

SPEECH OF ROBERT PURVIS.

I hold it, Mr. President, and Ladies and Gentlemen, eminently fitting that the Abolitionists should assemble to commemorate the great fact of emancipation. It is but the logical result of their labors. In my recollections of the past, my mind reverts to those early days of trial and suffering, as well as of patient fortitude, of those noble men and women, who, for humanity and for God, lifted up their voices against the accursed system of American slavery. It is not my purpose, however, to enter upon the record of that ordeal, through which they passed, by a bitter and malignant persecution. It is enough to know that they have "fought the good fight," they "have kept the faith," and thanks to Almighty God, He has vouchsafed to them the victory!

With an overwhelming sense of the importance of this august and beneficent act of *Justice* and of *Mercy*, of which the President is made the honored instrument, I but express the deep feeling of my heart in joining with the millions of grateful hearts of our country in saying, "*God bless Abraham Lincoln!*" An honored friend, one who gave himself in early life to the cause of our enslaved countrymen, and who has served that cause for more than a quarter of a century, with unwavering fidelity, exclaimed as he read the blessed Proclamation of freedom—"I am proud in being an American citizen." I agree with that friend, and with every other man, in that expression; for, forgetting the past, and looking forward to the future, I, too, am proud of the land of my birth—proud of this mighty young nation—this awakened young lion, with power so vast, varied and exhaustless as to fill with consternation and terror the haughty despotisms

SPEECH OF ROBERT PURVIS.
I hold it, Mr. President, and Ladies and Gentlemen, eminently fitting that the Abolitionists should assemble to commemorate the great fact of emancipation. It is but the logical result of their labors. In my recollections of the past, my mind reverts to those early days of trial and suffering, as well as of patient fortitude, of those noble men and women, who, for humanity and for God, lifted up their voices against the accursed system of American slavery. It is not my purpose, however, to enter upon the record of that ordeal, through which they passed, by a bitter and malignant persecution. It is enough to know that they have "fought the good fight," they "have kept the faith," and thanks to Almighty God, He has vouchsafed to them the victory!
With an overwhelming sense of the importance of this august and beneficent act of *Justice* and of *Mercy*, of which the President is made the honored instrument, I but express the deep feeling of my heart in joining with the millions of grateful hearts of our country in saying, "*God bless Abraham Lincoln!*" An honored friend, one who gave himself in early life to the cause of our enslaved countrymen, and who has served that cause for more than a quarter of a century, with unwavering fidelity, exclaimed as he read the blessed Proclamation of freedom—"I am proud in being an American citizen." I agree with that friend, and with every other man, in that expression; for, forgetting the past, and looking forward to the future, I, too, am proud of the land of my birth—proud of this mighty young nation—this awakened young lion, with power so vast, varied and exhaustless as to fill with consternation and terror the haughty despotisms

of the Old World. Proud of a country whose soul is for freedom, and who, in the grandeur and sublimity of her position, will welcome under the aegis of her protection people of every nation and every clime.

And now, sir, in view of this Heavenly baptism of the nation, this holy consecration to the eternal and ever-living principles of freedom and justice—now that the righteous edict has gone forth, and

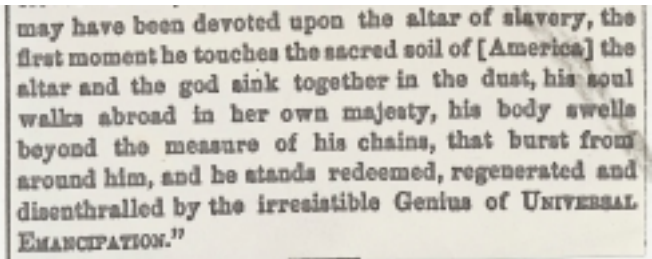
“The recording Angel’s hand
Has penned it in a fadeless land”—

now, upon a well-grounded hope that the “Star-Span-
gled Banner will actually wave
“O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave,”
with every fetter in the dust, and every slave a man—
I repeat, in view of such a glorious consummation, I
am proud of being an American citizen! Sir, think of
it! Free! everywhere free! our whole country free!
No degraded vassalage on the one hand, no pampered
slaveholding insolence on the other! Purged, then,
from this monstrous crime against humanity and God,
we shall have not only redeemed and saved ourselves,
but in the panoply of an omnipotent moral power we
shall revolutionize the world. With such a future be-
fore us, may we not, in the elegant language of Curran,
say “to the stranger and the sojourner,” who sets his
foot on the soil of America,” he treads on ground that
is holy, and consecrated by the genius of universal
emancipation. No matter in what language his doom
may have been pronounced; no matter what complex-
ion, incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an Afri-
can sun may have burned upon him; no matter in
what disastrous battle his liberty may have been
cloven down; no mater with what solemnities he

of the Old World. Proud of a country whose soul is for freedom, and who, in the grandeur and sublimity of her position, will welcome under the agis of her protection people of every nation and every clime.

And now, sir, in view of this Heavenly baptism of the nation, this holy consecration to the eternal and ever-living principles of freedom and justice—now that the righteous edict has gone forth, and
“The recording Angel’s hand
Has penned it in a fadeless land”—
now, upon a well-grounded hope that the “Star-Span-
gled Banner will actually wave
“O’er the land of the free, and the home of the brave,”
with every fetter in the dust, and every slave a man—
I repeat, in view of such a glorious consummation, I
am proud of being an American citizen! Sir, think of
it! Free! everywhere free! our whole country free!
No degraded vassalage on the one hand, no pampered
slaveholding insolence on the other! Purged, then,
from this monstrous crime against humanity and God,
we shall have not only redeemed and saved ourselves,
but in the panoply of an omnipotent moral power we
shall revolutionize the world. With such a future be-
fore us, may we not, in the elegant language of Curran,
say “to the stranger and the sojourner,” who sets his
foot on the soil of America, “he treads on ground that
is holy, and consecrated by the genius of universal
emancipation. No matter in what language his doom
may have been pronounced; no matter what complex-
ion, incompatible with freedom, an Indian or an Afri-
can sun may have burned upon him; no matter in
what disastrous battle his liberty may have been
cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he

may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery, the first moment he touches the sacred soil of [America] the altar and the god sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the irresistible Genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION."



may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery, the first moment he touches the sacred soil of [America] the altar and the god sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains, that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated and disenthralled by the irresistible Genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION."