

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:* It becomes me in the outset of my remarks to you to day, to render my thanks to those who have the management of this meeting and who give me permission to stand upon this platform this afternoon. I wish to say, also, that I thank God for the two bloods that are coursing through my veins to-day. I stand before you as the representative of two classes of persons who are affected, and seriously affected by American Slavery in this country.—Slavery strikes its bloody hand at the liberty of every one. There is not a solitary individual who can truly say “I am in full possession of my liberty as an American citizen.” Go if you please to Bunker Hill,—take your stand by that marble pile erected upon the spot where Warren fell, and American Slavery comes there and lays its heavy and bloody hand upon the altars of liberty and strikes them down. There is no person nor class of persons but should be interested in the overthrow of American Slavery.

To show the workings of this system of slavery upon the American, people, I shall divide them into four great classes and endeavor to show how this great Moloch, with its strong arm strikes down the liberties of each and tramples them in the dust. And first, there is the Slaveholder himself. It is affirmed that the Slaveholder, by virtue of his citizenship, has the liberty of doing and saying just what he pleases upon any topic, domestic or political. But is this really so? Let us take a case in Louisiana. There is a law upon their statute books which declares that “no man shall give utterance in the pulpit, or the

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forum or at the bar, to any sentiment that will tend to create insurrection among the slaves.”— Now suppose that celebrated jurist and eminent lawyer Soule, in a public meeting of all classes in that state should give utterance to such language as the following: “I am a firm believer in the doctrines of our fathers—that *all* men are created *free* and equal, and endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights among, which are life and *liberty* and the pursuit of happiness” To give utterance to such obnoxious sentiments in Louisiana would be but the beginning of an insurrection. Where then is Soule? Where the boast that a slaveholder has the liberty of saying what he pleases? He is [o]rtailed somewhat in his freedom of thought and liberty of speech. He does not make use of liberty sentiments before the people. Should he do so, it is at his own peril, for he has laid himself liable to a prosecution by law. And so it is throughout the whole South? No slaveholder, no matter what his reputation for loyalty to the union, nor his devotion to slavery, dares to open his mouth in the South and speak in favor of liberty and equality for all.

The second class whom I would mention is the non-slaveholders. Those composing this class of persons in the South are poor, ignorant and degraded. They have but few of the necessities of life—their children grow up ignorant, indolent and steeped in superstition. Why is this I ask? Do they *choose* to be thus poor and ignorant? It is because American Slavery takes away from them everything in the form of a *free school*. The doors

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of knowledge are locked—the paths thereto blockaded and the poor non-slaveholder of the South must ever remain as he is so long as slavery exists there as it does to-day. American Slavery takes from them a *free church* in which to worship God—it takes from them all incentives to industry—it degrades and oppresses them beyond measure.— This the only solution that can be given of the matter. There they stand. You are here to-day, ladies and gentlemen, in the full possession of your freedom—but white men and women, boys and girls are suffering in South Carolina, Georgia and all the Southern States under the dire effects of American Slavery. Dare this class of persons speak freely without fear of molestation in the South? Let a political meeting be called—is the poor white man there? No. When you have called your meeting is he there to say “Salmon P. Chase, the champion of American liberty, is my choice for President of the United States?” Is he there to say, “I am in favor of Senator Seward’s doctrine that slavery should not be permitted to go into the territories of the United States, now free?” No, he is not there; for American Slavery has stricken down his rights—it has padlocked his lips so that he cannot, nor dare not open them and give free utterance to the honest sentiments of his heart. Thus it is that Slavery respects the rights and liberties of the white men throughout the whole length and breadth of the land. We call ourselves a great people—an honored people, and we come together on every fourth of July and say,

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"We believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; that God has given us liberty—that he has betowed upon us freedom of thought and freedom of speech; and that every one is bound to respect these rights." But is it so? Suppose that Salmon P. Chase—who has not his equal as a lawyer, nor as a speaker—suppose that he should go to South Carolina and should stand up in the city of Charleston to defend the rights of the people of all classes and conditions. Can he be protected because he is Salmon P. Chase? Can he say I demand respect because I am an American citizen, and get it? All *that* will be nothing to the South. When he tells them who he is, that he is the Governor of Ohio, the third State in the American Union, a committee, composed of the most respectable and influential men of the city, will wait upon him and say "You cannot give utterance to such sentiments here—they are inimical to the existence of our institutions—you must leave this place immediately." You had a case of this kind a few years ago. You sent a man from Massachusetts down to South Carolina to look after the rights of Massachusetts seamen who were imprisoned in the jails of that State, not because of crimes they had committed, but because of the color of their skin. This was in those good old Whig days, when all were considered loyal and true to the Union. Mr. Hoar went down to look after the rights of the colored seamen of Old Massachusetts. What did they do down there in Charleston?—When they had learned the object of his visit—when they ascertained the purpose for which he

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was sent, this committee waited upon him and informed him that his presence in their midst could not be permitted—that within a specified time he must leave the city and the State. What did this white gentleman do and answer them? Did he say, you are mistaken in your man? Did he answer; I am a citizen of the old Whig State, Massachusetts, a State that has ever been true to the Constitution? Did he reply—I am a Whig and Daniel Webster is my political God-father—I stand here with my foot planted upon the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and therefore demand the respect due to me as a citizen of of this Republic and as a representative of Massachusetts, What did he do—white man as he was? Why he bowed his head in meek submission to the slave power and said “Gentlemen, I obey your command,” and he quietly returned; and Massachusetts’ rights were trampled down by the slave power of the South. The same thing was once repeated in New Orleans. The Committee quietly waited upon the agent of the North and informed him that he too must leave the city and he obeyed, nor dared to do otherwise. How is this, you white men, who boast of your liberty, who boast of your Declaration of Independence and of your glorious Constitution and of the protection they yield you—how is it, I say, that you thus yield implicit submission to American Slavery? It proves that Slavery is the enemy of the white man, not only in the South, but also in the North, even in this glorious State of the Union, Ohio. Suppose you have a son, who, having com-

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pleted his education, proposes to go to Kentucky or Tennessee to engage in the occupation of a teacher. He is a lover of liberty. Ever from a child have the principles of liberty and hatred of oppression been instilled into him[,] and now he feels the fires of freedom burning in his soul. Just before he takes his departure for the the South, his dear old father says to him, "Come here my son, I want to talk to you a little. You are about to leave us—you are going to the South where it is unsafe for you to give utterance to the free thoughts of your own mind. Now take this advice—don't say a word about this vexed question of American Slavery—keep your mouth shut—hold your own counsel and say nothing on the subject of Slavery." The mother also gives him her parting advice: "My dear son, you are about to go from us—you know how proslavery they are down there in Kentucky—now in the name of the love I bear you, keep your mouth shut and do not say anything upon this question of Slavery—your life will be in danger if you do." With this parting advice from his loved and aged parents, he takes his departure from the free homes of the North, to seek a situation in the land of whips and chains. On his way, he meets with a proslavery ruffian from Kentucky who says to him, "You Ohioans are all behind the age—in Ohio you live in ignorance—in Ohio there is no advancement—no improvement". What says this liberty-loving son of the North?—Acting on the advice of his parents, he repels not the insults of this haughty son of the South, but meekly replies to all, "Yes sir, yes sir, what you

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say is all true". If he opens his mouth there in defence of freedom and equality, it is at the risk of his life and liberty. Do you doubt it? It is a fact which every day proves to be too true.— This question of Anti-Slavery is as broad as the whole land and strikes for the liberty of every man, woman and child. Shall they have it—is a question for the North to answer. I have a friend in the South who, in his letters to me says, "When you write to me don't, for heaven's sake, say a word about Slavery. Don't send me any of Senator Seward's liberty speeches. Don't send me the Tribune with letters and speeches from Chase and Giddings. Do permit Garrison's Liberator and Phillips' speeches to remain in Boston till I come back". American Slavery denies to my friend the right of free thought, the right of free speech in the State of Tennessee and in the city of Nashville.

A few years since there was issued a call for a Women's Rights Convention. In making the arrangements for this meeting the question arose as to where the convention should be held. The city of Washington was proposed by some as the most suitable place for holding a convention of that character. Lucy Stone remarked that she was opposed to going to that city because the right of free speech would be denied her in the city of Washington. This speech of Lucy Stone reveals the fact that women cannot go to the capital of "the land of the free and the home of the brave," and give free utterance to opinions upon the subject of Women's Rights. American Slavery says,

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you cannot do it, and there it is. Remember I am now only speaking of white people, not of colored. Why does not Garrison go South and preach his gospel of anti-slavery there? He certainly has the constitutional right to do so. Why does not our friend Henry C. Wright and Parker Pillsbury go there and utter their free thoughts as freely as they do to-day? It is because American Slavery has said—you cannot come—if you do, you come at the expense of your lives and liberties. But Democrats tell us this is all a farce—a false notion and idea of the character of the people of the Southern section of our union. Say they, Douglas, Pierce and Buchanan go south, and they are not molested but are protected by Southern institutions. But what is it these men say? Why just what slavery says they shall say. Buchanan is only doing what Pierce and Douglas have done before him—speaking and acting only as the South dictates. But when these men shall plant themselves upon the constitution and demand freedom for the poor white man of the South, they will be told, “you cannot remain here and preach such doctrines—you must leave us”, and they will be obliged to obey.

’Tis not long since your best Northern Senator was stricken down upon the Senate floor for daring to give utterance to his own thoughts and opinions. He fell only as American liberty fell in him before the despotism of American Slavery.—Taking a higher position, I demand a release from slavery for the white people of the North and South and shall never cease to demand it till I

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cease to breathe.

I shall next call your attention to a third class which is most deeply intersected in this subject of slavery, and that class is the slaves themselves.

You all understand how he is oppressed, how he is tortured—how he has nothing he can call his own. He can do nothing, say nothing for himself. The slave raises his arm and says this is *my* hand—this is *my* head, this is *my* brain and *my* soul, and the omnipotent God of heaven is *my* God. It is then that the slaveholder laughs him to scorn. With the slave, this is all a figure of speech—it means nothing when applied to him. He is all his master's—body, brain, muscles, soul—everything is held as the property of another; is bought and sold as merchandise in the market, heart and brain and soul given in exchange for gold. Is not this class of all others most deeply interested in the overthrow of American Slavery? May their sighs which come to us on every southern breeze find a response in our breasts and create a determination on our part to work more earnestly for their release and for the destruction of that system that alike tramples their rights as well as that of the white man, to the ground.

The fourth and last class to which I wish to refer you as interested in this great question, is the free colored people of the North. Their condition in the State of Ohio I shall use an illustration of their condition throughout all the free States of the Union. A deep proslavery sentiment against them pervades the whole country. You see the

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workings of this sentiment in the Church, in the theatre, in the schools and colleges, and even in the graveyards. When a colored man goes to your church he is invited to take the back pew. Even in a time of revivals, when he feels as though he would draw nigh to God and worship at his throne—when you profess to have the love of God shed abroad in your hearts, you say to him, “Take the back seats; you cannot come up with us; you must wait to be served; go up or off somewhere where God will hear you after a while.”

In the city of New York when that great religious revival was going on a few months ago, a colored man and his wife went into the church one evening and took seats in the body of the church to listen to the prayers that were offered up at the throne of Grace. Presently a man came along and tapping them on the shoulder said, “I wish to speak to you; you will find seats for the colored people up there in the gallery. Go up there and presently some one will come round and pray for you.” They went, but after remaining there for some time and no one coming, they concluded to seek religion at some other place, and left the church. This simple fact shows how we are treated. Go where you will, this prejudice is the same. You find it cropping out in the legislature of the State of Ohio; you see it in the laws recently enacted. You will find it in the law which says to the colored man, “You cannot become an inmate of the poor-house, although you are taxed to build and support it.”—You see it in the law by which colored men are excluded from sitting as jurors—by which unjust act

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no colored man is ever tried by a jury of his peers. You have a law which denies to colored children the advantages of your schools. But how is it when you come to tax him. Do you refuse to tax his property? Not so. The colored people of Ohio own property to the amount of seven millions of dollars, upon which taxes are yearly levied, and the same is duly paid. It is true that in some places the schools are opened for the admission of colored children, but it is not by virtue of the law, but because the people are better than the law.— I hope it is so in Alliance—it is so in Oberlin.

Now in conclusion let me say that I demand that the rights of the colored man be restored to him—first because we are men. Second, because we are native born citizens—third, in the name of the fathers of the revolution that nativity gives citizenship—fourth, in the name of that other principle of American policy that there shall be no taxation without representation—fifth, because we are patriotic. The colored men fought in the revolutionary struggle and in the war of 1812—indeed there has been no war in which the American people have been engaged, in which the colored man did not bear his full share.

I close by saying that I am not here to speak as a partizan—I want every man and woman to work in the Anti-Slavery cause, day and night, in season and out of season, against slavery the common enemy of us all, saying to the slave oligarchy and to every influence that protects it, you shall die. Let this sentiment be borne on the free breezes of the North to the ears of the slaveholders of the

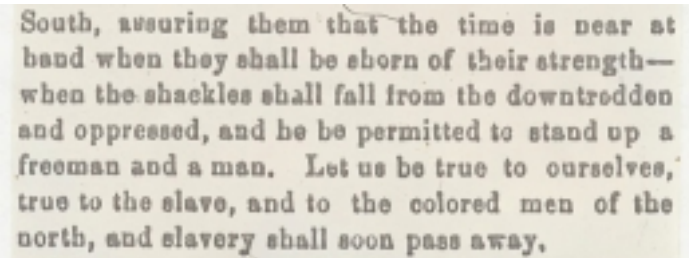
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South, assuring them that the time is near at hand when they shall be shorn of their strength—when the shackles shall fall from the downtrodden and oppressed, and he be permitted to stand up a freeman and a man. Let us be true to ourselves, true to the slave, and to the colored men of the north, and slavery shall soon pass away.



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