

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS: The time has so far elapsed, that it becomes me to speak but briefly. There seems hardly any need of me here, judging from the speeches of the noble men who have just addressed you. Their statement of the wrongs to the colored race has been so full, that the blackest man among us could not state it better. I appreciate all which the first speaker (Mr. Phillips) said so well. I enter fully into the criticisms—the severe criticisms—so needed and so just—of the state of things to-day; and for my interest in the people with whom I am identified, I would not lessen the force of those words, for I feel their truth. But I appreciate also the position of your President (Mr. Garrison), who has just addressed you, and feel with him that much of the failure of Mr. Lincoln to do duty is owing to the failure of the people of the land whose agent he is. Do we complain that Mr. Lincoln and the government do not recognize the manhood of the negro? Let us find the cause of that in the people at home. Just so long as citizens of New York exclude respectable colored persons from railway cars on the streets; just so long as the people of the city exclude the colored children from several wards together, on the ground of color merely; just so long as even in some of the churches of the city there are negro pews—just so long is there evidence that the people themselves do not recognize the manhood of the black man of this country.

Though the nation has been cast into the crucible of War, with waves of Death sweeping, for three years past, through our very hearts, the Nation has yet to learn one of the first truths proclaimed by this organization—namely, that everywhere and at any time

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Though the nation has been cast into the crucible of War, with waves of Death sweeping, for three years past, through our very hearts, the Nation has yet to learn one of the first truths proclaimed by this organization—namely, that everywhere and at any time

emancipation in little or large numbers is safe policy. And I deem it fitting upon this Thirty-first Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society to note the fact that to-day we have a perfect vindication of your principles, if not of all your policy—to point to the realization of the great truth of the safety of emancipation, vindicated, without exception, in every case of thorough emancipation around the world. In 1794, in St. Domingo, Cayenne, Guadaloupe and Martinique; in 1810, in Canada; in 1811, in Java; in 1815, in Ceylon; in 1816, in Buenos Ayres; in 1819, in St. Helena; in 1821, in Colombia and Chili; in 1823, in Cape Colony; in 1825, in Malacca; in 1826, in Bolivia and the Southern Provinces of Burmah; in 1828, in Peru, Guat[ema]la and Monte Video; 1834, in the British Isles in the Caribbean Sea; and since, in British India and other places too numerous to mention. It may not be known to you, that even in Canada, now so free, African slavery existed, and from 1803 to 1810, the poor slave groaned—groaned there as he has since groaned here. They then ran to the United States for protection in freedom, as since, to the number of fifty thousand, the United States slaves have run to Canada. There they toiled and pined—unheeded by even the Governors of the land, until a Governor came from England who understood England's principles. He appealed to the Chief Justice of Montreal to declare the law—and that Chief Justice, going back to 1772, declared slavery to be so incompatible with British law, that immediately, every slave in Canada must go free. Those thousands thus introduced to manhood united with the fifty thousand escaped slaves of this country, have wrought on, until

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their claim to manhood has been vindicated. Out of thirty thousand cases examined into, we find that twenty-seven thousand of these new-made freemen have had no aid for their physical wants from any source whatever. A vindication, Mr. President, of themselves and of your principles as well. The principles of equality for human beings in the church and before the law of the land urged by our Society in the early day, were responded to by the cry, "Let the blacks show themselves capable—it is not in them to rise." Here was another vindication from their own hands of their manhood disputed, denied, and of the truth of your principles.

Another point is, that the United States have been no exception to the rule. Take even Louisiana, where, as Mr. Phillips justly complains, serfdom has been substituted for slavery, and we find even there the manhood of the black man and his fitness for freedom vindicated. Col. Hawkes, Superintendent of Labor at New Orleans, says: "The Free Labor movement brought ten to twelve hundred refugees at public expense. Subsequently, conquests swelled the number to 20,000. Not an able-bodied man is there who does not support himself. Only two hundred (and these include 60 orphans) who are supported." It becomes me to be brief, considering that we are all anxious to hear the gentleman who is to follow me—and I omit other facts he gives as to schools, etc. For the same reason, I omit special reference to the West Indies.

These points which have risen up in the pathway of the nation and have become facts, the American Anti-Slavery Society fully believed, in its inception. They

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urged them, therefore, with might and main. Charged with infidelity as was this organization, it yet used Christian weapons to urge its work. The burden of all was the negro's manhood. The first Biblical truths I have remembered—truths burnt more deeply than others into my memory—were words read at these Anniversary Meetings, as read to-day, by the Garrisonian President of this Society, from the Book of Books, the Word of God. He pointed us through them, away back to the thunderings and lightnings of Sinai, where God, with his finger dipped in flame, wrote himself anti-slavery, saying, "I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: thou shalt have no other gods before me"—to the fact that the 16th verse of the following chapter makes him who said: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man"—also to say: "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand he shall surely be put to death"—thus making the right to life and the right to liberty, paramount and inalienable. That Jesus proclaimed it when he said: "Whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." That Peter thundered it forth on the astonished ears of the haughty Jew—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." That Paul attested the love he had for liberty by saying, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, *except these bonds*." And that voice has been going around the world, like a wave of fire, licking up the despotisms of the world, but yet,

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through this society and by other means, [...]ng to whisper in the ear of the bleeding bondman—"Thou thyself art also a man!" This manhood thus vindicated by the friends of the black man, and the black man himself, deserves a mention by us to-day. At this Thirty-first Anniversary, we can point to results as they stand up proudly in the pathway of the nation. Thus the colored people have risen despite the objection of their color, despite all obstacles, by the help of their friends and by self-help, by events, by war rolling its red waves through half a million hearts and homes, sweeping out the jewels in those hearts and homes and burying them out of sight, until they shall be taken up to make up His jewels—but at the same time purging the issues of national life, and preparing them to be issues for national freedom. In accord with the first resolution proposed to-day, I reverently recognize the hand of God, and thank him for his faithfulness to the poor bound slav[e.] Thanks for war even, if it bring liberty. In the colored people's name, whom, in part, I represent, I thank you, Mr. President, for your earnest and able support in their uplifting. Thanks, that amid obloquy, danger, and death, you were unawed. Thanks, that in the Old World and in the New you would be heard. May you long live to enjoy the blessings of a country truly free! And when the closing hours of your benevolent, eventful life shall have come they will be surrounded with a halo of glory all the more brilliant, because you labored to release those whom others had bound, and to lift up to the light the poorest man of America.

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What shall I say to your coadjutors upon this platform—one of whom has preceded, and the other of whom will follow me? *Par nobile fratrum*. One in the Old World and the other in the New. Both the polished, unbending defenders of liberty here—both the implacable foes of tyranny everywhere. But for George Thompson, I may add, that India in the West and India in the East—Great Britain in the mists of the North, and this great nation, the child of Great Britain, in the clear sky of the farther south will, together, weave a chaplet for him while living, and will strew roses upon his grave when dead, because in every land he did what he could in the homes of the rich and the huts of the poor, so give liberty back to the world as she came from God, fair and pure as an angel, unmarred by sorrow, untouched by crime, unfettered by chains.

To all the members of this Society—to the men and women—from a full heart, and from a people whose hearts are full, thanks, thanks, to all.

But, in conclusion, from this table-land of rest this morning, we see all over the vast plains before us, that there is work to be done. It is well to look backward over the work of thirty-one years, but we must look forward, as well. There is work to be done. Slavery is not dead yet—for all the songs we hear chanted over its grave—and your work, sir, and mine, and the work of all of us, is to throttle it where it lives, and give it no quarter until we drive it from the land. Your national danger, as has been well intimated, is not rebellion—that can be met and overthrown—but the manner of dealing with the rebellion. Your danger is not slavery merely as against liberty

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—for slavery would always go under. J. M. Mason, author of the Fugitive Slave Bill, when visiting, years ago, a house in New Jersey where I slept the other night, admitted that Slavery and Liberty were not equals—but that the thrift of the North was the thrift of Freedom. Slavery must thus always go under. That, therefore, is not your danger, but this—the manner of dealing with slavery.

I have been asked to describe slavery. If I were a painter I would attempt it. I would erect in the corner there a huge engine, working from daylight to dark, and from dark to daylight, busy, busy, busy, with its iron arms crushing the body and the soul. I would place beyond it the remains of the victims who have already passed through the machine—already has it destroyed its millions—and even now there are hundreds of thousands chained for its murderous purposes. And yet the work goes on! Listen, as its ponderous wheels creak over the bones of innocent men, and women, and children. And there I would dig a pool nearly filled with clotted blood, that its stench might come up continually to remind us of the cruelties of slavery. And there I would make the entrance to a tomb and part prison, leading on and on to the Mexican Gulf. With the living slave I would place the mangled remains, the heart's best affections, the unrealized desire, the hope for freedom, the aspiration for a higher existence, the manhood. I would raise over it a mound, and I would picture some one like Lovejoy, and Work, and Burr, and Thompson, and Torrey, and John Brown, walking among the graves, rolling away the stone from the door of the prison-sepulchre, and

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[l]etting in the light of freedom. And there I would show relentless persecution following them: Lovejoy with a rifle, Work and Torrey with a penitentiary sentence, George Thompson and others with mobs, and Wm. Lloyd Garrison with a rope around his neck, and a prison for his home. I would erect in the centre there a heartless, hellish image, with a giant's strength, a scorpion's sting, and a hyena's heart, to clutch each of us as we entered those doors, and in his lap a huge cup to receive your hard earnings, as the daily demand of of the demon to sustain his system. I would crown him king. I would then close up every window here but one, that the work of darkness might go on, with only light enough to make it more dismal. I would then go up and down the land, and bring men and women to see it as it is—until its impression should be daguerreotyped upon the soul—until men and women should feel that liberty is above all price, and that slavery must die.

All would unite with us in saying then—

“Down let the shrine of Moloch sink,
And leave no traces where it stood;
Nor longer let its idol drink
Its daily cup of human blood;
But rear another altar there,
To truth, and love, and mercy given—
And Freedom's gift and Freedom's prayer
Shall call an answer down from Heaven.”

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