



DECLARATION

OF THE

NATIONAL ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION.

The Convention, assembled in the City of Philadelphia to organize a National Anti-Slavery Society, promptly seize the opportunity to promulgate the following DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS, as cherished by them in relation to the enslavement of one-sixth portion of the American people.

More than fifty-seven years have elapsed since a band of patriots convened in this place, to devise measures for the deliverance of this country from a foreign yoke. The corner-stone upon which they founded the TEMPLE OF FREEDOM was broadly this—'that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of happiness.'

We have met together for the achievement of an enterprise, without which, that of our fathers is incomplete, and which, for its magnitude, solemnity, and probable results upon the destiny of the world, as far transcends theirs, as moral truth does physical force.

In purity of motive, in earnestness of zeal, in decision of purpose, in integrity of action, in steadfastness of faith, in sincerity of spirit, we would not be inferior to them.

Their principles led them to wage war against their oppressors, and to spill human blood like water, in order to be free. Ours forbid the doing of evil that good may come, and lead us to reject, and to entreat the oppressed to reject, the use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage—relying solely upon those which are spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

Their measures were physical resistance—the marshalling in arms—the hostile array—the mortal encounter. Ours shall be such only as the opposition of moral purity to moral corruption—the destruction of error by the potency of truth—the overthrow of prejudice by the power of love—and the abolition of slavery by the spirit of repentance.

Their grievances, great as they were, were trifling in comparison with the wrongs and sufferings of those for whom we plead. Our fathers were never slaves—never bought and sold like cattle—never shut out from the light of knowledge and religion—never subjected to the lash of brutal taskmasters.

But those, for whose emancipation we are striving,—constituting at the present time at least one-sixth part of our countrymen,—are recognised by the laws, and treated by their fellow beings, as marketable commodities—goods and chattels—as brute beasts;—are plundered daily of the fruits of their toil without redress;—really enjoy no constitutional nor legal protection from licentious and murderous outrages upon their persons;—are ruthlessly torn asunder—the tender babe from the arms of its frantic mother—the heart-broken wife from her weeping husband—at the caprice or pleasure of irresponsible tyrants;—and, for the crime of having a dark complexion, suffer the pangs of hunger, the infliction of stripes, and the ignominy of brutal servitude. They are kept in heathenish darkness by laws expressly enacted to make their instruction a criminal offence.

These are the prominent circumstances in the condition of more than TWO MILLIONS of our people, the proof of which may be found in thousands of indisputable facts, and in the laws of the slaveholding States.

Hence we maintain—

That in view of the civil and religious privileges of this nation, the guilt of its oppression is unequalled by any other on the face of the earth;—and, therefore,

That it is bound to repent instantly, to undo the heavy burden, to break every yoke, and to let the oppressed go free.

We further maintain—

That no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother—to hold or acknowledge him, for one moment, as a piece of merchandise—to keep back his hire by fraud—or to brutalize his mind by denying him the means of intellectual, social and moral improvement.

The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable. To invade it, is to usurp the prerogative of Jehovah. Every man has a right to his own body—to the products of his own labor—to the protection of law—and to the common advantages of society.

It is piracy to buy or steal a native African, and subject him to servitude. Surely the sin is as great to enslave an AMERICAN as an AFRICAN.

Therefore we believe and affirm—

That there is no difference, in principle, between the African slave trade and American slavery.

That every American citizen, who retains a human being in involuntary bondage, is [according to Scripture] a MAN-STEALER;

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free, and brought under the protection of law;

That if they had lived from the time of Pharaoh down to the present period, and had been entailed through successive generations, their right to be free could never have been alienated, but their claims would have constantly risen in solemnity;

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are therefore before God utterly null and void; being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the relations, endearments and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of all the holy commandments—and that therefore they ought to be instantly abrogated.

We further believe and affirm—

That all persons of color who possess the qualifications which are demanded of others, ought to be admitted forthwith to the enjoyment of the same privileges, and the exercise of the same prerogatives, as others; and that the paths of preferment, of wealth, and of intelligence, should be opened as widely to them as to persons of a white complexion.

We maintain that no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves—

Because it would be a surrender of the great fundamental principle that man cannot hold property in man;

Because SLAVERY IS A CRIME, AND THEREFORE IT IS NOT AN ARTICLE TO BE SOLD;

Because the holders of slaves are not the just proprietors of what they claim;—freeing the slaves is not depriving them of property, but restoring it to the right owner—it is not wronging the master, but righting the slave—restoring him to himself;

Because immediate and general emancipation would only destroy nominal, not real property; it would not amputate a limb or break a bone of the slaves, but by infusing motives into their breasts, would make them doubly valuable to the masters as free laborers; and

Because if compensation is to be given at all, it should be given to the outraged and guiltless slaves, and not to those who have plundered and abused them.

We regard, as delusive, cruel and dangerous, any scheme of expatriation which pretends to aid, either directly or indirectly, in the emancipation of the slaves, or to be a substitute for the immediate and total abolition of slavery.

We fully and unanimously recognise the sovereignty of each State, to legislate exclusively on the subject of the slavery which is tolerated within its limits. We concede that Congress, under the present national compact, has no right to interfere with any of the slave States, in relation to this momentous subject.

But we maintain that Congress has a right, and is solemnly bound, to suppress the domestic slave trade between the several States, and to abolish slavery in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction.

We also maintain that there are, at the present time, the highest obligations resting upon the people of the free States, to remove slavery by moral and political action, as prescribed in the Constitution of the United States. They are now living under a pledge of their tremendous physical force to fasten the galling fetters of tyranny upon the limbs of millions in the southern States;—galling fetters which are able to be called at any moment to suppress a general insurrection of the slaves;—they authorise the slave owner to perpetuate his oppression;—they support a property, and thus enable him to perpetuate his oppression;—they support a standing army at the south for its protection;—and they seize the slave who has escaped into their territories, and send him back to be tortured by an enraged master or a brutal driver.

This relation to slavery is criminal and full of danger: IT MUST BE BROKEN UP.

These are our views and principles—these, our designs and measures. With entire confidence in the overruling justice of God, we plant ourselves upon the Declaration of our Independence, and upon the truths of Divine Revelation, as upon the EVERLASTING ROCK.

We shall organize Anti-Slavery Societies, if possible, in every city, town and village of our land.

We shall send forth Agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty and rebuke.

We shall circulate, unsparingly and extensively, anti-slavery tracts and periodicals.

We shall enlist the PULPIT and the PRESS in the cause of the suffering and the dumb.

We shall aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery.

We shall encourage the labor of freemen over that of the slaves, by giving a preference to their productions;—and

We shall spare no exertions nor means to bring the whole nation to speedy repentance.

Our trust for victory is solely in GOD. We may be personally defeated, but our principles never. TRUTH, JUSTICE, REASON, HUMANITY, must and will gloriously triumph. Already a host is coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and the prospect before us is full of encouragement.

Submitting this DECLARATION to the candid examination of the people of this country, and of the friends of liberty all over the world, we hereby affix our signatures to it;—pledging ourselves that, under the guidance and by the help of Almighty God, we will do all that in us lies, consistently with this Declaration of our principles, to overthrow the most execrable system of slavery that has ever been witnessed upon earth—to deliver our land from its deadliest curse—to wipe out the foulest stain which rests upon our national escutcheon—and to secure to the colored population of the United States all the rights and privileges which belong to them as men and as Americans—come what may to our persons, our interests, or our reputations—whether we live to witness the triumph of JUSTICE, LIBERTY and HUMANITY, or perish untimely as martyrs in this great, benevolent and holy cause.

- DAVID THURSTON, NATHAN WINSLOW, JOSEPH SOUTHWICK, JAMES FREDERICK OTIS, ISAAC WINSLOW, DAVID CAMPBELL, ORSON S. MURRAY, DANIEL S. SOUTHWAY, EPHRAIM L. APRON, JOSHUA COFFIN, AMOS A. PHELPS, JOHN G. WHITTIER, HORACE P. WAKFIELD, JAMES GEORGE BARBADOS, DAVID T. KIMBALL, Jun. DANIEL E. JEWETT, JOHN REID CAMPBELL, NATHAN SOUTHARD, ARNOLD BUFFUM, WILLIAM GREEN, Jun. ABRAHAM L. COX, WILLIAM GOODELL, ELIZUR WRIGHT, Jr. CHARLES W. DENISON, JOHN FROST, GEORGE BOURNE, CHAS. LEWIS, EDWIN P. ATLEE, ROBERT PURVIS, JAMES MCCRUMMELL, THOMAS SHIPLEY.

- BARTHOLOMEW FUSSELL, DAVID JONES, ENOCH MACK, 2d, JAMES DOUGLASS, JOHN MCCULLOUGH, EDWIN P. ATLEE, WILLIAM M. MCKIM, JAMES LLOYD GARRISON, RAY POTTER, JOHN PRENTICE, GEORGE W. BENSON, SAMUEL JOSEPH MAY, ALPHRUS KINGSEY, JR. EDWIN A. STILLMAN, SIMON SMITH JOCELYN, ROBERT BERNARD HALL, BERAH GREEN, JOHN SHARP, JR., JOHN RANKIN, AARON VICKERS, JOHN B. SLEEPER, LUCIUS GILLINGHAM, JOHN SHARP, JR., JAMES MOTT, JAMES WHITE, JONATHAN PARKHURST, CHARLES GILLINGHAM, JOHN M. STERLING, MILTON SUTLIF, LEVI SUTLIF, THOMAS WHITSON.

Signed in the Adelpi Hall, in the City of Philadelphia, on the sixth day of December, A. D. 1833.

[From the Emancipator.]

WHITESBORO', ONEIDA INSTITUTE, November 5, 1833.

To the Editor of the Emancipator:

Sir,—Believing that it tends much to encourage the friends of a good cause to give publicity to every accession to its strength however small, we send for insertion, in your columns, the Constitution of the Anti-Slavery Society of Oneida Institute.

PREAMBLE.

Whereas this nation, contrary to the commands of God, and every principle of justice and humanity, now holds in bondage more than two millions of human beings. Whereas, we believe it to be both right and expedient that they should be immediately emancipated, and placed in full possession of those rights which are set forth in the Declaration of our Independence as the 'inalienable rights of all men.' Whereas, we believe that the doing of this, so far from endangering the lawful property and lives of our Southern brethren, is absolutely necessary for the preservation of both. Therefore, we do hereby declare, that a scheme of expatriation now in operation ostentatiously for the removal of the free people of color, instead of having a favorable influence against the institution of Slavery, strongly tends to perpetuate it. We therefore believe that no scheme of expatriation, either voluntary or compulsory, can be adequate to the extinction of this evil. We resolve to form ourselves into a Society, to be governed by the following

CONSTITUTION.

Article 1. This Society shall be called the 'Anti-Slavery Society of Oneida Institute.' Art. 2. The object of this Society shall be to endeavor, by all means sanctioned by Law, Humanity and Religion, to effect the immediate abolition of Slavery in the United States without expatriation—to improve the character and condition of the free people of color—to inform and correct public opinion in relation to their situation and rights, and obtain for them civil and political rights and privileges equal with those of the whites.

The following are the officers of the Society: Hiram Foots, President; Amos M. Stone, Vice-President; Isaac B. Hoady, Cor. Secretary; Amnon Gaston, Rec. Secretary; Benjamin Barber, Treasurer; Clancy T. Gaston, Philander Barber, Wm. Smith, Henry H. Loomis, Amos D. Hollister, Directors.

HALLOWELL ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

An adjourned meeting of the friends of immediate abolition, was held at the Town Hall, on Tuesday evening, 20th ult. for the purpose of forming an Anti-Slavery Society. After the adoption of a Constitution, the following gentlemen were chosen officers of the Society for the ensuing year.

- EBENEZER DOLE, President. PAUL STICKNEY, Vice President. ROBERT G. BARBER, Treasurer. GEORGE SHEPARD, Cor. Secretary. RICHARD D. RICE, Rec. Secretary.

[For the Liberator.]

SPECIMEN OF COLONIZATION UNFAIRNESS.

MR. EDITOR,—You may have seen in the New York 'Emancipator,' a few weeks since, a short account, with my signature, of a Colonization meeting, just before, held in the city of Albany. The year readers may understand the unfairness, or rather specimen of duplicity, of which I complain. I will repeat, that, on the evening of Oct. 2, the very time of the pro-slavery mob in New York, I attended a meeting in the city of Troy, seven miles from Albany, appointed to hear an address from Lt. Gov. Williams of the Col. of Liberia, a colored gentleman, who has recently finished his travels in the States, in labor to promote the interests of the Colony, by increasing the funds of the American Colonization Society. Although the audience at Troy, were denied the privilege of hearing the complete address from so distinguished a character, by reason as we then learnt, of his unexpected haste in returning to Liberia, by the ship engaged. Rev. Mr. Danforth, General Agent of the Colonization Society, was present. From him we learnt the reason of the non-attendance of Mr. Williams, who was expected; and likewise, that the evening before, the said Mr. Williams addressed a very large audience in Albany, who listened with much interest to the statements he made concerning his going to Liberia, &c. But what was more striking to me, he informed us that the good people of Albany, at the close of the meeting, passed resolutions to the following effect,—(I am unable to give the language).—That with the blessing of God, they would endeavor to raise, by subscription, for the removal and colonizing of 100 free colored persons of the United States, to Liberia.

That as a condition of their raising or paying said funds, the said 100 emigrants should be of good or suitable character to become members of such a Colony.

That they should, previously to their embarking, be organized into a Temperance Society, &c.

That on arriving at Liberia, they should be established as a settlement at some distance, or distinct from the settlement already there.

This, I thought—though adverse to the present plans of the Colonization Society,—is doing very well, comparatively; since, from the knowledge I have of the more enlightened and respectable people of color in our land, I have so much assurance that a 100 of such emigrants will never be found in the United States, who will be satisfied with their own consent, in Africa.

Besides, I was gratified to learn the apparent discovery of the good people of Albany, in relation to the wretchedness and degradation of the Colony already in Liberia, by reason of the extreme unfitness of the great majority of those who have been sent out to form a promising Colony; and by reason also of the intemperance scattered in Africa, by the sale, in the Colony, of at least 1000 or 2000 barrels of ardent spirits annually; and that, too, by the acknowledged ministers of Christ, or Missionaries with others, sent out for the propagation of the gospel in Africa.

The resolutions of the good people of Albany, I conceived, if published in the Colonization papers, would be one of the best things I had seen to promote inquiry, and pour light on the disastrous results of the measures now pursued by the slaveholding powers of the South, which have, hitherto, propelled onward the car of Colonizationism.

Though I have not had access to many of the anti-abolition papers since that time, I am led to the belief that not one of them has given the proceedings of the meeting at Albany, as they were variously stated by Mr. Danforth in the meetings at Troy on the next evening. I am led to this conclusion from the consideration that, so far as my acquaintance with their measures extends, they have heretofore carefully excluded from their papers, every thing which, however true, has been calculated to enlighten their readers, on the true merits of abolitionism, and the demerits of the present Colonization system.

Of the same unfairness, or duplicity, I am also convinced by reading the account of the said Albany Resolutions in the New York Observer, a religious and very respectable periodical, and decidedly opposed to what the editors and contributors of the said principles and plans of the Anti-Slavery Societies of this country. The account of the Albany Colonization meeting, which I read in the Observer, barely stated that a resolution was passed at said meeting, to raise funds for the colonization of 100 emigrants in Liberia; and that something was said, or proposed, by some gentleman, in regard to the qualifications or character of the emigrants to be sent out, without giving the reader to suspect that the people of Albany are resolved to support Colonizationism only on principles of special expediency or that they feel unwilling to contribute to the support of the demagogical and wolf in the sheep's clothing of that Society as it now exists.

This is not mentioned as the fault of the editors of the New York Observer, because, altogether likely, they never learnt any thing further of the Albany meeting, from the friends of the Colonization Society. Though the same duplicity appears in those who understandingly furnish such mutilated statements of the press.



