratification at the commencement. He took the subject home, and his thoughts were varied and disjointed, as to the manner in which he should write his thesis, that he might carry off the palm in triumph from all competitors, and wear the wreath of literature upon his own brow. This question was taken up as a matter of literary rivalry; but when



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the subject was carried home to the heart of Clarkson, and he began to investigate it, he was influenced or led to see suffering and horrors never thought of by him before. Nature's God had pointed out a work of completion for him to prosecute and accomplish; the vanity of scholastic superiority was absorbed in the benevolent desire of so presenting the subject as to awaken an undying sympathy for the oppressed and down-trodden bondman. He was successful in so doing, and he also succeeded in taking the prize, and successfully bore off the palm of victory for his literary acquirements and his literary ability on that occasion. We will now follow him for a quarter of a century, in his zealous and untiring efforts in disseminating truth and knowledge respecting the nature and growth of the African slave-trade, which had brought to its support a commercial cupidity, a popular acquiescence, an aristocratic countenance, a governmental patronage, as well as a colonial selfishness unparalleled in human history. Mark his pathway, beset with perils and his life in jeopardy! How malignant are the prejudices against him! What mountainous obstacles obstruct his course and how dark and appalling are the clouds above him, at times excluding every ray of light! But the scene changes—the clouds disappeared, and

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goodness in all its beatitude and dignity bursts through the opening vista, proclaiming to the bondmen their freedom, no longer to groan in fetters in oppression, and beneath the iron heel of the tyrant. Slaves cannot breathe in England; the moment they touch the soil their shackles fall. Listen to the words of Cowper:

I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me when I sleep,
And tremble when I wake,
For all the wealth that sinews,
Bought and sold have ever earned.
No, dear as freedom is,
And in my heart's just estimation,
Prized above all price,
I had rather be myself the slave
And wear the bonds,
Than fasten them to him.

We see throughout the great and glorious struggle, side by side with Clarkson, the earnest, intrepid and philanthropic Wilberforce, gallantly contending, in his place in Parliament, year after year, against overwhelming odds, of Kings, Lords and Commons. In the year of 1821, Clarkson feeling the weight of years, and constitutional infirmities pressing heavily upon him, signified to Thomas Powell Buxton, then recently elected to Parliament, his earnest wish that he should be his coadjutor in that thoroughly pro-slavery body. In a letter addressed to him, dated London, May 9, 1821, he says: "Let me entreat you to

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form an alliance with me, that may truly be termed holy, and if I should be unable to commence the war, (certainly not to be declared this season,) and still more, if, when commenced, I should be unable to finish it, I do entreat that you would continue to persecute it." Mr. Baxter, with great distrust of his own ability, gave Mr. Clarkson the desired assurance, and, from that hour, never faltered in his philanthropic career. He, for a time, was deluded by the idea of gradual Emancipation, and in this compromised the cause of those to whose redemption he had consecrated his life.

Mark how the associate of Clarkson proceeded. he left the platform of immediate and unconditional Emancipation. Listen to the language of his first resolution, offered by him in Parliament, on that subject:

Resolved, That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British constitution, and of the Christian religion, and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British colonies with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned.

This resolution contained nothing ultra or fanatical. It did not enunciate or contend for any principle. Gradual Emancipation means some time before the world

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ceases to exist. In 1828, several years after, sorrowfully he saw, and confessed his sad mistake; to use his own words: "We did not then know, as we now do, that all attempts at gradual Emancipation are utterly wild and visionary." In the year 1837 or 1838, if my memory serves me right, Mr. Canning offered an amendment, binding the Legislature to the immediate mitigation and eventual extinction of slavery. Shortly after the passage of this, Mr. Canning's resolution, came the tidings of the murder of Mr. Smith, a missionary; then the destruction of the Chapel at Barbadoes, next the persecution, trial, conviction and punishment of the slaves for worshipping God in their own way. All that professed the principles of love to God and to man were persecuted; the missionaries were thrown into prison, and the slaves were murdered. The planters became angry, jealous and malignant, tearing down some chapels and burning others. The missionaries were obliged to flee to England for security, and spread it broadcast to her people. It was a matter of impossibility to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ where slavery existed. They must either submit to the outrages perpetrated on the Gospel, or slavery must be extirpated from the land; and when the truth was made clear to the moral

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vision of the people of this fearful and growing evil, then it was that the pulpits began to thunder, the religious journals to speak out, and the public mind to be aroused for the immediate Abolition of West India slavery; then it was that all England was rocked from centre to base, as by a mighty earthquake, and in one year's time the death-blow was given to that fool and heaven-defying system. The planters used every effort to put down the anti-slavery feeling in England. Meetings were held, speeches made and resolutions passed, of the most hostile and inflammatory description; resistance to the mother-country and the renunciation of the king's allegiance were publicly threatened. In the parish of Trelawney it was

Resolved, That the means devised by a faction in the House of Commons, to deprive us of our property, if carried into effect, cannot fail to create a civil war of too horrible a nature to contemplate, and that any person who attempts to produce or promote such a war, is an enemy to his country.

The resolutions proceeded to state, that thrown, as they were about to be, as a prey before bloodthirsty savages; their petition to the king was to be absolved from their allegiance, and allowed the privilege to seek protection from another

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nation, as they could not have it from their own.

The resolutions of St. Thomas were in like strain; their charges were wicked, as well as enormous and unfounded. They asserted that the passage of the Act would be the signal for a scene of blood; that their throats would be cut, and that England would stand by and cheer on the blacks to their utter destruction. But the slaves were emancipated, and did any of these crimes follow? No; it elevated their morals as well as their conditions, which I shall presently show.

The people of St. Ann

Resolved, That hitherto, under the most marked infractions of our rights and principles, we have been loyal. Our attachment to the mother-country has [i]ndeed long, very long, outlived her justice, and it would now be with grief that we should divest ourselves of a feeling which has "grown with our growth, and [s]trengthened with our strength," but when we see ourselves scorned, betrayed, [d]evoted to ruin and slaughter, delivered [o]ver to the enemies of our country, we [c]onsider that we are bound by every [p]rinciple—human and divine—TO RESIST.

Where are those contumacious planters [t]o-day? Still living under the flag of [t]heir mother-country, and rejoicing to be [t]here. In spite of all their unreasonable

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was struck that broke every fetter, and
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[I]ndia planter did the Union with Eng-
[l]and? They have declared, for years past,
[t]hat to extinguish slavery in the District of
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[L]aw; or to restore the Missouri compro-
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[t]he oligarchy of the sunny South, if they
[a]ttempt to stop or arrest its march of
[p]rogression, which must and will, finally,
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[T]he star-spangled banner, that blows broad and
brave,
[O]'er the home of the free, o'er the hut of the
slave—
[W]hose stars in the face of no foe e'er waxed pale,
[A]nd whose stripes are for those that the stars
dare assail.

[W]hose folds every year, broad and broader have
grows,
[T]ill they shadow both artic and tropical zone;
[F]rom the Sierra Nevada to Florida's shore,
[A]nd, like Oliver Twist, are still asking for more.

[T]hat banner whose infantile bunting can boast
[T]o have witnessed the Union's great charter
engrossed;

[W]hich, at Boston, saw freedom's stout struggle
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[A]nd from Washington welcomed its victory won.

[N]ow, Heaven guide the issue! may freedom's pure
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Now, Heaven guide the issue! may freedom's pure
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[...]e too late, form the plank of those blood-rotted strands,
[A]nd to battle and breeze fling the banner in proof,
[...]hat 'tis all her own fabric, as in warp as in woof.

[...] this may not be, if the moment be nigh,
[...]hen this banner unrent shall no more float the sky,
[...] make fitting devision of beams and of bars,
[...]t the South have the stripes, and the North have the stars.

4th. Again, our friends in the old Bay State, Key Stone and Buck Eye State,
[...]e doing much for our elevation, and for [th]e Emancipation of 4,000,000 of our [fe]llow countrymen, who are groaning in [op]pression, and beneath the tortures of [th]e tyrant's lash. They are gaining [gr]ound, step by step; their time and tal- [an]ts are at work, and have restored the [M]issouri compromise.

In 1855 or 1856, the Massachusetts Personal Liberty Bill passed both houses, in the Senate 32 to 3, and 3 to 1 in the House of Representative; and in a few short years we will see slavery annihilated from the land; and then you will see the supporter of Southern despotism, quietly living beneath the wide-spread wings of the American eagle, and the stars and stripes.

Again, by virtue of a single act of Parliament, the slaves of the British West Indias were changed at once to a state of freedom. It was also accom- plished without personal danger of any

to too late, form the plank of those blood-rotted strands,
nd to battle and breeze fling the banner in proof,
hat 'tis all her own fabric, as in warp as in woof.

this may not be, if the moment be nigh,
hen this banner unrent shall no more float the sky,
o make fitting devision of beams and of bars,
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kind to the master, and the chance of danger there was greater far than among us. In our country the slaves are overshadowed 6 to 1. In South Carolina and Mississippi, the slaves outnumber the whites. In the other slave States, the white outnumbered the slaves by many millions. In the British West Indies the whites are overshadowed by more than a sixfold slave population. The slaves were 800,000, the number of whites 131,000, distributed in different proportions on the different islands, and this disproportion has increased rather than diminished, and without danger to the whites. In Jamaica, the largest of these possessions, there are now upwards of 400,000 Africans, and only 37,000 whites. In Barbadoes, the next, there are 120,000 Africans, and only 15,000 whites. In St. Lucia, 19,500 Africans, and only 600 whites; and in Tobago, 14,000 Africans, and only 400 whites. In Montserrat, 6,000 Africans and less than 60 whites; and in all of these places the authorities praise the good behavior of the Emancipadoes. Queen Victoria, in a speech from the throne, has announced that the complete and final Emancipation of the Africans had taken place, without any disturbance of public order and tranquillity.

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subject, and throw away the objections founded on the alleged danger to the master by doing right to the bondman. Then the only right and consistent course is immediate and unconditional Emancipation, or some other motto tantamount in meaning to it.

Another objection is fostered against immediate Abolition: after they have been restored to liberty it has been said they would not work. This is true: on some of the large estates, they ran down and lingered into the lowest depths of bankruptcy: and why was this? The planters, after receiving the market value of their slaves, were still malignant in their spirit, because they were obliged to Emancipate; and, consequently, they did everything in their power to irritate and exasperate those whom they could no longer coerce. They would not offer them the paltry compensation for their labor, as freemen and freewomen, which was paid for the services of slaves, under the old system, and the consequence was, they would not work for such men as they were. They said, we can live from hand to mouth, as freemen, and we choose to do so, rather than to be wronged in this manner. Cowper recognizes these principles of divine government as to nations, and has embodied them in the following powerful verses, which are as follows,

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with a slight alteration.

O! could that noble Baker rise again,
How would he take up freedoms taunting strain,
Art thou too fallen, tyrant? do we see
The robber and the murderer weak as we?
Thou that hast wasted earth, and dare despise,
Alike the wrath and mercy of the skies,
Thy pomp is in the grave, thy glory laid
Low in the pits thine avarice has made.
We came with joy from our eternal rest;
You see the oppressor in his turn oppressed.
Art thou the God, the thunder of whose hand
Rolled over all our desolated land,
Shook principalities and kingdoms down,
And made the mountains tremble at his frown?
The sword shall light upon thy boasted powers,
And waste them, as oppression wasted ours.
'Tis thus Omnipotence his law fulfills,
And vengeance executes what justice wills.

What says the Rev. T. Starr King?

"A virtue clothed in action is a contribution to literature as much as a virtue clothed in rhetoric or rhyme. He that puts forth a splendid deed into the world, is a greater benefactor, even to the intellect, than he who creates a brilliant thought or phrase."

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