GERRET HENDRICKS, DERICK OP DE GRAEFF, FRANCIS DANIELL PASTORIUS, AND ABRAHAM OP DEN GRAEF

Resolution of Germantown Mennonites

This document, the earliest known expression of public opposition to slavery in the American colonies, was drafted and signed by four former Mennonites recently converted to Quakerism. The sharply argued petition was approved at the February 18, 1688 meeting of Quakers in Germantown, Pennsylvania (after 1854 a neighborhood in northwest Philadelphia), to be presented next to the monthly Quaker meeting at the house of Richard Worrell in nearby Dublin Township. It was subsequently read at the Quarterly Meeting in Philadelphia and the Yearly Meeting at Burlington, New Jersey, where "It was adjudged not to be so proper for this Meeting to give a Positive Judgment in the case, It having so General a Relation to many other Parts."

This is to ye Monthly Meeting held at Rigert Worrells. These are the reasons why we are against the traffick of men's-body as followeth: Is there any that would be done or handled at this manner? viz. to be sold or made a slave for all the time of his life? How fearfull & fainthearted are many on sea when they see a strange vassel being afraid it should be a Turck, and they should be tacken and sold for Slaves in Turckey. Now what is this better done as Turcks doe? yea rather is it worse for them, wch say they are Christians for we hear, that ye most part of such Negers are brought heither against their will & consent, and that many of them are stollen. Now tho' they are black, we cannot conceive there is more liberty to have them slaves, as it is to have other white ones. There is a saying, that we shall doe to all men, licke as we will be done our selves: macking no difference of what generation, descent, or Colour they are. And those who steal or robb men, and those who buy or purchase them, are they not all alicke? Here is liberty of Conscience, wch is right & reasonable, here ought to be lickewise liberty

GOLDEN RULE"

of ye body, except of evildoers, wch is an other case. But to bring men hither, or to robb and sell them against their will, we stand against. In Europe there are many oppressed for Conscience sacke; and here there are those oppressed wch are of a black Colour. And we, who know that men must not commit adultery, some do commit adultery in others, separating wifes from their housbands, and giving them to others and some sell the children of those poor Creatures to other men. Oh, doe consider well this things, you who doe it, if you would be done at this manner? and if it is done according Christianity? you surpass Holland and Germany in this thing. This mackes an ill report in all those Countries of Europe, where they hear off, that ye Quackers doe here handel men, Licke they handel there ye Cattle; and for that reason some have no mind or inclination to come hither. And who shall maintaine this your cause or plaid for it! Truely we can not do so except you shall inform us better hereoff, viz. that christians have liberty to practise this things. Pray! What thing in the world can be done worse towarts us then if men should robb or steal us away & sell us for slaves to strange Countries, separating housband from their wife & children. Being now this is not done at that manner we will be done at, therefore we contradict & are against this traffick of men body. And we who profess that it is not lawfull to steal, must lickewise avoid to purchase such things as are stolen, but rather help to stop this robbing and stealing if possibel and such men ought to be delivred out of ye hands of ye Robbers and set free as well as in Europe. Then is Pensilvania to have a good report, in stead it hath now a bad one for this sacke in other Countries. Especially whereas ye Europeans are desirous to know in what manner ye Quackers doe rule in their Province & most of them doe loock upon us with an envious eye. But if this is done well, what shall we say, is don evil?

If once these slaves (wch they say are so wicked and stubbern men) should joint themselves, fight for their freedom and handel their masters & mastrisses, as they did handel them before; will these masters & mastrisses tacke the sword at hand & warr against these poor slaves, licke we are able to believe, some will not refuse to doe? Or have these negers not as much right to fight for their freedom, as you have to keep them slaves?

Now consider well this thing, if it is good or bad? and in case

SIN VIOLATES COMMANDMENTS

SLAVES HAVE RIGHT TO FIGHT BACK

you find it to be good to handel these blacks at that manner, we desire & require you hereby lovingly that you may informe us herein, which at this time never was done, viz. that Christians have Liberty to do so, to the end we shall be satisfied in this point, & satisfie lickewise our good friends & acquaintances in our natif Country, to whose it is a terrour or fairfull thing that men should be handeld so in Pensilvania.

This is from our meeting at Germantown hold ye 18 of the 2 month 1688 to be delivred to the monthly meeting at Richard Warrels.

gerret hendricks
derick op de graeff
Francis daniell Pastorius
Abraham op den graef

(1688)

be provoked to blaspheme against the blessed Name of Christ, by reason of the unparallel'd Cruelty of these cruel and hard hearted pretended *Christians*! Surely the Lord doth behold their Oppressions & Afflictions, and will further visit for the same by his righteous and just Judgments, except they break off their sins by Repentance, and their Iniquity by shewing Mercy to these poor afflicted, tormented miserable Slaves!

Fifthly, Because Slaves and Souls of Men are some of the *Merchandize of Babylon* by which the Merchants of the Earth are made Rich; but those Riches which they have heaped together, through the cruel Oppression of these miserable Creatures, will be a means to draw Gods Judgments upon them; therefore, *Brethren,* let us hearken to the Voice of the Lord, who saith, *Come out of* Babylon, *my People, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not her Plagues; for her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembred her Iniquities; for he that leads into Captivity shall go into Captivity,* Rev. 18. 4, 5. & 13.10.

Given forth by our Monethly Meeting in Philadelphia, *the 13th day of the 8th Moneth,* 1693. *and recommended to all our Friends and Brethren, who are one with us in our Testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, and to all others professing* Christianity.

(1693)

SAMUEL SEWALL

The Selling of Joseph: A Memorial

A prominent Boston Puritan, Samuel Sewall (1652–1730) was a man of conscience who took courageous stances on a variety of issues. A member of the judiciary that presided over the Salem Witch Trials in 1692, five years later he became the only magistrate to publicly repent of his involvement. Throughout his life, he supported Indian Christian churches and funded scholarships for Indian students at Harvard. The miseries of African slaves also affected him. In 1700 he wote in his diary: "Having been long and much dissatisfied with the Trade of fetching Negroes from Guinea . . . I began to be uneasy that I had so long neglected doing anything." Five days later, he published *The Selling of Joseph*, the first antislavery tract to be printed in New England. Moved partly by his unsuccessful efforts to secure the freedom of a slave named Adam from John Saffin, a Boston merchant and judge who published a defense of slavery in response to Sewall the next year, Sewall refuted several common defenses of racial slavery, such as the argument that Abraham had owned slaves, the claim that only captives whose lives had been spared in war were sold as slaves, and the specious view that the blackness of Africans was the mark of a curse on descendants of the "house of Cham." Like his contemporaries in Philadelphia, Sewall used Christian doctrine to show the essential equality of blacks and whites, and he was the first to foreground the evils of sexual predation and the destruction of families that were inevitable consequences of slavery.

FIRST ANTISLAVERY TEXT IN N.E.

FOR AS MUCH *as* Liberty *is in real value next unto* Life: *None ought to part with it themselves, or deprive others of it, but upon most mature Consideration.*

The Numerousness of Slaves at this day in the Province, and the Uneasiness of them under their Slavery, hath put many upon thinking whether the Foundation of it be firmly and well laid; so as to sustain the Vast Weight that is built upon it. It is most certain that all Men, as they are the Sons of *Adam,* are Coheirs; and have equal Right unto Liberty, and all other outward Comforts of Life. GOD *hath given the Earth* [with all its Commodities] *unto the Sons of* Adam, *Psal* 115–16. *And hath*

made of One Blood, all Nations of Men, for to dwell on all the face of the Earth; and hath determined the Times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation: That they should seek the Lord. Forasmuch then as we are the Offspring of GOD &c. *Act* 17.26, 27, 29. Now although the Title given by the last ADAM, doth infinitely better Mens Estates, respecting GOD and themselves; and grants them a most beneficial and inviolable Lease under the Broad Seal of Heaven, who were before only Tenants at Will: Yet through the Indulgence of GOD to our First Parents after the Fall, the outward Estate of all and every of their Children, remains the same, as to one another. So that Originally, and Naturally, there is no such thing as Slavery. *Joseph* was rightfully no more a Slave to his Brethren than they were to him: and they had no more Authority to *Sell* him, than they had to *Slay* him. And if *they* had nothing to do to Sell him; the *Ishmaelites* bargaining with them, and paying down Twenty pieces of Silver, could not make a Title. Neither could *Potiphar* have any better Interest in him than the *Ishmaelites* had. *Gen.* 37.20, 27, 28. For he that shall in this case plead *Alteration of Property*, seems to have forfeited a great part of his own claim to Humanity. There is no proportion between Twenty Pieces of Silver, and LIBERTY. The Commodity it self is the Claimer. If *Arabian* Gold be imported in any quantities, most are afraid to meddle with it, though they might have it at easy rates; lest if it should have been wrongfully taken from the Owners, it should kindle a fire to the Consumption of their whole Estate. 'Tis pity there should be more Caution used in buying a Horse, or a little lifeless dust; than there is in purchasing Men and Women: Whenas they are the Offspring of GOD, and their Liberty is,

———*Auro pretiosior Omni.*

And seeing GOD hath said, *He that Stealeth a Man and Selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to Death*, Exod. 21.16. This Law being of Everlasting Equity, wherein Man Stealing is ranked amongst the most atrocious of Capital Crimes: What louder Cry can there be made of that Celebrated Warning,

Caveat Emptor!

And all things considered, it would conduce more to the Welfare of the Province, to have White Servants for a Term of Years, than to have Slaves for Life. Few can endure to hear of a Negro's being made free; and indeed they can seldom use their freedom well; yet their continual aspiring after their forbidden Liberty, renders them Unwilling Servants. And there is such a disparity in their Conditions, Colour & Hair, that they can never embody with us and grow up into orderly Families, to the Peopling of the Land: but still remain in our Body Politick as a kind of extravasat Blood. As many Negro men as there are among us, so many empty places there are in our Train Bands, and the places taken up of Men that might make Husbands for our Daughters. And the Sons and Daughters of *New England* would become more like *Jacob*, and *Rachel*, if this Slavery were thrust quite out of doors. Moreover it is too well known what Temptations Masters are under, to connive at the Fornication of their Slaves; lest they should be obliged to find them Wives, or pay their Fines. It seems to be practically pleaded that they might be Lawless; 'tis thought much of, that the Law should have Satisfaction for their Thefts, and other Immoralities; by which means, *Holiness to the Lord*, is more rarely engraven upon this sort of Servitude. It is likewise most lamentable to think, how in taking Negros out of *Africa*, and Selling of them here, That which GOD ha's joyned together men do boldly rend asunder; Men from their Country, Husbands from their Wives, Parents from their Children. How horrible is the Uncleanness, Mortality, if not Murder, that the Ships are guilty of that bring great Crouds of these miserable Men, and Women. Methinks, when we are bemoaning the barbarous Usage of our Friends and Kinsfolk in *Africa*: it might not be unseasonable to enquire whether we are not culpable in forcing the *Africans* to become Slaves amongst our selves. And it may be a question whether all the Benefit received by *Negro* Slaves, will balance the Accompt of Cash laid out upon them; and for the Redemption of our own enslaved Friends out of *Africa*. Besides all the Persons and Estates that have perished there.

Obj. 1. *These Blackamores are of the Posterity of* Cham, *and therefore are under the Curse of Slavery.* Gen. 9.25, 26, 27.

RACIAL DIFFERENCES 'TROUBLING PASSAGE"

SLAVE TRADE = SIN

CURSE OF CAIN

Answ. Of all Offices, one would not begg this; *viz.* Uncall'd for, to be an Executioner of the Vindictive Wrath of God; the extent and duration of which is to us uncertain. If this ever was a Commission; How do we know but that it is long since out of Date? Many have found it to their Cost, that a Prophetical Denunciation of Judgment against a Person or People, would not warrant them to inflict that evil. If it would, *Hazael* might justify himself in all he did against his Master, and the *Israelites*, from 2 *Kings* 8. 10, 12.

But it is possible that by cursory reading, this Text may have been mistaken. For *Canaan* is the Person Cursed three times over, without the mentioning of *Cham*. Good Expositors suppose the Curse entaild on him, and that this Prophesie was accomplished in the Extirpation of the *Canaanites*, and in the Servitude of the *Gibeonites*, *Vide Pareum*. Whereas the Blackmores are not descended of *Canaan*, but of *Cush*. Psal. 68.31. *Princes shall come out of Egypt* [Mizraim] *Ethopia* [Cush] *shall soon stretch out her hands unto God*. Under which Names, all *Africa* may be comprehended; and their Promised Conversion ought to be prayed for. *Jer.* 13.23. *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin?* This shews that Black Men are the Posterity of *Cush:* Who time out of mind have been distinguished by their Colour. And for want of the true, *Ovid* assigns a fabulous cause of it:

> *Sanguine tum credunt in corpora summa vocato*
> *Æthiopum populos nigrum traxisse colorem.*
> Metamorph. lib. 2.

Obj. 2. *The* Nigers *are brought out of a Pagan Country, into places where the Gospel is Preached.*

Answ. Evil must not be done, that good may come of it. The extraordinary and comprehensive Benefit accruing to the Church of God, and to *Joseph* personally, did not rectify his brethrens Sale of him. HIPPOCRACY

Obj. 3. *The* Africans *have Wars one with another. Our Ships bring lawful Captives taken in those Wars.*

Answ. For ought is known, their Wars are much such as were between *Jacob's* Sons and their Brother *Joseph*. If they be between Town and Town; Provincial, or National: Every War is upon one side Unjust. An Unlawful War can't make lawful Captives. And by Receiving, we are in danger to promote, and partake in their Barbarous Cruelties. I am sure, if some Gentlemen should go down to the *Brewsters* to take the Air, and Fish: And a stronger party from *Hull* should Surprise them, and Sell them for Slaves to a Ship outward bound: they would think themselves unjustly dealt with; both by Sellers and Buyers. And yet 'tis to be feared, we have no other kind of Title to our *Negers*. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Matt. 7.12.

Obj. 4. Abraham *had Servants bought with his Money, and born in his House.*

Answ. Until the Circumstances of *Abraham's* purchase be recorded, no Argument can be drawn from it. In the mean time, Charity obliges us to conclude, that He knew it was lawful and good.

It is Observable that the *Israelites* were strictly forbidden the buying, or selling one another for Slaves. *Levit.* 25.39, 46. *Jer.* 34.8–22. And GOD gaged His Blessing in lieu of any loss they might conceipt they suffered thereby. *Deut.* 15.18. And since the partition Wall is broken down, inordinate Self love should likewise be demolished. GOD expects that Christians should be of a more Ingenuous and benign frame of spirit. Christians should carry it to all the World, as the *Israelites* were to carry it one towards another. And for men obstinately to persist in holding their Neighbours and Brethren under the Rigor of perpetual Bondage, seems to be no proper way of gaining Assurance that God ha's given them Spiritual Freedom. Our Blessed Saviour ha's altered the Measures of the ancient Love-Song, and set it to a most Excellent New Tune, which all ought to be ambitious of Learning. *Matt.* 5. 43, 44. *John* 13. 34. These *Ethiopians*, as black as they are; seeing they are the Sons and Daughters of the First *Adam*, the Brethren and Sisters of the Last ADAM, and

PATRICK HENRY

Letter to John Alsop, January 13, 1773

Most famous for his exclamation "Give me Liberty, or Give me Death!", the Virginian Patrick Henry (1736–1799) was one of many founding fathers who professed a hatred of slavery but continued to hold slaves. In this letter to a Quaker friend living in Hudson, New York, Henry presents an extraordinary self-examination of his own hypocrisy: he views the keeping of slaves as an "abominable practice" and a "lamentable evil," but feels himself unable to overcome "the general inconvenience of living without them." The dark mood of his last paragraph foreshadows similar ruminations by Jefferson and others.

HANOVER, Va., Jan. 13, 1773.

DEAR SIR:—I take this opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of ANTHONY BENEZET'S book against the slave trade. I thank you for it. It is not a little surprising that Christianity, whose chief excellence consists in softening the human heart, in cherishing and improving its finer feelings, should encourage a practice so totally repugnant to the first impressions of right and wrong. What adds to the wonder is, that this abominable practice has been introduced in the most enlightened ages. Times that seem to have pretensions to boast of high improvements in arts, sciences and refined morality, have brought into general use, and guarded by many laws, a species of violence and tyranny which our more rude and barbarous, but more honest, ancestors detested.

Is it not amazing that at the time when the rights of humanity are defined and understood with precision, in a country, above all others, fond of liberty—that in such an age and in such a country we find men professing a religion the most humane, mild, meek, gentle and generous, adopting a principle as repugnant to humanity as it is inconsistent with the Bible and destructive to liberty? Every thinking, honest man rejects it in speculation. How few, in practice, from conscientious motives!

The world, in general, has denied your people a share of its honors; but the wise will ascribe to you a just tribute of virtuous

praise for the practice of a train of virtues, among which your disagreement to Slavery will be principally ranked. I cannot but wish well to a people whose system imitates the example of Him whose life was perfect; and believe me, I shall honor the Quakers for their noble efforts to abolish Slavery. It was equally calculated to promote moral and political good.

Would any one believe that I am master of slaves by my own purchase? I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living without them. I will not—I cannot justify it, however culpable my conduct. I will so far pay my devoir to Virtue, as to own the excellence and rectitude of her precepts, and to lament my want of conformity to them. I believe a time will come when an opportunity will be afforded to abolish this lamentable evil. Everything we can do, is to improve it, if it happens in our day; if not, let us transmit to our descendants, together with our slaves, a pity for their unhappy lot, and an abhorrence of Slavery. If we cannot reduce this wished-for reformation to practice, let us treat the unhappy victims with lenity. It is the furthest advancement we can make toward justice. It is a debt we owe to the purity of our religion, to show that it is at variance with that law which warrants Slavery.

Here is an instance that silent meetings (the scoff of Rev. doctors) have done that which learned and elaborate preaching cannot effect; so much preferable are the dictates of conscience, and a steady attention to its feelings, above the teaching of those men who pretend to have found a better guide. I exhort you to persevere in so worthy a resolution. Some of your people disagree, or at least are lukewarm in the Abolition of Slavery. Many treat the resolution of your meeting with ridicule; and among those who throw ridicule and contempt on it are clergymen whose surest guard against both ridicule and contempt, is a certain act of Assembly.

I know not where to stop. I could say many things on this subject, a serious review of which gives a gloomy perspective in future times. Excuse this scrawl, and believe me, with esteem, your humble servant.

PATRICK HENRY, Jr.

that justice to these oppressed people, which the nature of their several cases will allow, such as declaring their offspring free at a suitable age; and instead of extorting their service by severity of discipline, make way for their freedom, by giving them such an interest in their own labour as may stir them up to the utmost exertion of their vigour and industry, and encourage them to employ those talents and ingenuity, which are now depressed by slavery, for the general good; thus from grudging dangerous Slaves they may become willing minded labourers, equally concerned with their masters in promoting the safety and happiness of their country. It will be when measures of this kind take place in America, and when a final end is put to a horrible Slave Trade in England, that both countries may expect to flourish, under the blessing of Him who delights in Justice and Mercy; and has promised to reward every country, as well as individual, according to their deeds.

(1781)

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remembrance of his family and friends, whom he never expected to see any more, were the principal cause of his dejection and grief. Now can any whose mind is not rendered quite obdurate by the practice of oppression, or the love of gain, hear this relation without being affected with sympathy and sorrow; and doubtless the case of many of these afflicted people will be found to be attended with circumstances equally tragical and aggravating. And if we enquire of those Negroes who were brought from their native country, when children, we shall find many of them have been stolen away, when abroad from their parents on the roads, or watching their corn fields. Now TENDER PARENTS; and all who are real friends of LIBERTY; and you who are willing to read the book of Conscience, and those that are learned in the law, what can you say to these deplorable cases? When and how have these oppressed strangers forfeited their liberty; must not your heart assent to the declaration publickly made by a respectable member of the Assembly of Virginia? 'That there cannot be in nature, there is not in history, an instance in which every right of men is more flagrantly violated.' Does not justice loudly call for LIBERTY being restored to them? Is it not the duty of every dispenser of justice, who is not forgetful of his own humanity, to remember that they are men, and to declare them free. Where evils of such magnitude are neither inquired into nor redressed by those whose duty it is, 'to seek judgment, to relieve the oppressed, to judge for the fatherless, and plead for the widow,' Isa. 1. 17. what can be expected but that the groans and cries of these sufferers will reach HEAVEN, and what shall ye do 'when GOD riseth up, and when he visiteth.' What will ye answer him? Did not he that made them make us; and did not one fashion us in the womb. Job. xxxi. 14.

JUPITER HAMMON

from *A Dialogue, intitled, The Kind Master and the Dutiful Servant*

A household slave in Queens Village, Long Island (now part of New York City), Jupiter Hammon (1711–c. 1800) was the first published black poet (1761) in American history. With his poetic tribute to Phillis Wheatley in 1778, "An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatly, Ethiopian Poetess," in which one black writer publicly paid homage to another, Hammon initiated a consciously African American literary tradition. In this master/servant dialogue, Hammon carefully but forcefully expresses resistance to the master on theological grounds, not daring, as a slave, to offer a claim based on civil or natural rights.

MASTER.

1. Come my servant, follow me,
   According to thy place;
And surely God will be with thee,
   And send thee heav'nly grace.

SERVANT.

2. Dear Master, I will follow thee,
   According to thy word,
And pray that God may be with me,
   And save thee in the Lord.

MASTER.

3. My Servant, lovely is the Lord,
   And blest those servants be,
That truly love his holy word,
   And thus will follow me.

SERVANT.

4. Dear Master, that's my whole delight,
   Thy pleasure for to do;
As far as grace and truth's in sight,
   Thus far I'll surely go.

MASTER.

5. My Servant, grace proceeds from God,
And truth should be with thee;
Whence e'er you find it in his word,
Thus far come follow me.

SERVANT.

6. Dear Master, now without controul,
I quickly follow thee;
And pray that God would bless thy soul,
His heav'nly place to see.

MASTER.

7. My Servant, Heaven is high above,
Yea, higher than the sky:
I pray that God would grant his love,
Come follow me thereby.

SERVANT.

8. Dear Master, now I'll follow thee,
And trust upon the Lord;
The only safety that I see,
Is Jesus's holy word.

MASTER.

9. My Servant, follow Jesus now,
Our great victorious King;
Who governs all both high and low,
And searches things within.

SERVANT.

10. Dear Master I will follow thee,
When praying to our King;
It is the Lamb I plainly see,
Invites the sinner in.

MASTER.

11. My Servant, we are sinners all,
But follow after grace;
I pray that God would bless thy soul,
And fill thy heart with grace.

SERVANT.

12. Dear Master I shall follow then,
The voice of my great King;
As standing on some distant land,
Inviting sinners in.

MASTER.

13. My Servant we must all appear,
And follow then our King;
For sure he'll stand where sinners are,
To take true converts in.

SERVANT.

14. Dear Master, now if Jesus calls,
And sends his summons in;
We'll follow saints and angels all,
And come unto our King.

MASTER.

15. My Servant now come pray to God,
Consider well his call;
Strive to obey his holy word,
That Christ may love us all.

A LINE *on the present* WAR.

SERVANT.

16. Dear Master, now it is a time,
A time of great distress;
We'll follow after things divine,
And pray for happiness.

MASTER.

17. Then will the happy day appear,
That virtue shall increase;
Lay up the sword and drop the spear,
And nations seek for peace.

SERVANT.

18. Then shall we see the happy end,
Tho' still in some distress;
That distant foes shall act like friends,
And leave their wickedness.

MASTER.

19. We pray that God would give us grace,
And make us humble too;
Let ev'ry nation seek for peace,
And virtue make a show.

SERVANT.

20. Then we shall see the happy day,
That virtue is in power;
Each holy act shall have its sway,
Extend from shore to shore.

MASTER.

21. This is the work of God's own hand,
We see by precepts given;
To relieve distress and save the land,
Must be the pow'r of heav'n.

SERVANT.

22. Now glory be unto our God,
Let ev'ry nation sing;
Strive to obey his holy word,
That Christ may take them in.

MASTER.

23. Where endless joys shall never cease,
Blest Angels constant sing;
The glory of their God increase,
Hallelujahs to their King.

SERVANT.

24. Thus the Dialogue shall end,
Strive to obey the word;
When ev'ry nation act like friends,
Shall be the sons of God.

25. Believe me now my Christian friends,
Believe your friend call'd H A M M O N:
You cannot to your God attend,
And serve the God of Mammon.

(1782)

LEMUEL HAYNES

from *Liberty Further Extended: Or Free Thoughts on the Illegality of Slave-Keeping*

Abandoned as an infant by his black father and white mother in West Hartford, Connecticut, Lemuel Haynes (1753–1833) was raised in the Massachusetts household of Deacon David Rose. Haynes grew to be a bookish and religious man who, after fighting in the American Revolution, went on to become the first ordained black minister in America. He would spend thirty years, from 1788 to 1818, as minister of a congregation in West Rutland, Vermont, until factional squabbles led to his dismissal, and he finished out his days as a minister in nearby Granville, New York. As a young man engaged in the Revolutionary War, and perhaps inspired by the larger prospects of freedom that the fight for independence was opening up, Haynes composed this essay arguing for the intrinsic illegality of slavery. Whether inhibited by second thoughts about its possible reception or distracted by events of the war, Haynes never published it. The manuscript was not printed until 1983.

> We hold these truths to be self-Evident, that all men are created Equal, that they are Endowed By their Creator with Ceartain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happyness.
>
> *Congress.*

I know that those that are concerned in the Slave-trade, Do pretend to Bring arguments in vindication of their practise; yet if we give them a candid Examination, we shall find them (Even those of the most cogent kind) to be Essencially Deficient. We live in a day wherein *Liberty* & *freedom* is the subject of many millions Concern; and the important Struggle hath alread caused great Effusion of Blood; men seem to manifest the most sanguine resolution not to Let their natural rights go without their Lives go with them; a resolution, one would think Every one that has the Least Love to his country, or futer posterity, would fully confide in, yet while we are so zelous to maintain, and foster our own invaded rights, it cannot be tho't

impertinent for us Candidly to reflect on our own conduct, and I doubt not But that we shall find that subsisting in the midst of us, that may with propriety be stiled *Opression*, nay, much greater opression, than that which Englishmen seem so much to spurn at. I mean an oppression which they, themselves, impose upon others.

It is not my Business to Enquire into Every particular practise, that is practised in this Land, that may come under this Odeus Character; But what I have in view, is humbly to offer som free thoughts, on the practise of *Slave-keeping*. Opression, is not spoken of, nor ranked in the sacred oracles, among the Least of those sins, that are the procureing Caus of those signal Judgments, which god is pleas'd to bring upon the Children of men. Therefore let us attend. I mean to write with freedom, yet with the greatest Submission.

And the main proposition, which I intend for some Breif illustration is this, Namely, That an *African*, or, in other terms, *that a Negro may Justly Chalenge, and has an undeniable right to his Liberty: Consequently, the practise of Slave-keeping, which so much abounds in this Land is illicit.*

Every privilege that mankind Enjoy have their Origen from god; and whatever acts are passed in any Earthly Court, which are Derogatory to those Edicts that are passed in the Court of Heaven, the act is *void*. If I have a perticular previledg granted to me by god, and the act is not revoked nor the power that granted the benefit vacated, (as it is imposable but that god should Ever remain immutable) then he that would infringe upon my Benifit, assumes an unreasonable, and tyrannic power.

It hath pleased god to *make of one Blood all nations of men, for to dwell upon the face of the Earth.* Acts 17, 26. And as all are of one Species, so there are the same Laws, and aspiring principles placed in all nations; and the Effect that these Laws will produce, are Similar to Each other. Consequently we may suppose, that what is precious to one man, is precious to another, and what is irksom, or intolarable to one man, is so to another, consider'd in a Law of Nature. Therefore we may reasonably Conclude, that Liberty is Equally as precious to a *Black man*, as it is to a *white one*, and Bondage Equally as intollarable to the one as it is to the other: Seeing it Effects the Laws of nature Equally as much in the one as it Does in the other. But, as I

observed Before, those privileges that are granted to us By the Divine Being, no one has the Least right to take them from us without our consent; and there is Not the Least precept, or practise, in the Sacred Scriptures, that constitutes a Black man a Slave, any more than a white one.

(1770)

SAMUEL HOPKINS

from *A Dialogue, Concerning the Slavery of the Africans*

A Yale-educated theologian and reformer influenced by Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening, Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) was a Congregationalist pastor in Newport, Rhode Island, from 1770 until his death. Perhaps prompted by awareness that Newport-based ships were heavily involved in the slave trade, Hopkins spoke out against slavery from the 1770s through the 1790s. Hopkins addressed this sixty-three-page tract to "the Honorable Members of the Continental Congress," obviously hoping to move them to legislate against slavery. At the root of American hypocrisy in claiming liberty for its citizens and denying freedom to blacks, Hopkins believed, was "our education," which "has filled us with strong prejudices against them."

The present situation of our public affairs, and our struggle for liberty, and the abundant conversation this occasions in all companies; while the poor negroes look-on and hear, what an aversion we have to slavery, and how much liberty is prized; they often hearing it declared publicly and in private, as the voice of all, that slavery is more to be dreaded than death, and we are resolved to live free or die, &c. &c. This, I say, necessarily leads them to attend to their own wretched situation, more than otherwise they could. They see themselves deprived of all liberty and property, and their children after them, to the latest posterity, subjected to the will of those who appear to have no feeling for their misery, and are guilty of many instances of hard heartedness and cruelty towards them, while they think themselves very kind; and therefore to make the least complaint, would be deemed the height of arrogance and abuse: And often, if they have a comparatively good master now, with constant dread they see a young one growing up, who bids fair to rule over them, or their children, with rigour.

They see the slavery the *Americans* dread as worse than death, is lighter than a feather, compared to their heavy doom; and may be called liberty and happiness, when contrasted with

as to propose they should be set at liberty. What reason for this partiality? Ought this so to be? An impartial person, who is not under the prejudices of interest, education and custom, is shocked with it beyond all expression. The poor Negroes have sense enough to see and feel it, but have no friend to speak a word for them; none to whom they may complain.

(1776)

JOEL BARLOW

from *The Prospect of Peace;* from *The Columbiad*

A Yale graduate and chaplain during the Revolutionay War, Joel Barlow (1754–1812) was an American patriot who went on to a career in law and business while serving the country as a diplomat and statesman. He also became one of America's leading poets, self-consciously striving from his youth to create a national literature. Public service took its toll: he died in Europe on a diplomatic mission during the Napoleonic wars. In July 1778, invited to address the Yale commencement, Barlow delivered "The Prospect of Peace," with its audacious vision of a yet unborn nation where slavery would not exist. In the excerpt from *The Columbiad*, an epic modeled on classical precursors, Barlow uses the voice of Atlas (the mythical guardian of Africa) to denounce racial slavery. His closing prophecy darkly foreshadows the themes of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address almost sixty years later.

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from *The Prospect of Peace*

No grasping lord shall grind the neighbouring poor,
Starve numerous vassals to increase his store;
No cringing slave shall at his presence bend,
Shrink at his frown, and at his nod attend;
Afric's unhappy children, now no more
Shall feel the cruel chains they felt before,
But every State in this just mean agree,
To bless mankind, and set th' oppressed free.
Then, rapt in transport, each exulting slave
Shall taste that Boon which God and nature gave,
And, fir'd with virtue, join the common cause,
Protect our freedom and enjoy our laws.

IDEALIZED VISION

(July 23, 1778)

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from *The Columbiad*

Enslave my tribes! what, half mankind imban,
Then read, expound, enforce the rights of man!
Prove plain and clear how nature's hand of old
Cast all men equal in her human mould!
Their fibres, feelings, reasoning powers the same,
Like wants await them, like desires inflame.
Thro former times with learned book they tread,
Revise past ages and rejudge the dead,
Write, speak, avenge, for ancient sufferings feel,
Impale each tyrant on their pens of steel,
Declare how freemen can a world create,
And slaves and masters ruin every state.—
Enslave my tribes! and think, with dumb disdain,
To scape this arm and prove my vengeance vain!
But look! methinks beneath my foot I ken
A few chain'd things that seem no longer men;
Thy sons perchance! whom Barbary's coast can tell
The sweets of that loved scourge they wield so well.
Link'd in a line, beneath the driver's goad,
See how they stagger with their lifted load;
The shoulder'd rock, just wrencht from off my hill
And wet with drops their straining orbs distil,
Galls, grinds them sore, along the rampart led,
And the chain clanking counts the steps they tread.
By night close bolted in the bagnio's gloom,
Think how they ponder on their dreadful doom,
Recal the tender sire, the weeping bride,
The home, far sunder'd by a waste of tide,
Brood all the ties that once endear'd them there,
But now, strung stronger, edge their keen despair.
Till here a fouler fiend arrests their pace:
Plague, with his burning breath and bloated face,
With saffron eyes that thro the dungeon shine,
And the black tumors bursting from the groin,
Stalks o'er the slave; who, cowering on the sod,
Shrinks from the Demon and invokes his God,
Sucks hot contagion with his quivering breath,
And, rack'd with rending torture, sinks in death.

Nor shall these pangs atone the nation's crime;
Far heavier vengeance, in the march of time,
Attends them still; if still they dare debase
And hold inthrall'd the millions of my race;
A vengeance that shall shake the world's deep frame,
That heaven abhors and hell might shrink to name.

(1807)

Till CHRIST proclaim the CHRISTIAN JUBILEE,
Break every yoke, and set the Oppressed free—
Sheathe up, or to a ploughshare turn the sword,
Take to himself the pow'r, and reign king, priest, and LORD.

(1791)

BENJAMIN BANNEKER

from Copy of a Letter from Benjamin Banneker to the Secretary of State

A free black man born in Maryland, Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806) was a polymath who worked as a surveyor, studied math and astronomy, published almanacs, wrote poems, and quietly protested racial injustice. When he sent Thomas Jefferson a copy of his latest almanac in 1791, Banneker included this rather daring letter in which he quotes back to Jefferson lines from the Declaration of Independence in order to confront him with the hypocrisy of slaveholding in a nominally free society. Jefferson responded politely but noncommittally, saying of African Americans, "no body wishes more ardently to see a good system commenced, for raising the condition, both of their body and mind, to what it ought to be."

Maryland, Baltimore County, August 19, 1791.

SIR,

I am fully sensible of the greatness of that freedom, which I take with you on the present occasion; a liberty which seemed to me scarcely allowable, when I reflected on that distinguished and dignified station in which you stand, and the almost general prejudice and prepossession, which is so prevalent in the world against those of my complexion.

I suppose it is a truth too well attested to you, to need a proof here, that we are a race of beings, who have long labored under the abuse and censure of the world; that we have long been looked upon with an eye of contempt; and that we have long been considered rather as brutish than human, and scarcely capable of mental endowments.

Sir, I hope I may safely admit, in consequence of that report which hath reached me, that you are a man far less inflexible in those things of this nature, than many others; that you are measurably friendly, and well disposed towards us; and that you are willing and ready to lend your aid and assistance to our relief, from those many distresses, and numerous calamities, to which we are reduced.

Now Sir, if this is founded in truth, I apprehend you will embrace every opportunity, to eradicate that train of absurd and false ideas and opinions, which so generally prevails with respect to us; and that your sentiments are concurrent with mine, which are, that one universal Father hath given being to us all, and that he hath not only made us all of one flesh, but that he hath also, without partiality, afforded us all the same sensations and endowed us all with the same faculties; and that however variable we may be in society or religion, however diversified in situation or color, we are all of the same family, and stand in the same relation to him.

Sir, if these are sentiments of which you are fully persuaded, I hope you cannot but acknowledge, that it is the indispensible duty of those, who maintain for themselves the rights of human nature, and who possess the obligations of Christianity, to extend their power and influence to the relief of every part of the human race, from whatever burden or oppression they may unjustly labor under; and this, I apprehend, a full conviction of the truth and obligation of these principles should lead all to.

Sir, I have long been convinced, that if your love for yourselves, and for those inestimable laws, which preserved to you the rights of human nature, was founded on sincerity, you could not but be solicitious, that every individual, of whatever rank or distinction, might with you equally enjoy the blessings thereof; neither could you rest satisfied short of the most active effusion of your exertions, in order to their promotion from any state of degradation, to whch the unjustifiable cruelty and barbarism of men may have reduced them.

Sir, I freely and cheerfully acknowledge, that I am of the African race, and in that color which is natural to them of the deepest dye; and it is under a sense of the most profound gratitude to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, that I now confess to you, that I am not under that state of tyrannical thraldom and inhuman captivity, to which too many of my brethren are doomed, but that I have abundantly tasted of the fruition of those blessings, which proceed from that free and unequalled liberty with which you are favored; and which, I hope, you will willingly allow you have mercifully received, from the immediate hand of that Being, from whom proceedeth every good and perfect Gift.

Sir, suffer me to recal to your mind that time, in which the arms and tyranny of the British crown were exerted, with every powerful effort, in order to reduce you to a state of servitude: look back, I entreat you, on the variety of dangers to which you were exposed; reflect on that time, in which every human aid appeared unavailable, and in which even hope and fortitude wore the aspect of inability to the conflict, and you cannot but be led to a serious and grateful sense of your miraculous and providential preservation; you cannot but acknowledge, that the present freedom and tranquility which you enjoy you have mercifully received, and that it is the peculiar blessing of Heaven.

This, Sir, was a time when you clearly saw into the injustice of a state of slavery, and in which you had just apprehensions of the horrors of its condition. It was now that your abhorrence thereof was so excited, that you publicly held forth this true and invaluable doctrine, which is worthy to be recorded and remembered in all succeeding ages: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and that among these are, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Here was a time, in which your tender feelings for yourselves had engaged you thus to declare, you were then impressed with proper ideas of the great violation of liberty, and the free possession of those blessings, to which you were entitled by nature; but, Sir, how pitiable is it to reflect, that although you were so fully convinced of the benevolence of the Father of Mankind, and of his equal and impartial distribution of these rights and privileges, which he hath conferred upon them, that you should at the same time counteract his mercies, in detaining by fraud and violence so numerous a part of my brethren, under groaning captivity and cruel oppression, that you should at the same time be found guilty of that most criminal act, which you professedly detested in others, with respect to yourselves.

I suppose that your knowledge of the situation of my brethren, is too extensive to need a recital here; neither shall I presume to prescribe methods by which they may be relieved, otherwise than by recommending to you and all others, to wean yourselves from those narrow prejudices which you have imbibed with respect to them, and as Job proposed to his friends, "put

USE OF JEFFERSON'S WORDS

your soul in their souls' stead;" thus shall your hearts be enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards them; and thus shall you need neither the direction of myself or others, in what manner to proceed herein.

And now, Sir, although my sympathy and affection for my brethren hath caused my enlargement thus far, I ardently hope, that your candor and generosity will plead with you in my behalf, when I make known to you, that it was not originally my design; but having taken up my pen in order to direct to you, as a present, a copy of an Almanac, which I have calculated for the succeeding year, I was unexpectedly and unavoidably led thereto.

This calculation is the production of my arduous study, in this my advanced stage of life; for having long had unbounded desires to become acquainted with the secrets of nature, I have had to gratify my curiousity herein, through my own assiduous application to Astronomical Study, in which I need not recount to you the many difficulties and disadvantages, which I have had to encounter.

And although I had almost declined to make my calculation for the ensuing year, in consequence of that time which I had allotted therefor, being taken up at the Federal Territory, by the request of Mr. Andrew Ellicott, yet finding myself under several engagements to Printers of this state, to whom I had communicated my design, on my return to my place of residence, I industriously applied myself thereto, which I hope I have accomplished with correctness and accuracy; a copy of which I have taken the liberty to direct to you, and which I humbly request you will favorably receive; and although you may have the opportunity of perusing it after its publication, yet I choose to send it to you in manuscript previous thereto, that thereby you might not only have an earlier inspection, but that you might also view it in my own hand writing.

And now, Sir, I shall conclude, and subscribe myself, with the most profound respect,

Your most obedient humble servant,
BENJAMIN BANNEKER.

JONATHAN EDWARDS

from *The Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, and of the Slavery of the Africans*

Son of the Congregationalist minister Jonathan Edwards of Massachusetts, Jonathan Edwards (1745–1801) was educated at the College of New Jersey (as Princeton was first known), taught at Yale for many years, and was one of the leading theologians and preachers of his era. In September 1791 Edwards delivered this forceful sermon at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom, then published it as a thirty-seven-page pamphlet. In this excerpt, the ardent Calvinist makes clear that he finds not only slavery but racism "abominable." He writes, "The nations from Germany to Guinea have complexions of every shade from the fairest white, to a jetty black: and if a black complexion subject a nation or an individual to slavery, where shall slavery begin? or where shall it end?"

II. The slave-trade is wicked and abominable on account of the cruel manner in which it is carried on.

Beside the stealing or kidnapping of men, women and children, in the first instance, and the instigation of others to this abominable practice; the inhuman manner in which they are transported to America, and in which they are treated on their passage and in their subsequent slavery, is such as ought forever to deter every man from acting any part in this business, who has any regard to justice or humanity. They are crowded so closely into the holds and between the decks of vessels, that they have scarcely room to lie down, and sometimes not room to sit up in an erect posture; the men at the same time fastened together with irons by two and two; and all this in the most sultry climate. The consequence of the whole is, that the most dangerous and fatal diseases are soon bred among them, whereby vast numbers of those exported from Africa perish in the voyage: others in dread of that slavery which is before them, and in distress and despair from the loss of their parents, their children, their husbands, their wives, all their dear connections, and their dear native country itself, starve themselves to death

But show a single lesson to a slave.
Those heavenly doctrines have a liberal aim,
And practis'd, soon would abrogate the name.
Our blessed Lord descended to unbind
Those chains of darkness which enslave the mind;
He draws the veil of prejudice aside,
To cure us of our selfishness and pride:
These once remov'd, then Afric's sable race
No more among the brutal herd we place:
Are they not blest with intellectual powers,
Which prove their souls are excellent as ours?
The same immortal hopes to all are given,
One common Saviour and one common heaven.
When these exalted views th' ascendant gain,
Fraternal love will form a silken chain,
Whose band, encircling all the human race,
Will join the species in one large embrace.

(1805)

ABSALOM JONES

from *A Thanksgiving Sermon*

born a slave in Sussex, Delaware, and separated from his mother and siblings when his master brought him as a servant to Philadelphia in 1762. Absalom Jones (1746–1818) managed to educate himself, save money, and eventually purchase his wife's freedom and then, in 1784, his own. He went on to become a religious and community leader in Philadelphia, where in 1794 he founded St. Thomas's African Episcopal Church, the first black Episcopal church in the United States. It was there that he delivered this sermon, on the occasion of the abolition of the foreign slave trade by the United States and Great Britain.

EXODUS, iii. 7,–8.

And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.

THESE WORDS, my brethren, contain a short account of some of the circumstances which preceded the deliverance of the children of Israel from their captivity and bondage in Egypt. They mention, in the first place, their *affliction.* This consisted in the privation of liberty: they were slaves to the kings of Egypt, in common with their other subjects; and they were slaves to their fellow slaves. They were compelled to work in the open air, in one of the hottest climates in the world; and, probably, without a covering from the burning rays of the sun. Their work was of a laborious kind: it consisted of making bricks, and travelling, perhaps to a great distance, for the straw, or stubble, that was a component part of them. Their work was dealt out to them in tasks, and performed under the eye of vigilant and severe masters, who constantly upbraided them with idleness. The least deficiency, in the product of their labour, was punished by beating. Nor was this all. Their food was of the cheapest kind, and contained but little nourishment: it consisted chiefly of leeks and onions, which grew almost spontaneously in

the land of Egypt. Painful and distressing as these sufferings were, they constituted the smallest part of their misery. While the fields resounded with their cries in the day, their huts and hamlets were vocal at night with their lamentations over their sons; who were dragged from the arms of their mothers, and put to death by drowning, in order to prevent such an increase in their population, as to endanger the safety of the state by an insurrection. In this condition, thus degraded and oppressed, they passed nearly four hundred years. Ah! who can conceive of the measure of their sufferings, during that time? What tongue or pen, can compute the number of their sorrows? To them no morning or evening sun ever disclosed a single charm: to them, the beauties of spring, and the plenty of autumn had no attractions: even domestick endearments were scarcely known to them: all was misery; all was grief; all was despair.

Our text mentions, in the second place, that, in this situation, they were not forgotten by the God of their fathers, and the Father of the human race. Though, for wise reasons, he delayed to appear in their behalf for several hundred years, yet he was not indifferent to their sufferings. Our text tells us, that he saw their affliction, and heard their cry: his eye and his ear were constantly open to their complaint: every tear they shed was preserved, and every groan they uttered, was recorded; in order to testify, at a future day, against the authors of their oppressions. But our text goes further: it describes the Judge of the world to be so much moved, with what he saw and what he heard, that he rises from his throne—not to issue a command to the armies of angels that surrounded him to fly to the relief of his suffering children—but to come down from heaven, in his own person, in order to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians. Glory to God for this precious record of his power and goodness: let all nations of the earth praise him. *Clouds and darkness are round about him*, but *righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. O sing unto the Lord a new song, for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand and his holy arm hath gotten him the victory. He hath remembered his mercy and truth toward the house of Israel, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.*

The history of the world shows us, that the deliverance of the children of Israel from their bondage, is not the only instance

in which it has pleased God to appear in behalf of oppressed and distressed nations, as the deliverer of the innocent, and of those who call upon his name. He is as unchangeable in his nature and character, as he is in his wisdom and power. The great and blessed event, which we have this day met to celebrate, is a striking proof, that the God of heaven and earth is *the same, yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.* Yes, my brethren, the nations from which most of us have descended, and the country in which some of us were born, have been visited by the tender mercy of the Common Father of the human race. He has seen the affliction of our countrymen, with an eye of pity. He has seen the wicked arts, by which wars have been fomented among the different tribes of the Africans, in order to procure captives, for the purpose of selling them for slaves. He has seen ships fitted out from different ports in Europe and America, and freighted with trinkets to be exchanged for the bodies and souls of men. He has seen the anguish which has taken place, when parents have been torn from their children, and children from their parents, and conveyed, with their hands and feet bound in fetters, on board of ships prepared to receive them. He has seen them thrust in crowds into the holds of those ships, where many of them have perished from the want of air. He has seen such of them as have escaped from that noxious place of confinement, leap into the ocean; with a faint hope of swimming back to their native shore, or a determination to seek an early retreat from their impending misery, in a watery grave. He has seen them exposed for sale, like horses and cattle, upon the wharves; or, like bales of goods, in warehouses of West India and American sea ports. He has seen the pangs of separation between members of the same family. He has seen them driven into the sugar, the rice, and the tobacco fields, and compelled to work—in spite of the habits of ease which they derived from the natural fertility of their own country in the open air, beneath a burning sun, with scarcely as much clothing upon them as modesty required. He has seen them faint beneath the pressure of their labours. He has seen them return to their smoky huts in the evening, with nothing to satisfy their hunger but a scanty allowance of roots, and these, cultivated for themselves, on that day only, which God ordained as a day of rest for man and beast. He has seen the neglect with which their masters have treated their

immortal souls; not only in withholding religious instruction from them, but, in some instances, depriving them of access to the means of obtaining it. He has seen all the different modes of torture, by means of the whip, the screw, the pincers, and the red hot iron, which have been exercised upon their bodies by inhuman overseers: overseers, did I say? Yes: but not by these only. Our God has seen masters and mistresses, educated in fashionable life, sometimes take the instruments of torture into their own hands, and, deaf to the cries and shrieks of their agonizing slaves, exceed even their overseers in cruelty. Inhuman wretches! though You have been deaf to their cries and shrieks, they have been heard in Heaven. The ears of Jehovah have been constantly open to them: He has heard the prayers that have ascended from the hearts of his people; and he has, as in the case of his ancient and chosen people the Jews, *come down to deliver* our suffering countrymen from the hands of their oppressors. He *came down* into the United States, when they declared, in the constitution which they framed in 1788, that the trade in our African fellow-men, should cease in the year 1808: He *came down* into the British Parliament, when they passed a law to put an end to the same iniquitous trade in May, 1807: He *came down* into the Congress of the United States, the last winter, when they passed a similar law, the operation of which commences on this happy day. Dear land of our ancestors! thou shalt no more be stained with the blood of thy children, shed by British and American hands: the ocean shall no more afford a refuge to their bodies, from impending slavery: nor shall the shores of the British West India islands, and of the United States, any more witness the anguish of families parted for ever by a publick sale. For this signal interposition of the God of mercies, in behalf of our brethren, it becomes us this day to offer up our united thanks. Let the song of angels, which was first heard in the air at the birth of our Saviour, be heard this day in our assembly: *Glory to God in the highest*, for these first fruits of *peace upon earth, and good-will to man*. Let us *give thanks unto the Lord:* let us *call upon his name*, and *make known his deeds among the people*. Let us *sing psalms unto him and talk of all his wondrous works.*

(January 1, 1808)

ANONYMOUS

The African Slave

In the early 1800s a sentimental poem on behalf of enslaved Africans was becoming, for many writers, something of a literary set piece. This formulaic poem was selected by the Washington, D.C.–based editor Mary De Krafft for inclusion in *Poems, Chiefly Amatory; by a Lady* in 1809. The obvious assumption was that American readers were also sensitive to slavery in the Caribbean.

Occasioned by the recent insurrections of the oppressed Blacks in the West Indies.

Shall the muse that's wont to wander
  Where the wretched sigh and cry,
Forbear upon the slave to ponder,
  Dying beneath the burning sky.

Shall not pity, gentle maiden,
  Wet the eye of freedom's son
When he beholds the slave o'erladen,
  See him lash'd, and hear him groan.

O'er Atlantic's sky hu'd billows
  Fancy guides my weeping way,
To mourn the toiling wretches' sorrows,
  Doom'd to servitude a prey!

O hark! I hear their plaintive anguish
  Murmur on the foaming shore;
Yes, I see the females languish,
  Spent with loss of purple gore!

Say, thy rich and lordly tyrant,
  Speak what reason bids thee say,
Were these made for thee to torment,
  Scourge and make to death a prey?

I had bought those captive negroes, to the time that the Lord freed them from under my oppressive hand.

I ask you all who are in the same state I was in, either ignorantly or knowingly, and who still keep negroes in bondage; whether you know or believe, that freedom is the negro's just right? for all who keep them are in one state or the other; but I believe that the greatest part of you know that it is their just right, unless there be some who have forfeited this right by some misdemeanor or crime.

(1815)

JAMES FORTEN

from *Letters from a Man of Colour on a Late Bill Before the Senate of Pennsylvania*

Born to free black parents in Philadelphia, James Forten (1766–1842) was educated in Anthony Benezet's African Free School until age nine, when the death of his father compelled him to go to work to help support his family. During the Revolutionary War he served aboard an American privateer but was captured by the British and spent seven months on a prison ship. He later became a successful businessman and leader in the black community, petitioning Congress in 1799 to end the slave trade and protect free blacks from kidnapping. In 1813, Forten wrote *Letters from a Man of Colour* to attack a bill in the Pennsylvania state senate that would have abridged the rights of free blacks in ways he found cruel in the extreme, but decidedly unconstitutional." The bill died without ever being voted on. In 1816, after initial interest, he became an unrelenting opponent of the African colonization movement; the previous year, a group of Quakers in Philadelphia, led by Charles Fenton Mercer, had transported thirty-eight free blacks to Freetown, Sierra Leone. In the early 1830s Forten embraced the new radical abolition movement, as a close personal friend of William Lloyd Garrison and financial supporter of the abolitionists' flagship journal *The Liberator*. For all his activism, sadly, Forten lived to see a revision of the Pennsylvania constitution in 1838 that stripped African Americans of the right to vote.

LETTER I

O Liberty! thou power supremely bright,
Profuse of bliss and pregnant with delight,
Perpetual pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton train.
ADDISON.

We hold this truth to be self-evident, that God created all men equal, and is one of the most prominent features in the Declaration of Independence, and in that glorious fabrick of collected wisdom, our noble Constitution. This idea embraces the Indian and the European, the Savage and the Saint, the

Peruvian and the Laplander, the white Man and the African, and whatever measures are adopted subversive of this inestimable privilege, are in direct violation of the letter and spirit of our Constitution, and become subject to the animadversion of all, particularly those who are deeply interested in the measure.

These thoughts were suggested by the promulgation of a late bill, before the Senate of Pennsylvania, to prevent the emigration of people of colour into this state. It was not passed into a law at this session and must in consequence lay over until the next, before when we sincerely hope, the white men, whom we should look upon as our protectors, will have become convinced of the inhumanity and impolicy of such a measure, and forbear to deprive us of those inestimable treasures, Liberty and Independence. This is almost the only state in the Union wherein the African race have justly boasted of rational liberty and the protection of the laws, and shall it now be said they have been deprived of that liberty, and publickly exposed for sale to the highest bidder? Shall colonial inhumanity that has marked many of us with shameful stripes, become the practice of the people of Pennsylvania, while Mercy stands weeping at the miserable spectacle? People of Pennsylvania, descendants of the immortal Penn, doom us not to the unhappy fate of thousands of our countrymen in the Southern States and the West Indies; despise the traffick in blood, and the blessing of the African will for ever be around you. Many of us are men of property, for the security of which, we have hitherto looked to the laws of our blessed state, but should this become a law, our property is jeopardized, since the same power which can expose to sale an unfortunate fellow creature, can wrest from him those estates, which years of honest industry have accumulated. Where shall the poor African look for protection, should the people of Pennsylvania consent to oppress him? We grant there are a number of worthless men belonging to our colour, but there are laws of sufficient rigour for their punishment, if properly and duly enforced. We wish not to screen the guilty from punishment, but with the guilty do not permit the innocent to suffer. If there are worthless men, there are also men of merit among the African race, who are useful members of Society. The truth of this let their benevolent institutions and the numbers clothed and fed by them witness. Punish the guilty man of colour to the

utmost limit of the laws, but sell him not to slavery! If he is in danger of becoming a publick charge prevent him! If he is too indolent to labour for his own subsistence, compel him to do so, but sell him not to slavery. By selling him you do not make him better, but commit a wrong, without benefitting the object of it or society at large. Many of our ancestors were brought here more than one hundred years ago; many of our fathers, many of ourselves, have fought and bled for the Independence of our country. Do not then expose us to sale. Let not the spirit of the father behold the son robbed of that Liberty which he died to establish, but let the motto of our Legislators be: "The Law knows no distinction."

These are only a few desultory remarks on the subject, and intend to succeed this effervescence of feeling, by a series of essays, tending to prove the impolicy and unconstitutionality of the law in question.

For the present, I leave the publick to the consideration of the above observations, in which I hope they will see so much truth, that they will never consent to sell to slavery

A MAN OF COLOUR.

(April 1813)

LETTER II

THOSE PATRIOTICK citizens, who, after resting from the toils of a arduous war, which achieved our Independence and laid the foundation of the only reasonable Republick upon earth, associated together, and for the protection of those inestimable rights for the establishment of which they had exhausted their blood and treasure, framed the Constitution of Pennsylvania, have by the ninth article, declared; that "All men are born equally free and independent, and have certain inherent and indefeasible rights, among which are those of enjoying life and liberty." Under the restraint of wise and well administered laws, we cordially unite in the above glorious sentiment, but by the bill upon which we have been remarking, it appears as if the committee who drew it up mistook the sentiment expressed in this words, and do not consider us as men, or that those enlightened

I understand the sense and meaning of this clause to be That the power of the Congress, although competent to prohibit such migration and importation, was not to be exercised with respect to the *then* existing states (and them only) until the year 1808—but that the Congress were at liberty to make such prohibition as to any *new* state which might in the *mean* time be established.—And further that from and after *that* period they were authorized to make such prohibition as to *all* the states, whether *new* or *old*.

It will I presume be admitted that Slaves were the Persons intended.—The word Slaves was avoided, probably on account of the existing toleration of Slavery, and its discordancy with the principles of the Revolution; and from a consciousness of its being repugnant to the following positions in the Declaration of Independence—"We hold these truths to be self-evident—that *all* men are created Equal—that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights—that among them are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

As to my taking an *active* part in "organizing a plan of co-operation," the state of my health has long been such as not to admit of it.

Be pleased to assure the Committee of my best wishes for their success, and permit me to assure you of the esteem and regard with which

I am,
Dear Sir,
Your faithful and obedient Servant,
JOHN JAY

The Honourable
ELIAS BOUDINOT, Esq.

RUFUS KING

from *Observations of Rufus King, on the Missouri Bill*

Born in Scarborough, Maine (then part of Massachusetts) and educated at Harvard, Rufus King (1755–1827) fought in the American Revolution, helped draft the Constitution, and had a long career as politician and diplomat. His slavery politics were complex. In the 1780s he supported the exclusion of slavery from the Northwest Territory and emphatically opposed the admission of slave states to the Union, but he seemed willing to tolerate slavery in existing states and endorsed colonization schemes for freed blacks. In the pamphlet excerpted here, based on two speeches delivered while a U.S. senator from New York, he leaves aside moral issues to argue against slavery on political and economic grounds. His remarks resonated long after the Missouri crisis. In 1822 Denmark Vesey was partly inspired by his pamphlet to lead a slave insurrection, and in 1848 it was reprinted by free soil advocates.

The existence of slavery impairs the industry and the power of a nation; and it does so in proportion to the multiplication of its slaves: where the manual labour of a country is performed by slaves, labour dishonours the hands of freemen.

If her labourers are slaves, Missouri may be able to pay money taxes, but will be unable to raise soldiers, or to recruit seamen. Experience seems to have proved that manufactures do not prosper where the artificers are slaves. In case of foreign war, or domestic insurrection, misfortunes from which no states are exempt, and against which all should be seasonably prepared, slaves not only do not add to, but diminish the faculty of self defence: instead of increasing the public strength, they lessen it, by the whole number of free persons, whose place they occupy, increased by the number of free men that may be employed as guards over them.

The motives for the admission of new states into the union, are the extension of the principles of our free government, the

equalizing of the public burdens, and the consolidation of the power of the confederated nation. Unless these objects be promoted by the admission of new states, no such admission can be expedient or justified.

The states in which slavery already exists are contiguous to each other: they are also the portion of the United States nearest to the European colonies in the West Indies;—colonies whose future condition can hardly be regarded as problematical. If Missouri and the other states that may be formed to the west of the river Mississippi are permitted to introduce and establish slavery, the repose, if not the security of the union may be endangered; all the states south of the river Ohio and west of Pennsylvania and Delaware will be peopled with slaves and the establishment of new states west of the river Mississippi will serve to extend slavery instead of freedom over that boundless region.

Such increase of the states, whatever other interest it may promote, will be sure to add nothing to the security of the public liberties; and can hardly fail hereafter to require and produce a change in our government.

On the other hand, if slavery be excluded from Missouri, and the other new states which may be formed in this quarter, not only will the slave markets be broken up, and the principles of freedom be extended and strengthened; but an exposed and important frontier will present a barrier, which will check and keep back foreign assailants, who may be as brave, and, as we hope, will be as free as ourselves. Surrounded in this manner by connected bodies of freemen, the states where slavery is allowed will be made more secure against domestic insurrection, and less liable to be affected by what may take place in the neighbouring colonies.

It ought not be forgotten, that the first and main object of the negociation which led to the acquisition of Louisiana, was the free navigation of the Mississippi; a river that forms the sole passage from the western states to the ocean. This navigation, although of general benefit, has been always valued and desired, as of peculiar advantage to the western states; whose demands to obtain it, were neither equivocal nor unreasonable. But with the river Mississippi,—by a sort of coersion, we acquired by good or ill fortune, as our future measures shall determine, the

whole province of Louisiana. As this acquisition was made at the common expense, it is very fairly urged, that the advantages to be derived from it should also be common. This it is said will not happen, if slavery be excluded from Missouri, as the citizens of states where slavery is permitted will be shut out, and none but citizens of states where slavery is prohibited can become inhabitants of Missouri.

But this consequence will not arise from the proposed exclusion of slavery: the citizens of states, in which slavery is allowed, like all other citizens, will be free to become inhabitants of the Missouri, in like manner as they have become inhabitants of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, in which slavery is forbidden. The exclusion of slaves from Missouri, will not therefore operate unequally among the citizens of the United States. The constitution provides, "that the citizens of each state shall be entitled to enjoy all the rights and immunities of citizens of the several states"—every citizen may therefore remove from one to another state, and there enjoy the rights and immunities of its citizens. The proposed provision excludes slaves, not citizens, whose rights it will not, and cannot impair.

Besides there is nothing new or peculiar in a provision for the exclusion of slavery: it has been established in the states north west of the river Ohio, and has existed from the beginning in the old states where slavery is forbidden. The citizens of states where slavery is allowed, may become inhabitants of Missouri, but cannot hold slaves there, nor in any other state where slavery is prohibited. As well might the laws prohibiting slavery in the old states become the subject of complaint, as the proposed exclusion of slavery in Missouri; but there is no foundation for such complaint in either case.

(1819)

ELIZABETH MARGARET CHANDLER

The Slave-Ship; The Enfranchisement; Tea-Table Talk; Think of Our Country's Glory

Born in Delaware, orphaned at nine, and educated in a Philadelphia Quaker school, Elizabeth Margaret Chandler (1807–1834) became a prolific abolitionist writer during her sadly foreshortened life. At age eighteen, she won a prize for her first work, "The Slave-Ship," a poem published in a Philadelphia periodical, *The Casket*, and which in later years she considered equal to any of her writings. It was reprinted a year later in Benjamin Lundy's abolitionist newspaper, *The Genius of Universal Emancipation*, where in 1830 she published the sentimental story "The Enfranchisement." In 1832, in the same journal, using the pseudonym "Agnes," she published the didactic story "Tea-Table Talk," in which a conversation between two middle-class ladies about sugar boycotts opens a vista on the complicity of consumers in an economic system that benefits from slavery. One of her last compositions, the vigorous hymn "Think of Our Country's Glory," combines patriotism and abolitionist fervor. It was included in *A Selection of Anti-Slavery Hymns*, edited by William Lloyd Garrison in 1834, and was frequently reprinted in collections and hymnals over the next forty years.

The Slave-Ship

The Slave-ship was winding her course o'er the ocean,
  The winds and the waters had sunk into rest;
All hush'd was the whirl of the tempest's commotion,
That late had awaken'd the sailor's devotion,
  When terror had kindled remorse in his breast.

And onward she rode, though by curses attended,
  Though heavy with guilt was the freight that she bore,
Though with shrieks of despair was the midnight air rended,
And ceaseless the groans of the wretches ascended,
  That from friends and from country forever she tore.

On the deck, with his head on his fetter'd hand rested,
  He who once was a chief and a warrior stood;
One moment he gain'd, by his foes unmolested,
To think o'er his woes, and the fate he detested,
  Till madness was firing his brain and his blood.

"Oh, never!" he murmur'd in anguish, "no, never!
  These limbs shall be bent to the menial's toil!
They have reft us, my bride—but they shall not forever
Your chief from his home and his country dissever—
  No! never will I be the conqueror's spoil!

"Say! long didst thou wait for my coming, my mother?
  Did ye bend o'er the desert, my sister, your eye?
And weep at the lengthen'd delay of your brother,
As each slow passing moment was chased by another,
  And still he appear'd not a tear-drop to dry.

"But ye shall—yes, again ye shall fondly embrace me!
  We will meet my young bride in the land of the blest:
Death, death once again in my country shall place me,
One bound shall forever from fetters release me!"
  He burst them, and sunk in the ocean's dark breast.

(1826)

The Enfranchisement

It was a pretty looking cottage—with its roof half covered with the boughs of a great tree, and vines creeping up about the doors and windows. The garden, with its gay flowers, tempting berries, and fine vegetables, was almost without a weed; while the pailing that surrounded both that and the grass-plot, in front of the house, fairly glistened with its fresh covering of white wash.

The old woman was seated in a large arm-chair, just outside of the door. Her countenance was one of the finest I have ever

seen. She had probably passed seventy summers, but her brow yet remained as dark as the still brilliant eye over which it was arched. The lines of age were distinctly, but not deeply traced upon her cheek and forehead; and her mouth and chin, though wearing them much more visibly than her other features, retained their characteristic marks of firmness and dignity. Her whole face was beaming with mingled benevolence, gratitude and devotion. By her side was sitting a little dark-faced urchin of some half dozen years—and grouped round them, either seated on the grass, or on a long bench beneath the tree, several other descendants of Africa, whose happy faces, glowing with intelligence and feeling, spoke nothing of that consciousness of abasement and degradation, which is so often written upon the countenances of their race.

Shall I tell you the history of that group? It is a tale of female generosity, and negro gratitude.

That woman—she in the elbow-chair, with the open bible upon her knee—was a native, and till within these few years a resident, of Kentucky. Her husband was an owner of slaves—her father had been—and in her youth she thought but little of the sinfulness of laying unrighteous hands upon the property of God. But when the gentle creatures that called her "mother," gathered about her with their loving eyes, and she listened to their soft voices in the evening twilight, she felt how wretched would be *her* lot, if it were in the power of man's hand to tear them from her arms forever; and she thought of them, and commiserated the condition of the miserable slave. At first, it was compassion only that led her to sympathise with their unhappy fate; but the conviction soon came to her heart, that slavery was unjustifiable wickedness in the sight of the Almighty. She entreated her husband, almost with the earnestness of one beseeching for her own life, to liberate their slaves. He refused—and she wept secretly and in silence—but by every means in her power she strove with tireless perseverance to alleviate the bitterness of their lot. She was their instructer, their friend, their benefactress moving about among them more like a parent than a mistress, preserving their respect by the quiet dignity of her manner, and winning their enthusiastic gratitude and love, by her kindness and affection.

When her husband died, they were distributed among their children, who had all married and left the paternal roof. Again she renewed her solicitations for the freedom of those objects of her care—and again she was repulsed—ay, even by her own children was her prayer refused to be granted. She did not stoop to remonstrance, but her resolution was taken—and great as was the sacrifice, she accomplished the holy purpose of her heart. She purchased those slaves, from the oldest to the youngest—she accompanied them here, to Ohio, where she might bestow on them the blessing of liberty—she expended almost her last cent in the performance of her high deed of justice; and they flung themselves at her feet in an overwhelming burst of gratitude—disenthralled—enfranchised!

And they have never forgotten her kindness. She owes all the comforts, by which she is surrounded, to their unwearying industry: to labor for her, to serve her, and to obey her slightest word, is alike their pride and their happiness—and on this evening, they are all met together at her cottage, to celebrate the anniversary of their emancipation.

Is it a true story?

Why—recollect 'tis summer twilight, and there is the moon, just rising over the tree-tops; so a little embellishment may be pardonable. But the circumstance of that widow having thus purchased and manumitted those slaves, and the story of their gratefully laboring for her support—is really the truth.

MARGARET.

(1830)

Tea-Table Talk

Helen and Maria.

"Dear me, Helen, I cannot conceive why you think that taking a lump of sugar in your tea, or eating a piece of cake, or a preserve, can do any harm to the slaves. And when you are in company it must be so disagreeable, and look so singular, to decline eating almost every thing that is offered you! I think you must almost starve sometimes!"

"I have never yet been driven to such an extremity," answered her friend, smiling; "but I will acknowledge that it is certainly very disagreeable to be obliged so frequently to disappoint the kindness of my friends; neither is it at all pleasant to appear singular in one's notions, which however is not now greatly to be feared, since abstinence from slave articles has become lately quite common. But even if that was not the case, my reasons are, I believe, sufficiently strong to render singularity in this respect entirely proper, and to enable me to bear the imputation of it patiently."

"But you have eaten of such things all your life, till lately, and never thought it wrong; and all the rest of your family make use of them, so that, begging your pardon, cousin Helen, I cannot think it otherwise than very silly for you to make such a fuss about it now."

"In telling me that I have made use of slave produce through the whole of my life until lately, you have mentioned an excellent reason, my dear Maria, why I should patiently and cheerfully endure any privations that an abstinence from it may impose upon me now. But because I have done wrong ignorantly, or because those whom I most love have not the same views with myself in that respect, shall I continue to sin against my conscience?"

"I suppose you should not, if the use of slave produce really were wrong, or could be done without altogether;—but other people do not think it wrong, and why should you be more particular?"

"Shall I tell you why I think it wrong, Maria?"

"Oh! now, you want to tell me some horrid story about the treatment of the slaves. I do not know how you can bear to think and talk about such things."

"How, then, dear Maria, can you wonder that I should refuse to assist in *creating them*. It is indeed very painful to think upon the vast amount of suffering produced by slavery, but not half so painful, cousin, as to assist in producing it. Do not imagine that I think I deserve credit for my abstinence from slave luxuries, or what I suppose you would call necessary articles. I claim none—to partake of them would be to me far the greater punishment. There are times when I almost shudder at the thought, and when I feel as if I could almost as easily endure the taste of

human blood, as of the sweetness of the slave-grown cane! It is wonderful to me how any female, who has even a partial knowledge of the horrors of slavery, can be willing to support such a system, or can receive the least enjoyment from the indulgence in comforts and luxuries which are purchased by the sacrifice of so many lives. We shudder to think of the immolation of human beings by savage nations, at the altars of their gods; but when our own gratification is in question, we become careless of the poured out blood of thousands!"

"How you are severe, Helen! Do you think I would continue to use slave produce, especially when I could avoid doing so by any means, if I thought all I made use of would occasion the loss of life to any human being?"

"Yet you must acknowledge, Maria, for I believe you are aware of the fact, that, even excluding those who have sunk under the pressure of long continued toil and hardships, the number of the miserable beings who have been deprived of their lives by actual violence is immense. And the cause of slavery and all its attendant ills, can only be found in the profits of unrequited labor."

"But, cousin, all the slave produce I should use in the whole course of my life would make no difference in the number of slaves. Abstinence would only punish myself, without any benefit to those you compassionate."

"The articles you make use of cannot be produced without some time and labor, be the quantity what it may. Allowing the labor of a slave for six or twelve years to produce all the various slave grown products which you may use during the course of your life, would not he who was so occupied be in effect your *slave*, during the time he was thus employed? Do you not receive as much benefit from his oppression as the individual who is his nominal owner, but in fact, for that length of time, only your agent? Nor will the circumstances of this portion of labor, being divided among many persons, create any difference. You must excuse me for considering that for the time that is necessary to produce the articles you consume, you are a slave holder; or that you are doing worse, by paying another for the commission of a crime which you would not dare to commit yourself!"

"You speak very plainly, Helen; but I will not be offended, for

I know you feel strongly—nay, I will even acknowledge that I have taken my last cup of tea without sugar, and that it was not so very disagreeable. But I will talk no more upon the subject now, only to say that if I was fairly convinced you were right, I believe I would give up the use at least of slave sugar."

AGNES

(1841)

Think of Our Country's Glory

THEMES
NATIONAL PRIDE
EMPATHY
PERSONAL SYMPATHY
CALL TO ACTION FEMALES

Think of our country's glory,
All dimm'd with Afric's tears—
Her broad flag stain'd and gory
With the hoarded guilt of years!

Think of the frantic mother,
Lamenting for her child,
Till falling lashes smother
Her cries of anguish wild!

Think of the prayers ascending,
Yet shriek'd, alas! in vain,
When heart from heart is rending
Ne'er to be join'd again.

Shall we behold, unheeding,
Life's holiest feelings crush'd?—
When woman's heart is bleeding,
Shall woman's voice be hush'd?

Oh, no! by every blessing
That Heaven to thee may lend—
Remember their oppression,
Forget not, sister, friend.

(1836)

LYDIA SIGOURNEY

To the First Slave Ship; Slavery: Written for the Celebration of the Fourth of July

At the time of her death, Lydia Huntley Sigourney (1791–1865) was the best known woman poet in the United States, having published some fifty books of prose and poetry, and contributed hundreds of other pieces to various periodicals. Based in Hartford, Connecticut, and married to a man who first resented, and then depended on, her income from writing, she wrote for a popular audience and supported many reform causes, including rights for women and the abolition of slavery. "To the First Slave Ship" appeared in her first collected volume of *Poems*, published in Boston by S. G. Goodrich. Her ironic Fourth of July poem "Slavery" was published in her collected *Poems* in Philadelphia (1834) and reprinted the same year in a London collection entitled *Lays from the West*. The poem remained popular and was set to music by George W. Clark, who included it in his abolitionist anthology *The Liberty Minstrel* in 1844.

To the First Slave Ship

First of that train which cursed the wave,
And from the rifled cabin bore,
Inheritor of wo,—*the slave*
To bless his palm-tree's shade no more,

Dire engine!—o'er the troubled main
Borne on in unresisted state,—
Know'st thou within thy dark domain
The secrets of thy prison'd freight?—

Hear'st thou *their* moans whom hope hath fled?—
Wild cries, in agonizing starts?—
Know'st thou thy humid sails are spread
With ceaseless sighs from broken hearts?—

This day doth music rare
Swell through our nation's bound,
But Afric's wailing mingles there,
And Heaven doth hear the sound:
O God of power!—we turn
In penitence to thee,
Bid our loved land the lesson learn—
To bid the slave be free.

(1834)

GEORGE MOSES HORTON

On Liberty and Slavery; The Slave's Complaint

Born a slave in North Carolina, George Moses Horton (c. 1797–1883) was an autodidact who struggled for years to purchase his own freedom, first by selling commissioned love poems to University of North Carolina students and later by publishing volumes of his own writings. Despite the efforts of northern abolitionists, to whom he was a cause célèbre, and his fame as the most accomplished slave poet of his era, he did not gain his freedom until the Civil War. The poems here are two of his earliest and most vehemently antislavery works, displaying an attitude that became increasingly dangerous for a slave to express amid the mounting tensions of the 1840s and '50s.

On Liberty and Slavery

Alas! and am I born for this,
To wear this slavish chain?
Deprived of all created bliss,
Through hardship, toil and pain!

How long have I in bondage lain,
And languished to be free!
Alas! and must I still complain—
Deprived of liberty.

Oh, Heaven! and is there no relief
This side the silent grave—
To soothe the pain—to quell the grief
And anguish of a slave?

Come Liberty, thou cheerful sound,
Roll through my ravished ears!
Come, let my grief in joys be drowned,
And drive away my fears.

Say unto foul oppression, Cease:
Ye tyrants rage no more,
And let the joyful trump of peace,
Now bid the vassal soar.

Soar on the pinions of that dove
Which long has cooed for thee,
And breathed her notes from Afric's grove,
The sound of Liberty.

Oh, Liberty! thou golden prize,
So often sought by blood—
We crave thy sacred sun to rise,
The gift of nature's God!

Bid Slavery hide her haggard face,
And barbarism fly:
I scorn to see the sad disgrace
In which enslaved I lie.

Dear Liberty! upon thy breast,
I languish to respire;
And like the Swan unto her nest,
I'd to thy smiles retire.

Oh, blest asylum—heavenly balm!
Unto thy boughs I flee—
And in thy shades the storm shall calm,
With songs of Liberty!

(1829)

The Slave's Complaint

Am I sadly cast aside,
On misfortune's rugged tide?
Will the world my pains deride
Forever?

Must I dwell in Slavery's night,
And all pleasure take its flight,
Far beyond my feeble sight,
Forever?

Worst of all, must Hope grow dim,
And withhold her cheering beam?
Rather let me sleep and dream
Forever!

Something still my heart surveys,
Groping through this dreary maze;
Is it Hope?—then burn and blaze
Forever!

Leave me not a wretch confined,
Altogether lame and blind—
Unto gross despair consigned,
Forever!

Heaven! in whom can I confide?
Canst thou not for all provide?
Condescend to be my guide
Forever:

And when this transient life shall end,
Oh, may some kind eternal friend
Bid me from servitude ascend,
Forever!

(1829)

DAVID WALKER

from *Walker's Appeal, in Four Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World*

Often seen as the forefather of black nationalism, David Walker (1796–1830) shocked the country with his courageous and defiant *Appeal in Four Articles*, boldly addressed "to the Coloured Citizens of the World." His ingenious tactics for distributing the book throughout the South, using black church networks and benevolent societies, prompted southern officials to take drastic steps. The state of Georgia, for example, offered $10,000 to anyone who captured Walker alive, or $1,000 to anyone who would assassinate him. Nonetheless, the book went through several editions and was hugely influential. Born free in Wilmington, North Carolina, and shaped by his experiences as a young adult in Charleston, Walker wound up in Boston, where he flourished. Joining the African American Masonic Lodge, he became the Boston agent for the country's first black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal* (published in New York), and helped create the Massachusetts General Colored Association, which opposed African colonization schemes and fought for black political causes. Though suspicions that his early death was caused by poisoning were untrue (he died of consumption), his deliberately provocative tone made such rumors easy to believe.

ADDITION.—Our dear Redeemer said, "Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops."

How obviously this declaration of our Lord has been shown among the Americans of the United States. They have hitherto passed among some nations, who do not know any thing about their internal concerns, for the most enlightened, humane, charitable, and merciful people upon earth, when at the same time they treat us, the (coloured people) secretly more cruel and unmerciful than any other nation upon earth.—It is a fact, that in our Southern and Western States, there are millions who hold us in chains or in slavery, whose greatest object and glory

is centered in keeping us sunk in the most profound ignorance and stupidity, to make us work without remunerations for our services. Many of whom if they catch a coloured person, whom they hold in unjust ignorance, slavery and degradation, to them and their children, with a book in his hand, will beat him nearly to death. I heard a wretch in the state of North Carolina said, that if any man would teach a black person whom he held in slavery, to spell, read or write, he would prosecute him to the very extent of the law.—Said the ignorant wretch,* "a Nigar, ought not to have any more sense than enough to work for his master." May I not ask to fatten the wretch and his family?—These and similar cruelties these *Christians* have been for hundreds of years inflicting on our fathers and us in the dark. God has however, very recently published some of their secret crimes on the house top, that the world may gaze on their Christianity and see of what kind it is composed.—Georgia for instance, God has completely shown to the world, the *Christianity* among its *white inhabitants*. A law has recently passed the Legislature of this *republican* State (Georgia) prohibiting all free or slave person of colour, from learning to read or write; another law has passed the *republican* House of Delegates, (but not the Senate) of Virginia, to prohibit all persons of colour, (free and slave) from learning to read or write, and even to hinder them from meeting together in order to worship our Maker!!!!!!—Now I solemly appeal, to the most skilful historians in the world, and all those who are mostly acquainted with the histories of the Antedeluvians and of Sodom and Gomorrah, to show me a parallel of barbarity. *Christians!! Christians!!!* I dare you to show me a parallel of cruelties in the annals of Heathens or of Devils, with those of Ohio, Virginia and of Georgia—know the world that these things were before done in the dark, or in a corner under a garb of humanity and religion. God has however, taken off the fig-leaf covering, and made them expose themselves on the house top. I tell you that God works in many ways his wonders to perform, he will unless they repent, make

* It is a fact, that in all our Slave-holding States (in the countries) there are thousands of the whites, who are almost as ignorant in comparison as horses, whose only study they know, is to beat the coloured people, which some of them shall have their hearts full of yet.

them expose themselves enough more yet to the world. See the acts of the *Christians* in FLORIDA, SOUTH CAROLINA, and KENTUCKY—was it not for the reputation of the house of my Lord and Master, I would mention here, an act of cruelty inflicted a few days since on a black man, by the white *Christians* in the PARK STREET CHURCH, in this (CITY) which is almost enough to make Demons themselves quake and tremble in their FIREY HABITATIONS.—Oh! my Lord how refined in iniquity the whites have got to be in consequence of our blood*—what kind!! Oh! what kind!!! of Christianity can be found this day in all the earth!!!!!!

I write without the fear of man, I am writing for my God, and fear none but himself; they may put me to death if they choose—(I fear and esteem a good man however, let him be black or white.) I forbear to comment on the cruelties inflicted on this Black Man by the Whites, in the Park Street Meeting House, I will leave it in the dark!!!!! But I declare that the atrocity is really to Heaven daring and infernal, that I must say that God has commenced a course of exposition among the Americans, and the glorious and heavenly work will continue to progress until they learn to do justice.

*The Blood of our fathers who have been murdered by the whites, and the groans of our Brethren, who are now held in cruel ignorance, wretchedness and slavery by them, cry aloud to the Maker of Heaven and of earth, against the whole continent of America, for redresses.

ANONYMOUS

The African Woman

This children's story was published as an illustrated eight-page chapbook by the American Sunday-School Union in Philadelphia. The simple vocabulary would enable young readers to form their own understanding of the evils of racism.

LITTLE MARY was sitting at the window with her mother. She saw a poor old African woman go by. O mother, said she, I do not love that woman at all! Why not, Mary? Because she is black; I do not like anybody that is black. Her mother said, Mary, Mary, I am sorry to hear you talk so. It is foolish, it is wicked.

Mary looked very sober. Then she said, Why is it wicked, mother? My dear, it is wrong, because God has told us to love everybody in the world. God made that poor woman as well as you. I will call her in to see you.

Mary was frightened. She said, O no, mother, if you please, do not call her in. Yes, my dear, I wish to teach you a lesson. Then she raised the window, and asked the old woman to come in. Mary's mother said, Good woman, what do you think of this little girl? She is a dear little miss, madam: may I give her a peach? Then she took a peach out of her basket, and gave it to Mary. The little girl felt very much ashamed, and hung down her head.

The old woman then said, Once I had three little girls, but they are all dead. The Lord knows what is best. And the tears came into her eyes. Mary was ready to weep too. Then Mrs. Young gave the woman some work to do; for she knew her very well.

After the woman had gone, Mary said, Mother, I am sorry for being so foolish and naughty; I will not hate black people any more. Her mother said, My dear, you should not hate any of God's creatures. All men and women are made of one blood. All are brethren. This poor African woman was brought to America when she was young. Now she is old, and very poor. Besides,

she is a pious woman, and I am sure Christ loves her. You ought to love her too, and to do her all the good you can. Mary said nothing, but after all she felt some dislike to poor Patty.

Not long after Mary was very sick. She was in bed several weeks.

One morning the old African woman knocked at the door, and said, Mrs. Ewing, where is little Miss Mary? I never see her going by to school.

Then Mrs. Ewing took her into the chamber where Mary lay sick. Old Patty was very sorry.

She came and nursed Mary for seven days and nights. And when the little girl got well, she said,

Mother, I will never hate anybody again for having a dark skin. Poor Patty is a great deal better than I am.

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

To the Public; Universal Emancipation; Truisms; Song of the Abolitionist

A sampling of the voluminous writings of William Lloyd Garrison (1805–1879) could do justice to his importance in American history as a radical abolitionist. Born in Massachusetts, Garrison's formative experiences were a childhood of profound poverty and religiosity and an apprenticeship at age thirteen to a local newspaper. He disseminated his increasingly radical ideas over several decades in newspapers, orations, and pamphlets. In 1830, his imprisonment for libeling a slave trader as a "murderer" in the Baltimore paper *The Genius of Universal Emancipation* brought him to public attention. New England abolitionists brought him to Boston, where in 1831 he launched *The Liberator*, the weekly paper that published thousands of abolitionist writing in every genre and was Garrison's primary vehicle for thirty-five years. In its inaugural essay, "To the Public," Garrison recants his prior gradualism, and vows to campaign relentlessly for immediate abolition, "SO HELP ME GOD!" Over the years he would produce scores of poems and hymns, including "Universal Emancipation" and "Song of the Abolitionist," as well as more biting pieces such as his idiosyncratic and ironic aphorisms, bitterly entitled "Truisms." He helped found the New England Anti-Slavery Society in 1832 and became a leading force in the American Anti-Slavery Society, founded the next year. Garrison's evolving radicalism on slavery and other issues such as women's rights and anticlericalism would draw him into growing controversies over the years, both within the antislavery movement and in the larger sphere of national politics.

To the Public

In the month of August, I issued proposals for publishing 'THE LIBERATOR' in Washington city; but the enterprise, though hailed in different sections of the country, was palsied by public indifference. Since that time, the removal of the Genius of Universal Emancipation to the Seat of Government has rendered less imperious the establishment of a similar periodical in that quarter.

During my recent tour for the purpose of exciting the minds

of the people by a series of discourses on the subject of slavery, every place that I visited gave fresh evidence of the fact that a greater revolution in public sentiment was to be effected in the free states—*and particularly in New-England*—than at the south. I found contempt more bitter, opposition more active, detraction more relentless, prejudice more stubborn, and apathy more frozen, than among slave owners themselves. Of course, there were individual exceptions to the contrary. This state of things afflicted, but did not dishearten me. I determined, at every hazard, to lift up the standard of emancipation in the eyes of the nation, *within sight of Bunker Hill and in the birth place of liberty*. That standard is now unfurled; and long may it float, unhurt by the spoliations of time or the missiles of a desperate foe—yea, till every chain be broken, and every bondman set free! Let southern oppressors tremble—let their secret abettors tremble—let their northern apologists tremble—let all the enemies of the persecuted blacks tremble.

I deem the publication of my original Prospectus* unnecessary, as it has obtained a wide circulation. The principles therein inculcated will be steadily pursued in this paper, excepting that I shall not array myself as the political partisan of any man. In defending the great cause of human rights, I wish to derive the assistance of all religions and of all parties.

Assenting to the 'self-evident truth' maintained in the American Declaration of Independence, 'that all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights—among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,' I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population. In Park-street Church, on the Fourth of July, 1829, in an address on slavery, I unreflectingly assented to the popular but pernicious doctrine of *gradual* abolition. I seize this opportunity to make a full and unequivocal recantation, and thus publicly to ask pardon of my God, of my country, and of my brethren the poor slaves, for having uttered a sentiment so full of timidity, injustice and absurdity. A similar recantation, from my pen, was published in the Genius of Universal Emancipation at Baltimore, in September, 1829. My conscience is now satisfied.

*I would here offer my grateful acknowledgments to those editors who so promptly and generously inserted my Proposals. They must give me an available opportunity to repay their liberality.

I am aware, that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I *will be* as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. On this subject, I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. No! no! Tell a man whose house is on fire, to give a moderate alarm; tell him to moderately rescue his wife from the hands of the ravisher; tell the mother to gradually extricate her babe from the fire into which it has fallen;—but urge me not to use moderation in a cause like the present. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD. The apathy of the people is enough to make every stone leap from its pedestal, and to hasten the resurrection of the dead.

It is pretended, that I am retarding the cause of emancipation by the coarseness of my invective, and the precipitancy of my measures. *The charge is not true.* On this question my influence—humble as it is,—is felt at this moment to a considerable extent, and shall be felt in coming years—not perniciously, but beneficially—not as a curse, but as a blessing; and posterity will bear testimony that I was right. I desire to thank God, that he enables me to disregard 'the fear of man which bringeth a snare,' and to speak his truth in its simplicity and power. And here I close with this fresh dedication:

> 'Oppression! I have seen thee, face to face,
> And met thy cruel eye and cloudy brow;
> But thy soul withering glance I fear not now—
> For dread to prouder feelings doth give place
> Of deep abhorrence! Scorning the disgrace
> Of slavish knees that at thy footstool bow,
> I also kneel—but with far other vow
> Do hail thee and thy hord of hirelings base:—
> I swear, while life-blood warms my throbbing veins,
> Still to oppose and thwart, with heart and hand,
> Thy brutalising sway—till Afric's chains
> Are burst, and Freedom rules the rescued land,—
> Trampling Oppression and his iron rod:
> *Such is the vow I take*—SO HELP ME GOD!'

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

BOSTON, January 1, 1831.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

To William Lloyd Garrison; The Hunters of Men; The Yankee Girl; Clerical Oppressors; The Slave Ships; The Branded Hand

One of the most popular and prolific American poets of the nineteenth century, John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892) was a Massachusetts native who from age nineteen received encouragement and help from William Lloyd Garrison in getting his poems published and finding jobs editing newspapers. With Garrison, he was a founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833; he later described his signing of the Anti-Slavery Declaration that year as one of the most important acts of his life. After several years of publishing antislavery poems in the 1830s, the offices of his paper, *The Pennsylvania Freeman* in Philadelphia, were burned by an anti-abolitionist mob in 1838. The first five poems printed here were all originally published in various periodicals, then collected in his volume *Poems Written During the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States* (Boston, 1837). "The Branded Hand" was Whittier's poetic response to an infamous episode in 1844 when Jonathan Walker, a sympathetic tradesman, tried to help seven slaves escape by boat from Florida. Walker was caught at sea, tried and convicted by a federal territorial court, and, as part of his punishment, had the initials "S.S." ("slave stealer") branded on his hand. Abolitionists embraced Walker as a hero, circulating images of his branded hand and literary tributes like Whittier's throughout the North.

To William Lloyd Garrison

Champion of those who groan beneath
  Oppression's iron hand:
In view of penury, hate and death,
  I see thee fearless stand.
Still bearing up thy lofty brow,
  In the steadfast strength of truth,
In manhood sealing well the vow
  And promise of thy youth.

Go on!—for thou hast chosen well;
  On in the strength of God!
Long as one human heart shall swell
  Beneath the tyrant's rod.
Speak in a slumbering nation's ear,
  As thou hast ever spoken,
Until the dead in sin shall hear—
  The fetter's link be broken!

I love thee with a brother's love,
  I feel my pulses thrill,
To mark thy spirit soar above
  The cloud of human ill.
My heart hath leaped to answer thine,
  And echo back thy words,
As leaps the warrior's at the shine
  And flash of kindred swords!

They tell me thou art rash and vain—
  A searcher after fame—
That thou are striving but to gain
  A long enduring name—
That thou hast nerved the Afric's hand,
  And steeled the Afric's heart,
To shake aloft his vengeful brand,
  And rend his chain apart.

Have I not known thee well, and read
  Thy mighty purpose long!
And watched the trials which have made
  Thy human spirit strong?
And shall the *slanderer's demon breath*
  Avail with one like me,
To dim the *sunshine of my faith*,
  And earnest trust in thee?

Go on—the dagger's point may glare
  Amid thy pathway's gloom—
The fate which sternly threatens there,
  Is glorious martyrdom!

In the sunny Guadaloupe
A dark hull'd vessel lay—
With a crew who noted never
The night-fall or the day.
The blossom of the orange
Waved white by every stream,
And tropic leaf, and flower, and bird,
Were in the warm sun-beam.

And the sky was bright as ever,
And the moonlight slept as well,
On the palm-trees by the hill-side,
And the streamlet of the dell.
And the glances of the Creole
Were still as archly deep,
And her smiles as full as ever
Of passion and of sleep.

But vain were bird and blossom,
The green earth and the sky,
And the smile of human faces,
To the ever-darken'd eye;—
For, amidst a world of beauty,
The slaver went abroad,
With his ghastly visage written
By the awful curse of God!

The Branded Hand

Welcome home again, brave seaman! with thy thoughtful brow and gray,
And the old heroic spirit of our earlier, better day—
With that front of calm endurance, on whose steady nerve, in vain
Pressed the iron of the prison, smote the fiery shafts of pain!

Is the tyrant's brand upon thee? Did the brutal cravens aim
To make God's truth thy falsehood, His holiest work thy shame?
When, all blood-quenched, from the torture the iron was withdrawn,
How laughed their evil angel the baffled fools to scorn!

They change to wrong, the duty which God hath written out
On the great heart of humanity too legible for doubt!
They, the loathsome moral lepers, blotched from foot-sole up to crown,
Have to shame what God hath given unto honor and renown!

Why, that brand is highest honor!—than its traces never yet
Upon old armorial hatchments was a prouder blazon set;
And thy unborn generations, as they crowd our rocky strand,
Shall tell with pride the story of their father's BRANDED HAND!

As the templar, home was welcomed, bearing back from Syrian wars
The scars of Arab lances, and of Paynim scimetars,
The pallor of the prison, and the shackle's crimson span,
So we meet thee, so we greet thee, truest friend of God and man!

He suffered for the ransom of the dear Redeemer's grave,
Thou for His living presence in the bound and bleeding slave;
He for a soil no longer by the feet of angels trod,
Thou for the true Shechinah, the present home of God!

For, while the jurist sitting with the slave-whip o'er him swung,
From the tortured truths of freedom the lie of slavery wrung,
And the solemn priest to Moloch, on each God-deserted shrine,
Broke the bondman's heart for bread, poured the bondman's blood for wine;

While the multitude in blindness to a far off Saviour knelt,
And spurned, the while, the temple where a present Saviour
dwelt;
Thou beheld'st Him in the task-field, in the prison shadows
dim,
And thy mercy to the bondman, it was mercy unto Him!

In thy lone and long night watches, sky above and wave
below,
Thou did'st learn a higher wisdom than the babbling school-
men know;
God's stars and silence taught thee as His angels only can,
That, the one, sole *sacred thing* beneath the cope of heaven is
MAN!

That he, who treads profanely on the scrolls of law and creed,
In the depth of God's great goodness may find mercy in his
need;
But wo to him who crushes the SOUL with chain and rod
And herd with lower natures the awful form of God!

Then lift that manly right hand, bold ploughman of the wave!
Its branded palm shall prophecy, "SALVATION TO THE SLAVE!"
Hold up its fire-wrought language, that whoso reads may feel
His heart swell strong within him, his sinews change to steel.

Hold it up before our sunshine, up against our Northern
air—
Ho! men of Massachusetts, for the love of God look there!
Take it henceforth for your standard—like the Bruce's heart
of yore,
In the dark strife closing round ye, let that hand be seen before!

And the tyrants of the slave land shall tremble at that sign,
When it points its finger Southward along the Puritan line;
Wo to the State-gorged leeches, and the church's locust band,
When they look from slavery's ramparts on the coming of
that hand!

ANONYMOUS

A Dream; Another Dream

These two fictional sketches were published under the pseudonym "J. T." in William Lloyd Garrison's new abolitionist weekly, *The Liberator*, on April 2 and April 30, 1831. In his choice of motto for the first piece, the author shows his sophistication by quoting Samuel Johnson, who was here echoing Cicero.

A Dream

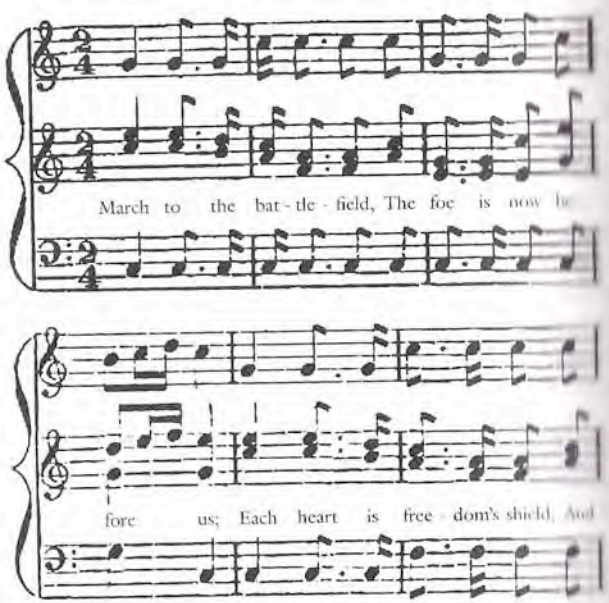
'*Time obliterates the fictions of opinion, and confirms the decisions of nature.*'—DR. JOHNSON.

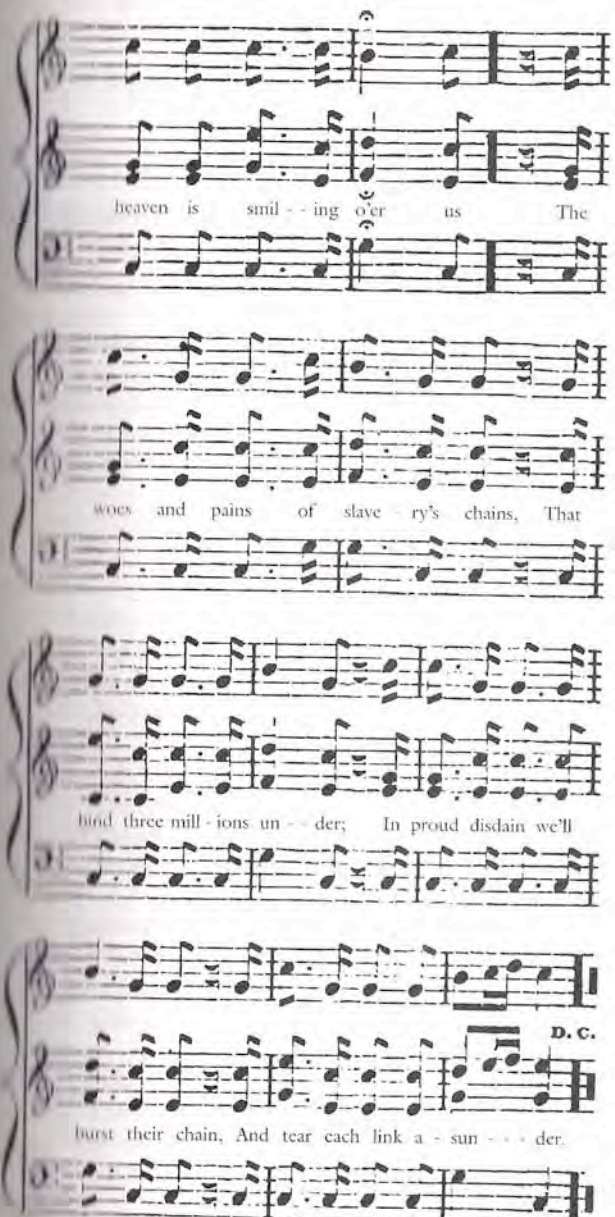
I was reading, the other day, some very curious reasonings upon *time*, which, as well as space, the author annihilates without any ceremony. 'I have proved elsewhere,' says he, 'that the idea of duration offers nothing absolute. Let us suppose, placed in space, intelligences who see, in the same instant, the earth in all the points of its orbit, as we ourselves see a lighted coal, at the same instant, in all the points of the circle which it is made to describe. Is it not evident that, if these intelligences can observe what passes upon earth, they will see us, at the same instant, tilling the ground and gathering the harvest!' After reading these somewhat whimsical speculations, and building thereupon some of my own not less strange, my waking fancies passed, by an imperceptible transition, into the vagaries of a dream. On casting a look out of my window, I saw, with some astonishment, that a young tree which I had planted in the morning, was now full grown, and cast a venerable shade over the surrounding lawn. My surprise was but momentary. On returning again to my speculations upon time, I perceived that the thing was perfectly natural. For, in fact, I reasoned, the time of planting, of the growth, and the maturity of the tree are one and the same, if the mind of the observer is capable of perceiving them at once, at which desirable state my mind appears now to have arrived. And, thought I, since there is usually in nature a conformity of one thing to another in these matters, why may

GEORGE W. CLARK

March to the Battlefield

A white antislavery lyricist and composer based in New York, George W. Clark (fl. 1844–1845) compiled *The Liberty Minstrel*, an assemblage of more than 115 songs written by figures known and unknown. It sold for fifty cents a copy. Clark included a musical score for each song, many of them popular tunes but some of his own composition. His "March to the Battlefield" captures the militant tone of some abolitionist writing that enraged southern slaveholders.





Who for his country brave,
  Would fly from her invader?
Who his base life to save
  Would traitor like degrade her?
Our hallowed cause—
  Our homes and laws,
'Gainst tyrant hosts sustaining,
  We'll win a crown of bright renown,
Or die, man's rights maintaining,
  March to the battlefield, &c.

(1844)

ELIZA LEE FOLLEN

The Slave Boy's Wish; Pic-nic at Dedham

[illegible] antislavery advocate, the Bostonian Eliza Lee Follen (1787–[illegible] was one of the most prolific and innovative writers of children's [illegible] in nineteenth-century America. Among her publications were [illegible] American edition of Grimm's fairy tales and various collections [illegible] odicals, including *The Child's Friend*; *Hymns, Songs and Fables* [illegible] *children*; and *Nursery Songs*. Her poignant lyric in the voice of an [illegible] child, "The Slave Boy's Wish," was published in George W. [illegible] collection of antislavery songs, *The Liberty Minstrel* (1844). [illegible] written in the voice of a child, her story "Pic-nic at Dedham" [illegible] a young person's conversion to the antislavery cause. She pub- [illegible] it in her own collection of antislavery literature for children, *The* [illegible] *Cap* (1846).

The Slave Boy's Wish

I wish I was that little bird,
  Up in the bright blue sky;
That sings and flies just where he will,
  And no one asks him why.

I wish I was that little brook,
  That runs so swift along;
Through pretty flowers and shining stones,
  Singing a merry song.

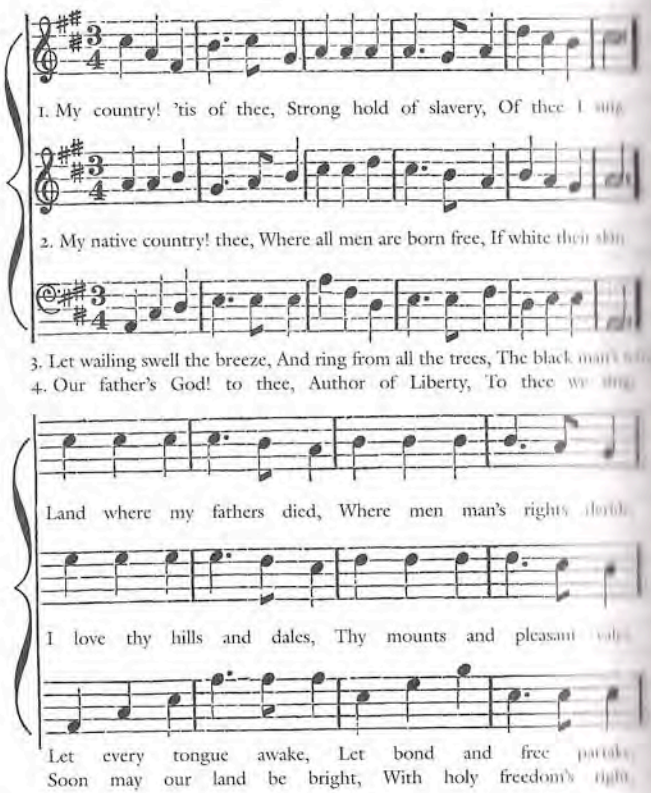
I wish I was that butterfly,
  Without a thought or care;
Sporting my pretty, brilliant wings,
  Like a flower in the air.

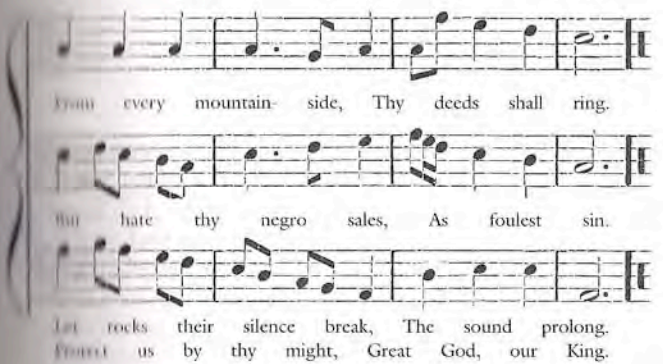
I wish I was that wild, wild deer,
  I saw the other day;
Who swifter than an arrow flew,
  Through the forest far away.

JAIRUS LINCOLN

Hymn 17

Born and educated in Boston, Jairus Lincoln (1794–1882) was a [illegible] writer and composer active in the Massachusetts antislavery movement in the 1840s. In 1843 he published a compendium of ninety-four abolitionist hymns, some reprinted from other sources but many of them original compositions, under the title *Anti-Slavery Melodies for the Friends of Freedom*. Among the original works is his own "Hymn 17," a scathing parody of the patriotic anthem "My country, 'tis of thee," to be sung to the same tune.





(1843)

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

The Slave's Dream; The Slave in the Dismal Swamp; The Slave Singing at Midnight; The Quadroon Girl; The Witnesses

One of the most popular American poets of the nineteenth century and famous for such works as *Evangeline, The Song of Hiawatha*, and "Paul Revere's Ride," Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807–1882) published in 1842 a volume called *Poems on Slavery*, from which all five selections here are taken. In each of the first three poems, the lyric form enables a desperate slave's state of mind to be imagined with hallucinatory intensity. Lust and sexual vulnerability create the dramatic tension in "The Quadroon Girl," while the somber cadence of "The Witnesses" implicates the entirety of the white race as participants or onlookers in the long history of the slave trade. Unlike his great contemporary John Greenleaf Whittier, who never stopped writing about slavery, Longfellow avoided the theme in most of his writing after 1842, though historian Jill Lepore has recently suggested that "Paul Revere's Ride" (published December 20, 1860) was a veiled cry to action for northerners faced with southern secession and the coming of war.

The Slave's Dream

Beside the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his Native Land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds
Beside some hidden stream;
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,

And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

(1842)

The Slave in the Dismal Swamp

In dark fens of the Dismal Swamp
The hunted Negro lay;
He saw the fire of the midnight camp,
And heard at times a horse's tramp
And a bloodhound's distant bay.

Where will-o'-the-wisps and glowworms shine,
In bulrush and in brake;
Where waving mosses shroud the pine,
And the cedar grows, and the poisonous vine
Is spotted like the snake;

Where hardly a human foot could pass,
Or a human heart would dare,
On the quaking turf of the green morass
He crouched in the rank and tangled grass,
Like a wild beast in his lair.

A poor old slave, infirm and lame;
Great scars deformed his face;
On his forehead he bore the brand of shame,
And the rags, that hid his mangled frame,
Were the livery of disgrace.

All things above were bright and fair,
All things were glad and free;
Lithe squirrels darted here and there,
And wild birds filled the echoing air
With songs of Liberty!

On him alone was the doom of pain,
From the morning of his birth;
On him alone the curse of Cain
Fell, like a flail on the garnered grain,
And struck him to the earth!

(1842)

The Slave Singing at Midnight

Loud he sang the psalm of David!
He, a Negro and enslaved,
Sang of Israel's victory,
Sang of Zion, bright and free.

In that hour, when night is calmest,
Sang he from the Hebrew Psalmist,
In a voice so sweet and clear
That I could not choose but hear,

Songs of triumph, and ascriptions,
Such as reached the swart Egyptians,
When upon the Red Sea coast
Perished Pharaoh and his host.

And the voice of his devotion
Filled my soul with strange emotion;
For its tones by turns were glad,
Sweetly solemn, wildly sad.

Paul and Silas, in their prison,
Sang of Christ, the Lord arisen,
And an earthquake's arm of might
Broke their dungeon-gates at night.

do right. Our colored people bear a much larger proportion to the whites than in your southern states; and when they were set to be set at liberty at once, we were under the most fearful apprehensions for the consequences. We smile now, when looking back on those groundless fears. The poor slaves were too much overjoyed at the result to harbor any malice, envy, or ill-will toward their former masters. It is enough that the servant be as his master. The large sum which was paid us by the English Government we also feel to be a gratuity, for without pay, the slaveholders would have been greatly benefitted. The slaveholders needed liberty as well as their slaves, and they received it at the same time. They are now free from the care and anxiety of supporting their workmen, and of much of the expense. They accomplish much more labor than they did while in bondage, and support themselves at a less expense. That is, 100 hogsheads of sugar cost the master less now, in the free state, than it did formerly in the slave state. At the same time, crimes are greatly diminished, and morals improved. In fact, our jails are now nearly useless. Churches and schools are multiplying, and we now know the luxury of living in peace, harmony and happiness. There is no part of the world where a person could sleep all night with his doors unlocked, with a trunk full of gold and silver in the doorway, unlocked, with more safety than in the island where I live. Let me assure my friend Col. Bombasto, that slavery, from beginning to end, in all its bearings, is a miserable delusion—a mere work of the devil. [*Exeunt omnes.*]

LUNSFORD LANE

from *The Narrative of Lunsford Lane, Formerly of Raleigh, N.C.*

Born in North Carolina, Lunsford Lane (1803–post-1870) was an enterprising household slave who earned enough money to buy his freedom in 1834. It took him another eight years to save the money to purchase his wife and children, but when he returned to Raleigh to settle the transaction, he was captured by a mob, tarred and feathered, and nearly lynched. Despite this horrific episode, he succeeded in bringing his wife, children, and mother north with him. Sales of his narrative helped him earn money in the years that followed, and it sold well, going through four editions by 1848. The excerpt here chronicles his remarkable entrepreneurial efforts, closing with an almost poetic description of the ecstasy of freedom.

One day, while I was in this state of mind, my father gave me a small basket of peaches. I sold them for thirty cents, which was the first money I ever had in my life. Afterwards I won some marbles, and sold them for sixty cents, and some weeks after Mr. Hogg from Fayetteville, came to visit my master, and on leaving gave me one dollar. After that Mr. Bennahan from Orange county gave me a dollar, and a son of my master fifty cents. These sums, and the hope that then entered my mind of purchasing at some future time my freedom, made me long for money, and plans for money-making took the principal possession of my thoughts. At night I would steal away with my axe, get a load of wood to cut for twenty-five cents, and the next morning hardly escape a whipping for the offence. But I persevered until I had obtained twenty dollars. Now I began to think seriously of becoming able to buy myself; and cheered on by this hope, I went on from one thing to another, laboring a great deal of night," after the long weary day's toil for my master was over, till I found I had collected one hundred dollars. This money I kept hid, first in one place and then in another, as I dare not put it out, for fear I should lose it.

After this I lit upon a plan which proved of great advantage

supposed my mistress would ask for me, and so I determined now what I would do.

I went to my mistress and inquired what was her price for me. She said a thousand dollars. I then told her that I wanted to be free, and asked her if she would sell me to be made free. She said she would; and accordingly I arranged with her, and with the master of my wife, Mr. Smith, already spoken of, for the latter to take my money* and buy of her my freedom, as I could not legally purchase it, and as the laws forbid emancipation except for "meritorious services." This done, Mr. Smith endeavored to emancipate me formally, and to get my manumission recorded; I tried also; but the court judged that I had done nothing "meritorious," and so I remained, nominally only the slave of Mr. Smith for a year; when, feeling unsafe in this relation, I accompanied him to New York whither he was going to purchase goods, and was there regularly and formally made a freeman, and there my manumission was recorded. I returned to my family in Raleigh and endeavored to do by them as a freeman should. I had known what it was to be a slave, and I knew what it was to be free.

But I am going too rapidly over my story. When the money was paid to my mistress and the conveyance fairly made to Mr. Smith, I felt that I was free. And a queer and joyous feeling it is to one who has been a slave. I cannot describe it, only it seemed as though I was in heaven. I used to lie awake whole nights thinking of it. And oh, the strange thoughts that passed through my soul, like so many rivers of light; deep and rich were their waves as they rolled;—these were more to me than sleep, more than soft slumber after long months of watching over the decaying, fading frame of a friend, and the loved one laid to rest in the dust. But I cannot describe my feelings to those who have never been slaves; then why should I attempt it? He who has passed from spiritual death to life, and received the witness within his soul that his sins are forgiven, may possibly form some distant idea, like the ray of the setting sun from the

*_Legally_, my money belonged to my mistress; and she could have taken it and refused to grant me my freedom. But she was a very kind woman for a slave owner; and she would under the circumstances, scorn to do such a thing. I have known of slaves, however, served in this way.

on mountain top, of the emotions of an emancipated slave. That opens heaven. To break the bonds of slavery, opens up at once both earth and heaven. Neither can be truly seen by us while we are slaves.

(1842)

abet, are made to lag behind the march of civilization, and to see the whole world running past them in social elevation, popular intelligence, and industrial enterprise. If a people will have slavery, they must have its results. It is not by accident that evil accompanies despotism, and that good attends upon liberty. So God ordained it to be. If it be better to employ men as brutes, all usages must be adapted to the grade and range of brutes. If it is best for a State to have its peculiar institutions on the foundation of human degradation, then public sentiment, public law, and the fabric of social life must be adjusted thereto. A system which is obliged to make knowledge in any class a crime, and the impartation of it a penitentiary offence, cannot diffuse a powerful impulse for popular education. The burden of popular education is as heavy as can be borne in States where religion and philanthropy stimulate every energy; where trades abound, commerce flourishes, and free husbandry enriches every acre with honored labor. What then can be expected in communities where religion and philanthropy stumble at the threshold over oppression? where free labor is a disgrace; idleness, a coveted prerogative; where knowledge is not free; and where the force required to exclude it from a part, deadens the whole community?

But a better day is coming: the contrast which exists between free and slave States pleads too efficaciously to be always resisted. Indeed, against servitude and vassalage there is no such convincing argument as the well-doing of freedom. Every abuse of liberty—its arrogance, intolerance, selfishness, lawless violence are arguments for despotism; as the peace and prosperity of free-labor is unanswerably logical against slave-labor. Wherefore, the gradual return of kindness in the public mind in free States; the deeper religious tone that animates their counsels; a more considerate sympathy with those who are unwillingly involved in the system—themselves bound as much as the slave—these things, together with reasons of political economy, lead us to anticipate an auspicious day. And upon the retreating footsteps of slavery ere long shall advance the benign institutions of learning!

WILLIAM WELLS BROWN

from *A Lecture Delivered before the Female Anti-Slavery Society of Salem;* from *Narrative of William W. Brown, a fugitive slave. Written by himself;* *The American Slave-Trade;* from *Clotel; or, the President's Daughter;* from *The Escape; or, A Leap for Freedom*

Lecturer, novelist, playwright, historian, and autobiographer William Wells Brown (c. 1814–1884) was probably the most accomplished African American man of letters of the nineteenth century. Born a slave in Kentucky, he was hired out for many kinds of work, including apprenticing in a print shop and assisting a slave trader in shipping slaves down the Mississippi for sale in New Orleans. On his second escape attempt, he succeeded in reaching Ohio, where he worked as a boatman on Lake Erie and began a career as an antislavery writer and lecturer. Published in Boston, his *Narrative* was a bestseller, going through four editions and ten thousand copies in just two years. A renowned lecturer, Brown could stun audiences with simple insights, as in this brief passage from his Salem lecture of November 1847: "The slave shall have no right to speak; he shall have nothing to say. The slave cannot speak for himself; he cannot speak for his wife or children. He is a thing." Brown's essay "The American Slave Trade," published in *The Liberty Bell*, mixes sympathy for families destroyed on the auction block with indignation that "the greatest Slave-market [can be] found at the capital of the country!" In 1849 Brown went to Europe, first to Paris, then to England where he reportedly delivered as many as one thousand antislavery lectures in five years. From the safe distance of London, Brown published in 1853 his most controversial work, the novel *Clotel*, inspired by Thomas Jefferson's infamous liaison with Sally Hemings. The dark mood of America in the wake of the 1857 Dred Scott decision pervades his play *The Escape*, and in this excerpt from Act III the "respectable" Dr. Gaines represents onstage the total power slave-owners exerted over their slaves—social, physical, emotional, and sexual. Brown's skepticism about America drove him to encourage black migration to Haiti in 1861–62, but, heartened by Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, he helped recruit for black regiments during the Civil War and afterwards remained in the United States. He continued to write, producing (among many other works) the first history of blacks in the Civil War, *The Negro in the American Rebellion* (1867).

from *A Lecture Delivered before the Female Anti-Slavery Society of Salem*

My subject for this evening is Slavery as it is, and its influence upon the morals and character of the American people.

I may try to represent to you Slavery as it is; another may follow me and try to represent the condition of the Slave, we may all represent it as we think it is; and yet we shall all fail to represent the real condition of the Slave. Your fastidiousness would not allow me to do it; and if it would, I, for one, should not be willing to do it;—at least to an audience. Were I about to tell you the evils of Slavery, to represent to you the Slave in his lowest degradation, I should wish to take you, one at a time, and whisper it to you.

Slavery has never been represented; Slavery never can be represented. What is a Slave? A Slave is one that is in the power of an owner. He is a chattel; he is a thing; he is a piece of property. A master can dispose of him, can dispose of his labor, can dispose of his wife, can dispose of his offspring, can dispose of everything that belongs to the Slave, and the Slave shall have no right to speak; he shall have nothing to say. The Slave cannot speak for himself; he cannot speak for his wife, or his children. He is a thing. He is a piece of property in the hands of a master, as much as is the horse that belongs to the individual that may ride him through your streets to-morrow. Where we find one man holding an unlimited power over another, I ask, what can we expect to find his condition? Give one man power *infinitum* over another, and he will abuse that power; no matter if there be law; no matter if there be public sentiment in favor of the oppressed.

The system of Slavery, that I, in part, represent here this evening, is a system that strikes at the foundation of society, that strikes at the foundation of civil and political institutions. It is a system that takes man down from that lofty position which his God designed that he should occupy; that drags him down, places him upon a level with the beasts of the field, and there keeps him, that it may rob him of his liberty. Slavery is a system that tears the husband from the wife, and the wife

from the husband; that tears the child from the mother, and the sister from the brother; that tears asunder the tenderest ties of nature. Slavery is a system that has its blood-hounds, its whips, its negro-whips, its dungeons, and almost every instrument of cruelty that the human eye can look at; and all this for the purpose of keeping the Slave in subjection; all this for the purpose of obliterating the mind, of crushing the intellect, and annihilating the soul.

(1847)

from *Narrative of William W. Brown, a fugitive slave. Written by himself*

CHAPTER VI

On our arrival at St. Louis, I went to Dr. Young, and told him that I did not wish to live with Mr. Walker any longer. I was heart-sick at seeing my fellow-creatures bought and sold. But the Dr. had hired me for the year, and stay I must. Mr. Walker again commenced purchasing another gang of slaves. He bought a man of Colonel John O'Fallon, who resided in the suburbs of the city. This man had a wife and three children. As soon as the purchase was made, he was put in jail for safe keeping, until we should be ready to start for New Orleans. His wife visited him while there, several times, and several times when she went for that purpose was refused admittance.

In the course of eight or nine weeks Mr. Walker had his cargo of human flesh made up. There was in this lot a number of old men and women, some of them with gray locks. We left St. Louis in the steamboat Carlton, Captain Swan, bound for New Orleans. On our way down, and before we reached Rodney, the place where we made our first stop, I had to prepare the old men for market. I was ordered to have the old men's whiskers shaved off, and the grey hairs plucked out, where they were not too numerous, in which case he had a preparation of blacking to color it, and with a blacking-brush we would put it on. This was new business to me, and was performed in a room where the passengers could not see us. These slaves were also taught

Charge me not with indelicacy in touching upon this theme. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.* I speak not to fastidious ears, but to the pure in heart, to whom all things are pure. I speak of eternal verities, before whose massive force the heart trembles and bows itself, as reeds before the tempest. It is the grossest and most shameless of all indelicacies to patronize and multiply vice through pusillanimity in exposing it,—

As to those females, I say, who are young, sprightly, and handsome, whom God has damned with beauty of form and beauty of face, because they only attract the gloating eye of passion, who can describe the loathsomeness of their life? They are ripened for the New Orleans, or for some other market, where southern harems are supplied; as, under the Mahometan religion, white Caucasian beauties are sent to the slave mart of the darker-skinned Turk.

SOJOURNER TRUTH

from *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth: A Northern Slave, Emancipated from Bodily Servitude by the State of New York, in 1828*

[illegible] black abolitionist and women's rights advocate was born [illegible] named Isabella in Ulster County, New York, and didn't rename herself Sojourner Truth (c. 1799–1883) until a pivotal moment of spiritual awakening in June 1843. After her emancipation in 1827 and her conversion to evangelical Methodism in 1843, she lived a largely itinerant life, preaching and exploring alternate belief systems such as spiritualism and communitarianism. Illiterate but a gifted speaker, she dictated the narrative of her life to Olive Gilbert in 1850 and William Lloyd Garrison arranged for it to be published in Boston. In this passage from the *Narrative*, "Isabella" is the young Sojourner, helpless to relieve the miseries of her aged father's final destitution.

LAST DAYS OF BOMEFREE.

Isabella and Peter were permitted to see the remains of their mother laid in their last narrow dwelling, and to make their bereaved father a little visit, ere they returned to their servitude. Most piteous were the lamentations of the poor old man, when, at last, *they* also were obliged to bid him 'Farewell!' Juan Fernandez, on his desolate island, was not so pitiable an object as this poor lame man. Blind and crippled, he was too superannuated to think for a moment of taking care of himself, and he greatly feared no persons would interest themselves in his behalf. 'Oh,' he would exclaim, 'I had thought God would take me first,—Mau-mau was so much smarter than I, and could get about and take care of herself;—and I am *so old*, and *so helpless*. What is to become of me? I can't do any thing more—my children are all gone, and here I am left helpless and alone.' 'And then, as I was taking leave of him,' said his daughter, in relating it, 'he raised his voice, and cried aloud like a child—*Oh, how he cried!*' I HEAR it *now*—and remember it as well as if it were but yesterday—*poor old man!!!* He thought *God* had done it

all—and my heart bled within me at the sight of his misery. He begged me to get permission to come and see him sometimes, which I readily and heartily promised him.' But when all had left him, the Ardinburghs, having some feeling left for their faithful and favorite slave, 'took turns about' in keeping him—permitting him to stay a few weeks at one house, and then awhile at another, and so around. If, when he made a removal, the place where he was going was not too far off, he took up his line of march, staff in hand, and asked for no assistance. If it was twelve or twenty miles, they gave him a ride. While he was living in this way, Isabella was twice permitted to visit him. Another time she walked twelve miles, and carried her infant in her arms to see him, but when she reached the place where she hoped to find him, he had just left for a place some twenty miles distant, and she never saw him more. The last time she *did* see him, she found him seated on a rock, by the road side, alone, and far from any house. He was then migrating from the house of one Ardinburgh to that of another, several miles distant. His hair was white like wool—he was almost blind—and his gait was more a creep than a walk—but the weather was warm and pleasant, and he did not dislike the journey. When Isabella addressed him, he recognized her voice, and was exceeding glad to see her. He was assisted to mount the wagon, was carried back to the famous cellar of which we have spoken, and there they held their last earthly conversation. He spoke, as usual, bewailed his loneliness,—spoke in tones of anguish of his many children, saying, 'They are all taken away from me! I have now not one to give me a cup of cold water—why should I live and not die?' Isabella, whose heart yearned over her father, and who would have made any sacrifice to have been able to be with, and take care of him, tried to comfort, by telling him that 'she had heard the white folks say, that all the slaves in the State would be freed in ten years, and that then she would come and take care of him.' 'I would take just as good care of you as Mau-mau would, if she was here'—continued Isabel. 'Oh, no, child,' replied he, 'I cannot *live* that long.' 'Oh *do*, daddy, do live, and I will take such *good* care of you,' was her rejoinder. She now says, 'Why, I thought then, in my ignorance, that he could live, if he *would*. I just as much thought so, as I ever thought

anything in my life—and I *insisted* on his living: but he shook his head, and insisted he could not.'

But, before Bomefree's good constitution would yield either to age, exposure, or a strong desire to die, the Ardinburghs grew tired of him, and offered freedom to two old slaves—Cæsar, brother of Mau-mau Bett, and his wife Betsey—on condition that they should take care of James. (I was about to say, 'their brother-in-law'—but as slaves are neither *husbands* nor wives in law, the idea of their being brothers-in-law is truly ludicrous.) And although they were too old and infirm to take care of themselves, (Cæsar having been afflicted for a long time with fever sores, and his wife with the jaundice,) they eagerly accepted the boon of freedom, which had been the life-long desire of their souls—though at a time when emancipation was to them little more than destitution, and was a freedom more to be desired by the master than the slave. Sojourner declares of the slaves in their ignorance, that 'their thoughts are no longer their own than her finger.'

(1810)

that he would rather die than deny the Redeemer, whose blood was shed for him. His master, after vainly trying to induce obedience by threats, had him terribly whipped. The fortitude of the sufferer was not to be shaken; he nobly rejected the offer of exemption from further chastisement at the expense of destroying his soul, and this blessed martyr *died in consequence of this severe infliction*. Oh, how bright a gem will this victim of irresponsible power be, in that crown which sparkles on the Redeemer's brow; and that many such will cluster there, I have not the shadow of a doubt.

SARAH M. GRIMKÉ

(1837)

ANGELINA EMILY GRIMKÉ

from *An Appeal to the Women of the Nominally Free States*

Younger sister of the abolitionist Sarah Grimké, Angelina Emily Grimké (1805–1879) also left behind a life of privilege in the slaveholding upper class of South Carolina when she moved to Philadelphia in 1829 and joined her sister in the Quaker community there. Angelina's antislavery writing first found expression in a letter to William Lloyd Garrison, published in *The Liberator* in 1835, and then in her pamphlet *An Appeal to the Christian Women of the South* (1836), which deliberately paralleled her older sister's pamphlet addressed to southern clergymen the same year. In this excerpt from her much longer tract of 1837, she makes clear her potentially shocking thesis: "dear sisters, let us not forget that *Northern* women are participators in the crime of slavery." Angelina married the abolitionist Theodore Dwight Weld in 1838, with whom she had three children, and helped him compile his *American Slavery As It Is* (1839), to which Sarah also contributed. Thereafter the three of them lived and worked together as reformers and educators in New Jersey and Massachusetts, where Angelina died six years after her sister.

II. WOMEN THE VICTIMS OF SLAVERY.

Out of the millions of slaves who have been stolen from Africa, a very great number must have been women who were torn from the arms of their fathers and husbands, brothers and children, and subjected to all the horrors of the middle passage and the still greater sufferings of slavery in a foreign land. Multitudes of these were cast upon our inhospitable shores; some of them now toil out a life of bondage, "one hour of which is fraught with more misery than ages of that" which our fathers rose in rebellion to oppose. But the great mass of female slaves in the southern States are the descendants of these hapless strangers; 1,000,000 of them now wear the iron yoke of slavery in this land of boasted liberty and law. They are our country women—*they are our sisters*; and to us, as women, they have a right to look for sympathy with their sorrows, and effort and prayer for their rescue. Upon those of us especially who have

named the name of Christ, they have peculiar claims, and claims which *we must answer, or we shall incur a heavy load of guilt.*

Women, too, are constituted by nature the peculiar guardians of children, and children are the victims of this horrible system. Helpless infancy is robbed of the tender care of the mother and the protection of the father. There are in this Christian land thousands of little children who have been made orphans by the "domestic institution" of the South; and whilst woman's hand is stretched out to gather in the orphans and the half orphans whom *death* has made in our country, and to shelter them from the storms of adversity, O let us not forget the orphans whom *crime* has made in our midst; but let us plead the cause of *these* innocents. Let us expose the heinous wickedness of the internal slave-trade. It is an organized system for the disruption of family ties, a manufactory of widows and orphans.

III. WOMEN ARE SLAVEHOLDERS

Multitudes of the Southern women hold men, women and children as *property. They* are pampered in luxury, and nursed in the school of tyranny; *they* sway the iron rod of power, and *they* rob the laborer of his hire. Immortal beings tremble at *their* nod, and bow in abject submission at *their* word, and under the cowskin too often wielded by *their* own delicate hands. Women at the South hold *their own sisters* and brothers in bondage. Start not at this dreadful assertion—we speak that which some of us do know—we testify that which some of us have seen. Such facts ought to be known, that the women of the North may understand *their* duties, and be incited to perform *them*.

Southern families often present the most disgusting scenes of dissension, in which the mistress acts a part derogatory to her own character as a woman. Jefferson has so exactly described the bitter fruits of slavery in the domestic circle that we cannot forbear re-quoting it: "The whole commerce between master and slave is a *perpetual exercise* of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one hand, and degrading submission on the other. The parent *storms*, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives loose to the worst of passions, and thus *nursed, educated and daily exercised* in *tyranny*, cannot

be stamped by it with odious peculiarities." We wish this picture applied only to the "commerce between *master* and slave," but we know that there are *female tyrants* too, who are prompt to lay their complaints of misconduct before their husbands, brothers and sons, and to urge them to commit acts of violence against their helpless slaves. Others still more cruel, place the lash in the hands of some trusty domestic, and stand by whilst he lays the heavy strokes upon the unresisting victim, deaf to the cries for mercy which rend the air, or rather the fiend enraged at such appeals, which are only answered by the Southern lady with the prompt command of "give her more of that." This work of chastisement is often performed by a father, or other relative of the poor sufferer, which circumstance stings like an adder the very heart of the slave while her body writhes under the lash. Other mistresses who cannot bear that their delicate ears should be pained by the screams of the poor sufferers, write an order to the master of the Charleston work-house, or the New Orleans calaboose, where they are more cruelly stretched in order to render the stroke of the whip or the blow of the paddle more certain to produce cuts and wounds which cause the blood to flow at every stroke. And let it be remembered that these poor creatures are often *women* who are most indecently divested of their clothing and exposed to the gaze of the executioner of a *woman's* command.

What then, our beloved sisters, must be the effects of such a system upon the domestic character of the white females? Can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit? Can such despotism mould the character of the Southern woman to gentleness and love? May we not fairly conclude that all that suavity, for which the Southern ladies are so conspicuous, is in many instances the paint and the varnish of hypocrisy, the fashionable polish of a heartless superficiality?

But it is not the character alone of the mistress that is deeply injured by the possession and exercise of such despotic power, nor is the degradation and suffering to which the slave is constantly subject; but another important consideration is, that in consequence of the dreadful state of morals at the South, the father and the daughter sometimes find their homes a scene of the most mortifying, heart-rending preference of the degraded mulatto, or the colored daughter of the head of the family.

There are, alas, too many families, of which the contentions of Abraham's household is a fair example. But we forbear to lift the veil of private life any higher; let these few hints suffice to give you some idea of what is daily passing *behind* that curtain which has been so carefully drawn before the scenes of domestic life in Christian America.

And now, dear sisters, let us not forget that *Northern* women are participators in the crime of slavery—too many of *us* have surrendered our hearts and hands to the wealthy planters of the South, and gone down with them to live on the unrequited toil of the slave. Too many of *us* have ourselves become slaveholders, our hearts have been hardened under the searing influence of the system, and we, too, have learned to be tyrants in the school of despots. Too few of us have replied to the matrimonial proposals of the slaveholder:

> "Go back, haughty Southron, thy treasures of gold
> Are dimmed by the blood of the hearts thou hast sold;
> Thy home may be lovely, but round it I hear
> The crack of the whip and the footsteps of fear.
>
> Full low at thy bidding thy negroes may kneel,
> With the iron of bondage on spirit and heel;
> Yet know that the Northerner sooner would be
> *In fetters with them than in freedom with thee.*"

But let it be so no longer. Let us henceforward resolve, that the women of the free States *never* again will barter their principles for the blood-bought luxuries of the South—*never* again will regard with complacency, much less with the tender sentiments of love, any man "who buildeth his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by wrong, that useth his neighbor's service *without* wages, and giveth him *naught* for his work."

And there are others amongst us, who, though not slaveholders ourselves, yet have those who are nearest and dearest to us involved in this sin. Ah, yes! some of us have fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, who are living in the slave States, and are daily served by the unremunerated servant; and for the enlightenment of these *we* are most solmenly bound to labor and to pray without ceasing. Vast responsibilities are rolled upon us by the fact that we believe we have received the truth on the

subject, whilst they are in ignorance and error. Some Northern women too, are the wives of slaveholders, and of those who hold mortgages on the slaves of the South.

IV. WOMEN USE THE PRODUCTS OF SLAVE LABOR.

Multitudes of Northern women are daily making use of the products of slave labor. They are clothing themselves and their families in the cotton, and eating the rice and the sugar which they well know has cost the slave his unrequited toil, his blood and his tears; and if the maxim in law be founded in justice and truth, that "the receiver *is as bad* as the thief," how much greater the condemnation of those who not merely receive the stolen products of the slave's labor, but *voluntarily* purchase them, and *continually appropriate them to their own use.*

We frequently meet with individuals who, though very particular in not using sugar which has been raised by the slave, still feel no compunction in purchasing slave-grown cotton, and urge as a reason, that there is not that waste of life in the culture of cotton, which attends that of sugar. *But is there less guilt of blood?* We copy the following description of the *whip* which is *made by Northern men*, and used by Southern overseers on *cotton plantations.* "The staff is about 20 or 22 inches in length, with a large and heavy head, which is often loaded with a quarter or half a pound of lead, wrapped in catgut, and securely fastened on, so that nothing but the greatest violence can separate it from the staff. The lash is 10 feet long, made of small strips of buckskin, tanned so as to be dry and hard, and plaited carefully and closely together, of the thickness in the largest part of a man's little finger, but quite small at each extremity. At the furthest end of this thong is attached a cracker, nine inches in length, made of strong sewing silk, twisted and knotted, until it feels as firm as the hardest twine.

"This whip, in an unpracticed hand, is a very awkward and inefficient weapon; but the *best* qualification of the overseer of a *cotton* plantation, is the ability of using this whip with adroitness, and when wielded by an experienced arm it is one of the most *cruel instruments of torture* ever invented by the ingenuity of

man. The cat-o'-nine-tails, used in the British military service, is but a clumsy instrument beside this whip, which has superseded the cowhide, the hickory, and every other species of lash on the *cotton* plantations. The cowhide and the hickory bruise and mangle the flesh of the sufferer; but *this whip cuts*, when expertly applied, *almost as keen as a knife*, and never bruises the flesh nor injures the bones." What then do our sisters say to using *cotton* which is raised under the keen and cutting lash of this whip, by the mancipated mothers, wives and daughters of the South? Can these sufferers really believe we are remembering them that are in bonds *as bound with them*, whilst we freely use what costs them so much agony?

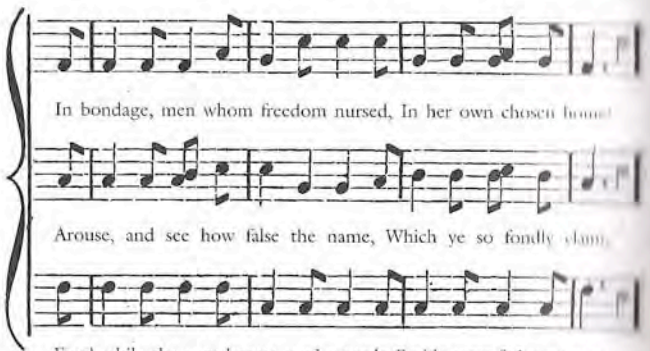
And has the Lord uttered no rebuke to us in these fearful times? Is there no lesson for *us* to learn in recent events? Who are the men that now weep and mourn over their broken fortunes—their ruined hopes? Are they not the merchants and manufacturers, who have traded largely in the unrequited labor of the slave? Men who have joined hand in hand with the wicked, and entered into covenant to rivet the chains of the captive?

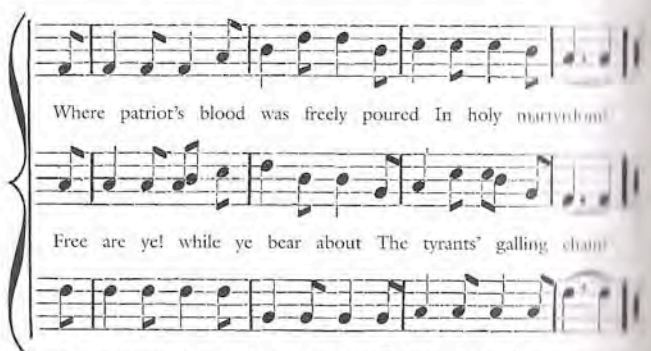
We are often told that free articles cannot be obtained, but why not? Our answer is, because there is so little demand for them. Only let the moral sense of the free States become so pure and so elevated as to induce them to refuse to purchase slave-grown products, and the manufacturers, and merchants, and grocers, will soon devise some plan by which to supply their factories and stores with free labor cotton and goods. But we may be asked what are we to do until the market is supplied? We unhesitatingly reply, suffer the inconvenience of deprivation, and then will *you*, dear sisters, become the favored instruments in the Lord's hand, of producing that change in public feeling which will lead to such action as will bring the desired supply into our market. We find that those who really wish to obtain such articles, are almost universally able to do so, if they will pay a little higher price, and be satisfied to wear what may not be of quite so good a quality; but it is frequently the case that even this trifling self-denial is not necessary.

We would remind you of the course pursued by our revolutionary fathers and mothers when Great Britain levied upon her colonies what they regarded as unjust taxes. Read the words of the historian, and ponder well the noble self-denial of the

men and *women* of this country, when they considered their own liberties endangered by the encroachments of England's evil policy. Look, then, at the influence which their measures produced in making it the interest of the merchants and manufacturers in Great Britain to second the petitions of her colonies for a redress of grievances, and judge for yourselves whether the Southern planters would not gladly second the efforts of the abolitionists, by petitioning their National and State Legislatures for the abolition of slavery, if they found they could no longer sell their slave-grown produce.

(1837)





(1843)

HENRY HIGHLAND GARNET

An Address to the Slaves of the United States of America

Born a slave in Kent County, Maryland, Henry Highland Garnet (1815–1882) escaped with his parents and seven siblings in 1824, moving via Pennington, Delaware, and Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to settle in New York City. Beginning at the African Free School in New York, followed by two years at sea as cabin boy and cook, Garnet pursued his education at institutions in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and upstate New York, and was ordained a Presbyterian minister in 1841. He became active in every aspect of the antislavery movement, harboring fugitive slaves and organizing boycotts of goods produced by slave labor. On August 21, 1843, he delivered an address to the National Convention of Colored Citizens in Buffalo, New York. His passionate call for violent resistance was too much for even such staunch abolitionists as Frederick Douglass, and the convention voted, 19–18, not to endorse the address.

PREFACE.

THE FOLLOWING Address was first read at the National Convention held at Buffalo, N.Y., in 1843. Since that time it has been slightly modified, retaining, however, all of its original doctrine. The document elicited more discussion than any other paper that was ever brought before that, or any other deliberative body of colored persons, and their friends. Gentlemen who opposed the Address, based their objections on these grounds. 1. That the document was war-like, and encouraged insurrection, and 2. That if the Convention should adopt it, that those delegates who lived near the borders of the slave states, would not dare to return to their homes. The Address was rejected by a small majority; and now in compliance with the earnest request of many who heard it, and in conformity to the wishes of numerous friends who are anxious to see it, the author now gives it to the public, praying God that this little book may

be borne on the four winds of heaven, until the principles it contains shall be understood and adopted by every slave in the Union.

Troy, N. Y., April 15, 1848.

ADDRESS TO THE SLAVES OF THE U. S.

BRETHREN AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Your brethren of the north, east, and west have been accustomed to meet together in National Conventions, to sympathize with each other, and to weep over your unhappy condition. In these meetings we have addressed all classes of the free, but we have never until this time, sent a word of consolation and advice to you. We have been contented in sitting still and mourning over your sorrows, earnestly hoping that before this day, your sacred liberties would have been restored. But we have hoped in vain. Years have rolled on, and tens of thousands have been borne on streams of blood, and tears, to the shores of eternity. While you have been oppressed, we have also been partakers with you; nor can we be free while you are enslaved. We therefore write to you as being bound with you.

Many of you are bound to us, not only by the ties of a common humanity, but we are connected by the more tender relations of parents, wives, husbands, children, brothers, and sisters and friends. As such we most affectionately address you.

Slavery has fixed a deep gulf between you and us, and while it shuts out from you the relief and consolation which your friends would willingly render, it afflicts and persecutes you with a fierceness which we might not expect to see in the breasts of hell. But still the Almighty Father of Mercies has left to us a glimmering ray of hope, which shines out like a lone star in a cloudy sky. Mankind are becoming wiser, and better. The oppressor's power is fading, and you, every day, are becoming better informed, and more numerous. Your grievances, brethren, are many. We shall not attempt, in this short address, to present to the world, all the dark catalogue of this nation's sins which have been committed upon an innocent people. Indeed it indeed, necessary, for you feel them from day to day, and the civilized world look upon them with amazement.

Two hundred and twenty-seven years ago, the first of our injured race were brought to the shores of America. They came not with glad spirits to select their homes, in the New World. They came not with their own consent, to find an unmolested enjoyment of the blessings of this fruitful soil. The first dealings which they had with men calling themselves Christians, exhibited to them the worst features of corrupt and sordid hearts, and convinced them that no cruelty is too great, no villany, and no robbery too abhorrent for even enlightened men to perform, when influenced by avarice, and lust. Neither did they come flying upon the wings of Liberty, to a land of freedom. But, they came with broken hearts, from their beloved native land, and were doomed to unrequited toil, and deep degradation. Nor did the evil of their bondage end at their emancipation by death. Succeeding generations inherited their chains, and millions have come from eternity into time, and have returned again to the world of spirits, cursed, and ruined by American Slavery.

The propagators of the system, or their immediate ancestors soon discovered its growing evil, and its tremendous wickedness, and secret promises were made to destroy it. The gross inconsistency of a people holding slaves, who had themselves fled "o'er the wave," for freedom's sake, was too apparent to be entirely overlooked. The voice of Freedom cried, "emancipate your Slaves." Humanity supplicated with tears, for the deliverance of the children of Africa. Wisdom urged her solemn plea. The bleeding captive plead his innocence, and pointed to Christianity who stood weeping at the cross. Jehovah frowned upon the nefarious institution, and thunderbolts, red with vengeance, struggled to leap forth to blast the guilty wretches who maintained it. But all was vain. Slavery had stretched its dark wings of death over the land, the Church stood silently by—the priests prophesied falsely, and the people loved to have it so. Its throne is established, and now it reigns triumphantly.

Nearly three millions of your fellow citizens, are prohibited by law, and public opinion, (which in this country is stronger than law), from reading the Book of Life. Your intellect has been destroyed as much as possible, and every ray of light they have attempted to shut out from your minds. The oppressors themselves have become involved in the ruin. They

have become weak, sensual, and rapacious. They have cursed you—they have cursed themselves—they have cursed the earth which they have trod. In the language of a Southern statesman, we can truly say, "even the wolf, driven back long since by the approach of man, now returns after the lapse of a hundred years, and howls amid the desolations of slavery."

The colonists threw the blame upon England. They said that the mother country entailed the evil upon them, and that they would rid themselves of it if they could. The world thought they were sincere, and the philanthropic pitied them. But time soon tested their sincerity. In a few years, the colonists grew strong and severed themselves from the British Government. Their Independence was declared, and they took their station among the sovereign powers of the earth. The declaration was a glorious document. Sages admired it, and the patriotic of every nation reverenced the Godlike sentiments which it contained. When the power of Government returned to their hands, did they emancipate the slaves? No; they rather added new links to our chains. Were they ignorant of the principles of Liberty? Certainly they were not. The sentiments of their revolutionary orators fell in burning eloquence upon their hearts, and with one voice they cried, LIBERTY OR DEATH. O, what a sentence was that! It ran from soul to soul like electric fire, and nerved the arm of thousands to fight in the holy cause of Freedom. Among the diversity of opinions that are entertained in regard to physical resistance, there are but a few found to gainsay the stern declaration. We are among those who do not.

SLAVERY! How much misery is comprehended in that single word. What mind is there that does not shrink from its direful effects? Unless the image of God is obliterated from the soul, all men cherish the love of Liberty. The nice discerning political economist does not regard the sacred right, more than the untutored African who roams in the wilds of Congo. Nor has the one more right to the full enjoyment of his freedom than the other. In every man's mind the good seeds of liberty are planted, and he who brings his fellow down so low, as to make him contented with a condition of slavery, commits the highest crime against God and man. Brethren, your oppressors aim to do this. They endeavor to make you as much like brutes as possible. When they have blinded the eyes of your mind—debased

they have embittered the sweet waters of life—when they have put out the light which shines from the word of God—then, and not till then has American slavery done its perfect work.

TO SUCH DEGRADATION IT IS SINFUL IN THE EXTREME FOR YOU TO MAKE VOLUNTARY SUBMISSION. The divine commandments, you are in duty bound to reverence, and obey. If you do not obey them you will surely meet with the displeasure of the Almighty. He requires you to love him supremely, and your neighbor as yourself—to keep the Sabbath day holy—to search the Scriptures—and bring up your children with respect for his laws, and to worship no other God but him. But slavery sets all these at naught, and hurls defiance in the face of Jehovah. The forlorn condition in which you are placed does not destroy your moral obligation to God. You are not certain of Heaven, because you suffer yourselves to remain in a state of slavery, where you cannot obey the commandments of the Sovereign of the universe. If the ignorance of slavery is a passport to heaven, then it is a blessing, and no curse, and you should rather desire its perpetuity than its abolition. God will not receive slavery, nor ignorance, nor any other state of mind, for love, and obedience to him. Your condition does not absolve you from your moral obligation. The diabolical injustice by which your liberties are trodden down, NEITHER GOD, NOR ANGELS, OR JUST MEN, COMMAND YOU TO SUFFER FOR A SINGLE MOMENT. THEREFORE IT IS YOUR SOLEMN AND IMPERATIVE DUTY TO USE EVERY MEANS, BOTH MORAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND PHYSICAL, THAT PROMISE SUCCESS. If a band of heathen men should attempt to enslave a race of Christians, and to place their children under the influence of some false religion, surely, heaven would frown upon the men who would not resist such aggression, even to death. If on the other hand, a band of Christians should attempt to enslave a race of heathen men and to entail slavery upon them, and to keep them in heathenism in the midst of Christianity, the God of heaven would smile upon every effort which the injured might make to disenthral themselves.

Brethren, it is as wrong for your lordly oppressors to keep you in slavery, as it was for the man thief to steal our ancestors from the coast of Africa. You should therefore now use the same manner of resistance, as would have been just in our ancestors, when the bloody foot prints of the first remorseless soul thief

was placed upon the shores of our fatherland. The humblest peasant is as free in the sight of God, as the proudest monarch that ever swayed a sceptre. Liberty is a spirit sent out from God, and like its great Author, is no respecter of persons.

Brethren, the time has come when you must act for yourselves. It is an old and true saying, that "if hereditary bondmen would be free, they must themselves strike the blow." You can plead your own cause, and do the work of emancipation better than any others. The nations of the old world are moving in the great cause of universal freedom, and some of them at least will ere long, do you justice. The combined powers of Europe have placed their broad seal of disapprobation upon the African slave trade. But in the slave holding parts of the United States the trade is as brisk as ever. They buy and sell you as though you were brute beasts. The North has done much—her opinion of slavery in the abstract is known. But in regard to the South, we adopt the opinion of the New York Evangelist—"We have advanced so far, that the cause apparently waits for a more effectual door to be thrown open than has been yet." We are about to point you to that more effectual door. Look around you, and behold the bosoms of your loving wives, heaving with unutterable agonies! Hear the cries of your poor children! Remember the stripes your fathers bore. Think of the torture and disgrace of your noble mothers. Think of your wretched sisters, loving virtue and purity, as they are driven into concubinage, and are exposed to the unbridled lusts of incarnate devils. Think of the undying glory that hangs around the ancient name of Africa—and forget not that you are native-born American citizens, and as such, you are justly entitled to all the rights that are granted to the freest. Think how many tears you have poured out upon the soil which you have cultivated with unrequited toil, and enriched with your blood; and then go to your lordly employers, and tell them plainly, that YOU ARE DETERMINED TO BE FREE. Appeal to their sense of justice, and tell them that they have no more right to oppress you, than you have to enslave them. Entreat them to remove the grievous burdens which they have imposed upon you, and to remunerate you for your labor. Promise them renewed diligence in the cultivation of the soil, if they will render to you an equivalent for your services. Point them to the increase of happiness and prosperity in the

British West Indies, since the act of Emancipation. Tell them in language which they cannot misunderstand, of the exceeding sinfulness of slavery, and of a future judgment, and of the righteous retributions of an indignant God. Inform them that all you desire, is FREEDOM, and that nothing else will suffice. Tell this, and for ever after cease to toil for the heartless tyrants, who give you no other reward but stripes and abuse. If they should commence the work of death, they, and not you, will be responsible for the consequences. You had far better all die—*die immediately*, than live slaves, and entail your wretchedness upon your posterity. If you would be free in this generation, here is your only hope. However much you and all of us may desire it, there is not much hope of Redemption without the shedding of blood. If you must bleed, let it all come at once—rather, *die freemen, than live to be slaves.* It is impossible, like the children of Israel, to make a grand Exodus from the land of bondage. For PHARAOHS ARE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BLOOD-RED WAVE! You cannot remove en masse to the dominions of the British Queen—nor can you pass through Florida, and overrun Texas, and at last find peace in Mexico. The propagators of American slavery are spending their blood and treasure, that they may plant the black flag in the heart of Mexico, and riot in the halls of the Montezumas. In the language of the Rev. Robert Hall, when addressing the volunteers of Bristol, who were rushing forth to repel the invasion of Napoleon, who threatened to lay waste the fair homes of England, "Religion is too much interested in your behalf, not to shed over you her most gracious influences."

You will not be compelled to spend much time in order to become inured to hardships. From the first moment that you breathed the air of heaven, you have been accustomed to nothing else but hardships. The heroes of the American Revolution were never put upon harder fare, than a peck of corn, and a few pumpkins per week. You have not become enervated by the luxuries of life. Your sternest energies have been beaten out upon the anvil of severe trial. Slavery has done this, to make you subservient to its own purposes; but it has done more than this, it has prepared you for any emergency. If you receive good treatment, it is what you could hardly expect; if you meet with pain, sorrow, and even death, these are the common lot of the slaves.

Fellow-men! patient sufferers! behold your dearest rights crushed to the earth! See your sons murdered, and your wives, mothers, and sisters, doomed to prostitution! In the name of the merciful God! and by all that life is worth, let it no longer be a debateable question, whether it is better to choose LIBERTY or DEATH!

In 1822, Denmark Veazie, of South Carolina, formed a plan for the liberation of his fellow men. In the whole history of human efforts to overthrow slavery, a more complicated and tremendous plan was never formed. He was betrayed by the treachery of his own people, and died a martyr to freedom. Many a brave hero fell, but History, faithful to her high trust, will transcribe his name on the same monument with Moses, Hampden, Tell, Bruce, and Wallace, Touissaint L'Overture, Lafayette and Washington. That tremendous movement shook the whole empire of slavery. The guilty soul thieves were overwhelmed with fear. It is a matter of fact, that at that time, and in consequence of the threatened revolution, the slave states talked strongly of emancipation. But they blew but one blast of the trumpet of freedom, and then laid it aside. As these men became quiet, the slaveholders ceased to talk about emancipation: and now, behold your condition to-day! Angels sigh over it, and humanity has long since exhausted her tears in weeping on your account!

The patriotic Nathaniel Turner followed Denmark Veazie. He was goaded to desperation by wrong and injustice. By fanaticism, his name has been recorded on the list of infamy, but future generations will number him among the noble and brave.

Next arose the immortal Joseph Cinque, the hero of the Amistad. He was a native African, and by the help of God he emancipated a whole ship-load of his fellow men on the high seas. And he now sings of liberty on the sunny hills of Africa, and beneath his native palm trees, where he hears the lion roar, and feels himself as free as that king of the forest. Next arose Madison Washington, that bright star of freedom, and took his station in the constellation of freedom. He was a slave on board the brig Creole, of Richmond, bound to New Orleans, that great slave mart, with a hundred and four others. Nineteen struck for liberty or death. But one life was taken, and the whole were emancipated, and the vessel was carried into Nassau, N.

providence. Noble men! Those who have fallen in freedom's conflict, their memories will be cherished by the true hearted, and the God-fearing, in all future generations; those who are living, their names are surrounded by a halo of glory.

We do not advise you to attempt a revolution with the sword, because it would be INEXPEDIENT. Your numbers are too small, and moreover the rising spirit of the age, and the spirit of the gospel, are opposed to war and bloodshed. But from this moment cease to labor for tyrants who will not remunerate you. Let every slave throughout the land do this, and the days of slavery are numbered. You cannot be more oppressed than you have been—you cannot suffer greater cruelties than you have already. RATHER DIE FREEMEN THAN LIVE TO BE SLAVES. Remember that you are THREE MILLIONS.

It is in your power so to torment the God-cursed slaveholders, that they will be glad to let you go free. If the scale was turned, and black men were the masters, and white men the slaves, every destructive agent and element would be employed to lay the oppressor low. Danger and death would hang over their heads day and night. Yes, the tyrants would meet with plagues more terrible than those of Pharaoh. But you are a patient people. You act as though you were made for the special use of these devils. You act as though your daughters were born to pamper the lusts of your masters and overseers. And worse than all, you tamely submit, while your lords tear your wives from your embraces, and defile them before your eyes. In the name of God we ask, are you men? Where is the blood of your fathers? Has it all run out of your veins? Awake, awake; millions of voices are calling you! Your dead fathers speak to you from their graves. Heaven, as with a voice of thunder, calls on you to arise from the dust.

Let your motto be RESISTANCE! RESISTANCE! RESISTANCE!—No oppressed people have ever secured their liberty without resistance. What kind of resistance you had better make, you must decide by the circumstances that surround you, and according to the suggestion of expediency. Brethren, adieu. Trust in the living God. Labor for the peace of the human race, and remember that you are three millions.

(1843)

reached Canada. When I first came, I joined the soldiers just after the rebellion: then practised up and down the province as a physician, from the knowledge I had obtained from a colored man in Mississippi, who knew roots and herbs,—but there were many kinds I wanted which I could not find here.

I am now hiring a piece of land in Buxton. My calculation is if I live, to own a farm if I can. My health is good, and the climate agrees with me—and it does with colored men generally.

Slavery is barbarous. In my view, slaveholders, judged by the way they treat colored people, are the worst persons on earth.

HARRIET TUBMAN

from *The Refugee: Or the Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada*

Unlike other former slaves who wrote narratives of their lives, the famous abolitionist Harriet Tubman (c. 1820–1913) never did, and thus this short reflection is the only text to capture anything of Tubman in her own voice. A woman of action, she led scores of slaves to freedom as a guide on the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, she volunteered as a nurse among the Union wounded, and she organized and led networks of black spies behind Confederate lines.

I GREW up like a neglected weed,—ignorant of liberty, having no experience of it. Then I was not happy or contented: every time I saw a white man I was afraid of being carried away. I had two sisters carried away in a chain-gang,—one of them left four children. We were always uneasy. Now I've been free, I know what a dreadful condition slavery is. I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but I never saw one who was willing to go back and be a slave. I have no opportunity to see my friends in my native land. We would rather stay in our native land, if we could be as free there as we are here. I think slavery is the next thing to hell. If a person would send another into bondage, he would, it appears to me, be bad enough to send him into hell, if he could.

(1856)

sometimes, when I have seen them starved, and miserable, and unable to help themselves, I have helped them to some of the comforts which they were denied by him who owned them, and which my companions had not the wit or the daring to procure. Meat was not a part of our regular food; but my master had plenty of sheep and pigs, and sometimes I have picked out the best one I could find in the flock, or the drove, carried it a mile or two into the woods, slaughtered it, cut it up, and distributed it among the poor creatures, to whom it was at once food, luxury, and medicine. Was this wrong? I can only say that, at this distance of time, my conscience does not reproach me for it, and that then I esteemed it among the best of my deeds.

LUCRETIA MOTT

from *A Sermon to the Medical Students*

Born in Nantucket, Massachusetts, the lifelong Quaker activist Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793–1880) emerged as one of the most fearless and dynamic campaigners for abolition and women's rights in the nineteenth century. Active in boycotting products of slave labor as early as the 1820s, and a close friend of Garrison, she helped found the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, attended the first Anti-Slavery Convention of American Women in 1837, and with her husband James Mott, represented Pennsylvania at the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840. She lectured and preached constantly. In her long life of activism, Mott never slowed down, joining at age eighty-five in the anniversary celebration of the Seneca Falls Convention for women's rights, which she had organized with Susan B. Anthony thirty years earlier. Here, in this 1849 sermon addressed to medical students in Philadelphia, Mott stressed that doctors had moral as well as clinical responsibilities and suggested that to be a serious physician meant that one must oppose slavery.

Your growing knowledge of the system of man impresses the importance of observing every law of his physical being, in order to be preserved a perfect whole. The light of truth has revealed to you your noble powers, and the responsibility of exercising them in the purity with which they have been bestowed. If thus by your studies you are made intelligently acquainted with these things, and if superadded, you have a quick sense of the divinity in the soul, responding to and according with this knowledge, how increasingly incumbent is it upon you to carry out your principles among your associates, so that you be not found in the back ground in the great reformation that is taking place in human society.

This is a part of my religion—a part of true Christianity, and you must bear with me, my friends, if I press upon you duties, having reference to your different relations in society, to your intercourse with men, wherever you are placed. It has been my privilege and pleasure to meet with some of you in our Anti-Slavery Rooms. When these have been disposed to come there,

though perhaps from mere curiosity, to see what the despised abolitionist was doing, I have been glad to meet them, and to offer such considerations as would induce a reflection upon the relation which they bear to our fellow beings in their own country and neighborhood. This, in the view of many, is a subject of delicacy—lightly to be touched. Still it is an essential part of Christianity; and one object in asking your audience this evening, was to offer for your consideration some views connected with it, in the hope that you would at least patiently hear, and "suffer the word of exhortation."

There are many now looking at the subject of slavery in all its bearings, who are sympathizing with the condition of the poor and oppressed in our land. Although many of you may be more immediately connected with this system, yet it is coming to be regarded as not a mere sectional question, but a national and an individual one. It is interwoven throughout our country, into so much with which we have to do, that we may well acknowledge we are all, all "verily guilty concerning our brother." There is, therefore, the greater responsibility that we first examine ourselves and ascertain what there is for us to do in order that we may speedily rid ourselves of the great evil that is clinging to us. *Evil?*—this mighty *sin* which so easily besets us. There are those here who have had their hearts touched, who have been led to feel and have entered into sympathy with the bondman, and have known where the evil lies. I believe there is a work for you to do, when you return home, if you will be faithful to yourselves. You will be brought more deeply to enter into feeling with the poor and oppressed slave; you will find that the mission of the gospel is "to bind up the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive." It would be a reflection upon the intelligence and the conscience of those who are here to suppose that they would always resist the wisdom and power with which truth is speaking to their hearts upon this subject. There are many disposed to examine, to cultivate their minds and hearts in relation to their duties in this respect. May you be faithful, and enter into a consideration as to how far you are partakers in this evil, even in other men's sins. How far, by permission, by apology, or otherwise, you are found lending your sanction to a system which degrades and brutalizes the millions of our fellow beings; which denies to them the right

of intelligent education, rights essential to them, and which we acknowledge to be dear to us.

Is this an evil that cannot be remedied? A remedy is nigh at hand, even at the door. The voice has been heard saying, "Proclaim liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison to them that are bound." "Proclaim ye liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." To this land peculiarly is this language applicable. In this land especially are we called to be faithful in this subject. Be true to your convictions of duty then, my brethren, and you will have the blessing of beholding your own country purged of this iniquity, and be brought to acknowledge that the divine hand of mercy and love has been stretched over our land.

[Here a few persons, irritated by this reference to the question of slavery, left the meeting.]

It is not strange that the allusion to this subject should create some little agitation among you; and while I can but regret it, I stand here on behalf of the suffering and the dumb, and must express the desire, that there may be a disposition to hear and reflect, and then judge. I speak unto those who have ears to hear, who have hearts to feel. May their understandings not be closed! May they be willing to receive that which conflicts with their education, their prejudices and preconceived opinions. The subject of slavery you must know, is now agitating the country from one end to the other. The Church and the Legislative Hall are occupied with its discussion. It will be presented to you in all its various bearings, and let me urge such faithfulness to the light which you have, as shall prepare you to become able advocates for the oppressed. So shall the blessing descend upon you as well as upon those for whom the appeal is made. I should not be true to myself did I not thus urge this subject upon your consideration. When you have opportunities for meditation and reflection, when your feelings are soothed by the circumstances around you, may you be led to reflect upon your duties, and the responsibility of your position in society.

(1849)

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Compromise

Compromise on the slavery question, which had prevailed in American politics at the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and during the resolution of the Missouri crisis of 1818–20, was again at the forefront of [illegible]. Lowell wrote this wryly satiric essay for the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* in March 1850. Beneath his irony, Lowell discerns real danger for the future of the Union: "Do they think that the Union can be stuck together with mouth-glue, when the eternal forces are rending it asunder?"

IF THERE were a Saint Compromise, it would be his image that ought to be stamped upon the coins of our Republic. Our very existence as a Nation at all is due, we are told, to a Compromise, and one of a somewhat ignoble sort, not between God and Satan, but between Trade and Slavery. So that Satan and Mammon were represented at the formation of the compact, but not God. Since the sticking together of the Union, this patron Saint Compromise has intervened on several occasions to prosper the work of his clients.

This patching up of expedients is justified by a system of reasoning falsely termed common sense. Everything, they say, is the result of Compromises. Conventionalism is a Compromise between the individual and Society. Respectability is a Compromise between Virtue and Vice. Nay, life itself is a Compromise between Health and Disease. We are taught to believe that half a loaf is not only better than no bread at all, but better than any amount of bread.

Now this is not truly common sense at all, for that is the result of experience and practical sagacity teaching the *best* means of reaching a desired point, not a makeshift for getting half-way to it. Facts are things to which we must all make up our minds, however distasteful they may be to us. No matter what our own hurry may be, we must consent that Destiny shall not make advances *per saltum*, but with an almost inappreciable slowness. The most vehement Reformer must endure that his

[illegible] existence shall depend upon that of his opposite pole, the unyielding Conservative. We must either get out of the way of facts or be run over by them, like the old philosopher who denied the existence of matter.

One of these tough facts is the presence and force of Evil, Unwisdom, Satan, or whatever we choose to call it, in human affairs. We may say what we please, there it is, and we must make the best of it. A great part of valuable human activity is wasted on the futile work of building barriers against the Inevitable. This, then, is the true problem—to find out what the Inevitable is. It is inevitable that when two forces join at an angle, a new direction is generated proportioned to the relative quantities of force. And this is the truth on which is based the fallacy that Compromise is the dictate of common sense. Practical wisdom, it is said, lies in the neutral ground, the balance between opposite poles. In spite of this, nevertheless, all that mankind has ever recognized as *un*common sense has been that which has gone bluntly and face to face against whatever was established theory or usage.

The difficulty is that all *our* Compromises have been no Compromises at all, at least in this sense. They have rather realized the old meaning of the word, which implied a Conspiracy. They have not been modifications springing from a meeting of the two antagonistic principles of Good and Evil, but conspiracies by which Good has been uniformly betrayed. In the great game which began with the birth of the Constitution, Slavery has all along played with loaded dice. She has put on the mask of Destiny, and acted the part so well that our Statesmen have always taken defeat for granted beforehand.

Slavery, being an acknowledged evil, the very permission to exist was at first a concession and a surrender. This was called a Compromise. Then Slavery desired to extend itself, and treachery allowed it. This was called a Compromise. Again the monster felt the pains of hunger, and Texas was thrown to it. This was called a Compromise. Now, affairs have thriven so well, that Freedom sits, an outcast and a beggar, at the gates of her own ancestral dwelling. And this is also called a Compromise. Better strangle at once that "bird of our Country" of which our orators are so fond of talking, than let her go hatching the eggs of all manner of unclean birds.

It is hardly a year since the Northern Whig presses were vieing with each other in their zeal for the Wilmot Proviso. The universal Whig Dough of the Country, fermenting with the yeast of an expected victory, forgot for a moment that it was dough. Nothing was too bad for that sour and heavy Democratic batch which would not rise. Now that aspiring dough is flat and lifeless. Even General Taylor *was* in favor of the Wilmot Proviso, and Northern Whigs were seduced to vote for him upon that pretence. Let a man cheat his neighbor out of a few hundred dollars and he goes to the State-Prison. But to what Penitentiary of public contempt shall a Party be consigned which obtains a President under false pretences? When the eye of the People becomes *clairvoyant*, it will behold, we fancy, certain unconscious gentlemen working in Congressional Committees, clad in symbolic suits of blue and red perpendicularly halved, such as are the uniform in some other public institutions.

The Wilmot Proviso was truly a Compromise. It allowed the South to keep all it had hitherto unjustly gained, but declared that it should steal no more. Our Statesmanship which has brought itself more and more into accordance with that of Europe was desirous of reproducing an American type of that greatest of Old-World humbugs, the Balance of Power. Accordingly we are now told that the beam must be kept exactly even between the Free and the Slave States, in other words, that when we make a great hole for our great cat to go through, we must also make a still greater for the little cat not yet littered.

All history is the record of a struggle, gradually heightening in fierceness, between reason and unreason between right and wrong. Of what good is it that we can put off the evil time a century, which is but a day in the history of the human race? Our statutes are subject to revision in that higher Congress where the laws of Nature are enacted. "Trent shall not wind him with so deep indent," exclaim our Glendowers.—"He must, he will, you see he *doth*," answers the progress of events. This very neutral ground of Compromise is that which is trampled at last by the contending forces of the good and evil principle. Our legislators might as well try to stay Niagara with a dipping or pass acts against the laws of gravitation, as endeavor to stunt the growth of avenging Conscience. Do they think that the Union can be stuck together with mouth-glue, when the

eternal forces are rending it asunder? There is something better than Expediency, and that is Wisdom; something stronger than Compromise, and that is Justice.

—J. R. L.

(1850)

in leading me from that terrible house of bondage, for raising me up friends in a land of strangers, and for leading me, as I hope, to a saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. A slave cannot be sure that he will always enjoy his religion in peace. Some of them are beaten for acts of devotion. I can never express to God all the gratitude which I owe him for the many favors I now enjoy. I try to live in love with all men. Nothing would delight me more than to take the worst slaveholder by the hand, even Mrs. Banton, and freely forgive her, if I thought she had repented of her sins. While she, or any other man or woman, is trampling down the image of God, and *abusing* the life out of the poor slave, I cannot believe they are Christians, or that they ought to be allowed the Christian name for one moment. I testify against them now, as having none of the spirit of Christ. There will be a cloud of swift witnesses against them at the day of judgment. The testimony of the slave will be heard then. He has no voice at the tribunals of earthly justice, but he will one day be heard; and then such revelations will be made as will fully justify the opinion which I have been compelled to form of slaveholders. They are a SEED of *evil-doers—corrupters*; they—they have done abominable works.

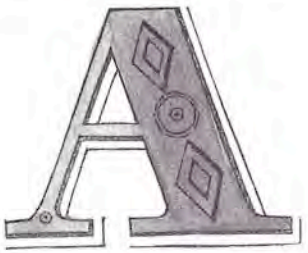
HANNAH TOWNSEND AND MARY TOWNSEND

The Anti-Slavery Alphabet

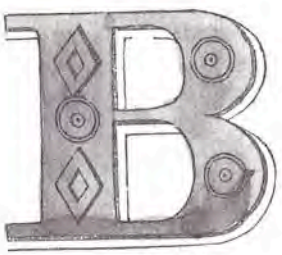
Although published anonymously, this little book for beginning readers was attributed to the Philadelphia Quakers Hannah Townsend (1813–post-1847) and Mary Townsend (1814–post-1847) by William Lloyd Garrison in the January 27, 1847, issue of *The Liberator*. The sisters wrote *The Anti-Slavery Alphabet* to be sold at the Anti-Slavery Fair in Philadelphia, an annual fund-raising event. Its twenty-six simple verses show that abolitionists believed it was never too early to shape the sympathies of a child.

TO OUR LITTLE READERS.

Listen, little children, all,
Listen to our earnest call:
You are very young, 'tis true,
But there's much that you can do.
Even you can plead with men
That they buy not slaves again,
And that those they have may be
Quickly set at liberty.
They may hearken what *you* say,
Though from *us* they turn away.
Sometimes, when from school you walk,
You can with your playmates talk,
Tell them of the slave child's fate,
Motherless and desolate.
And you can refuse to take
Candy, sweetmeat, pie or cake,
Saying "no"—unless 'tis free—
"The slave shall not work for me."
Thus, dear little children, each
May some useful lesson teach;
Thus each one may help to free
This fair land from slavery.

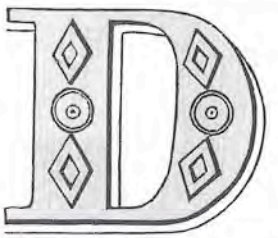


A is an Abolitionist—
A man who wants to free
The wretched slave—and give to all
An equal liberty.

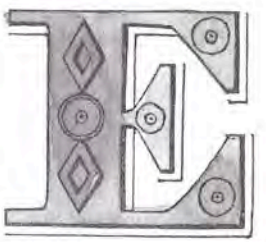


B is a Brother with a skin
Of somewhat darker hue,
But in our Heavenly Father's sight,
He is as dear as you.

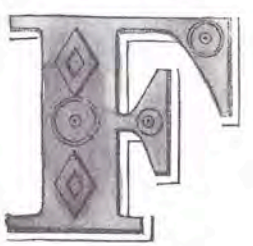
C is the Cotton-field, to which
This injured brother's driven,
When, as the white man's *slave*, he toils
From early morn till even.



D is the Driver, cold and stern,
Who follows, whip in hand,
To punish those who dare to rest,
Or disobey command.

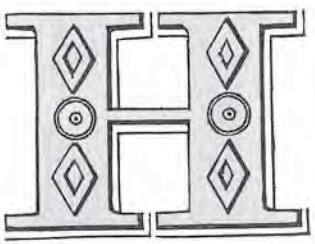


E is the Eagle, soaring high;
An emblem of the free;
But while we chain our brother man,
Our type he cannot be.

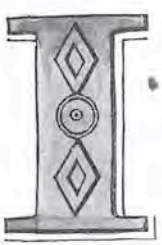


F is the heart-sick Fugitive,
The slave who runs away,
And travels through the dreary night,
But hides himself by day.

G is the Gong, whose rolling sound,
Before the morning light,
Calls up the little sleeping slave,
To labor until night.

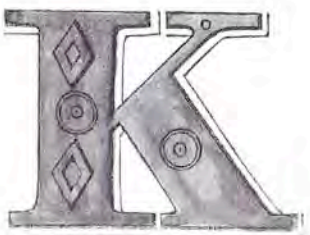


H is the Hound his master trained,
And called to scent the track,
Of the unhappy fugitive,
And bring him trembling back.

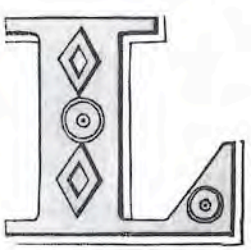


I is the Infant, from the arms
Of its fond mother torn,
And, at a public auction, sold
With horses, cows, and corn.

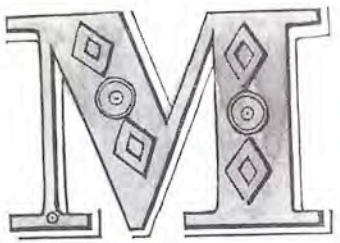
J is the Jail, upon whose floor
That wretched mother lay,
Until her cruel master came,
And carried her away.



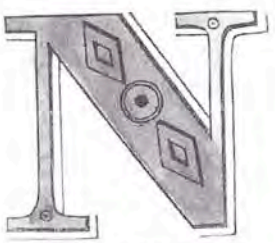
K is the Kidnapper, who stole
That little child and mother—
Shrieking, it clung around her, but
He tore them from each other.



L is the Lash, that brutally
He swung around its head,
Threatening that "if it cried again,
He'd whip it till 'twas dead."

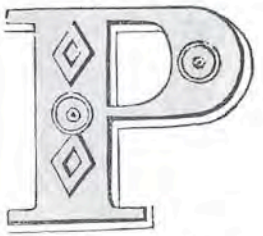


M is the Merchant of the north,
Who buys what slaves produce—
So they are stolen, whipped and worked,
For his, and for our use.



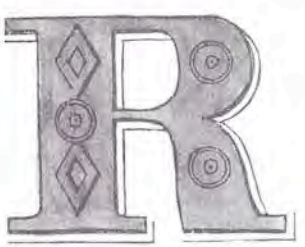
N is the Negro, rambling free
In his far distant home,
Delighting 'neath the palm trees' shade
And cocoa-nut to roam.

O is the Orange tree, that bloomed
Beside his cabin door,
When white men stole him from his home
To see it never more.

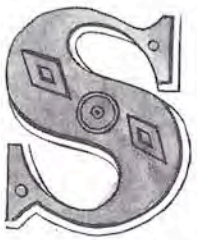


P is the Parent, sorrowing,
And weeping all alone—
The child he loved to lean upon,
His only son, is gone!

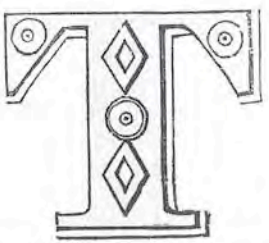
Q is the Quarter, where the slave
On coarsest food is fed,
And where, with toil and sorrow worn,
He seeks his wretched bed.



R is the "Rice-swamp, dank and lone,"
Where, weary, day by day,
He labors till the fever wastes
His strength and life away.



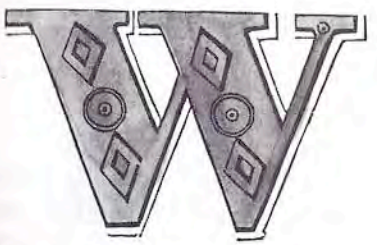
S is the Sugar, that the slave
Is toiling hard to make,
To put into your pie and tea,
Your candy, and your cake.



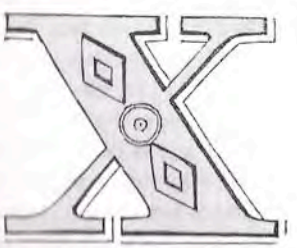
T is the rank Tobacco plant,
Raised by slave labor too:
A poisonous and nasty thing,
For gentlemen to chew.

U is for Upper Canada,
Where the poor slave has found
Rest after all his wanderings,
For it is British ground!

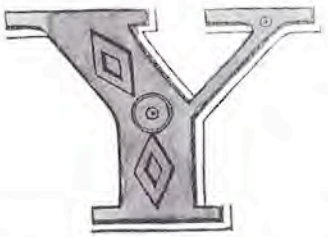
V is the Vessel, in whose dark,
Noisome, and stifling hold,
Hundreds of Africans are packed,
Brought o'er the seas, and sold.



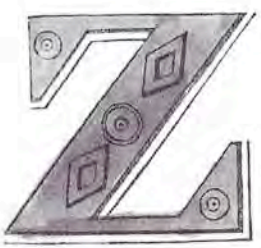
W is the Whipping post,
To which the slave is bound,
While on his naked back, the lash
Makes many a bleeding wound.



X is for Xerxes, famed of yore;
A warrior stern was he
He fought with swords; let truth and love
Our only weapons be.



Y is for Youth—the time for all
Bravely to war with sin;
And think not it can ever be
Too early to begin.



Z is a Zealous man, sincere,
Faithful, and just, and true;
An earnest pleader for the slave—
Will you not be so too?

HENRY WARD BEECHER

from *A Discourse Delivered at the Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. upon Thanksgiving Day*

The younger brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) was a Congregationalist minister and reformer who achieved celebrity status as a preacher and innovative theologian. His belief in a loving God, and his optimism about social progress and the capacity of people for self-fulfillment in their everyday lives, are consistent with the hopeful tone of this antislavery excerpt from his Thanksgiving Day sermon delivered in Brooklyn in November 1847. It was one of his first publications in a career that would see him write many popular books and survive an adultery scandal to earn a lasting reputation as one of the most influential and charismatic Christian leaders of his day.

The gladness which we have for the spread of education is saddened by the aspect of the South. Education is not there making the progress which it experiences in the North and West. Nor can it, while the elements of popular good are so grievously oppressed by slavery. It is in vain to call conventions, to pass resolutions, to found ample Universities, to have nominal common-schools, in States which have, in fact, no common-people. The disease is not on the skin, but in the bones and heart of the political and social system. The South has made slavery to be its heart. And while the laws and customs and institutions hedge in the servile mass, they all receive in turn a deadly infection. For if the slaves cannot resist, they can corrupt; they have no power to break their chains, but they put heavier ones on the keepers; they cannot enlighten themselves, but they can darken those around them; they cannot preserve their own moral purity, but they can make others participators of their degradation; they cannot be free, but they can enslave free-labor, extinguish popular enterprise, entail upon generations the curse of indolence, and luxury, and license. Themselves denied the privilege of manhood, how awful is that retribution by which those who approve and those who

SOLOMON NORTHUP

from *Twelve Years a Slave*, *Narrative of Solomon Northup*

What makes the story of Solomon Northup (1808–c. 1863) unique [illegible] slave narrative is that until his abduction while in Washington [illegible] 1841, he had lived his whole life a northern-born free man who [illegible] property and was even registered to vote in his hometown of [illegible] Springs, New York. He spent twelve hellish years on plantations in [illegible] bayou country of Louisiana before managing to secretly send a [illegible] to friends back home who, after months of effort, secured [illegible] freedom. Though court proceedings did not lead to any [illegible] or compensation for Northup, he earned $3,000 from the public [illegible] of his *Narrative*, with which he purchased a farm for his family. In the passage, Northup presents a detailed sketch of the sadistic slave [illegible] Edwin Epps that is almost mesmerizing in its graphic horror.

During the two years Epps remained on the plantation [illegible] Bayou Huff Power, he was in the habit, as often as once in a fortnight at least, of coming home intoxicated from Hadnot-ville. The shooting-matches almost invariably concluded with a debauch. At such times he was boisterous and half-crazy. Then he would break the dishes, chairs, and whatever furniture he could lay his hands on. When satisfied with his amusement in the house, he would seize the whip and walk forth into the yard. Then it behooved the slaves to be watchful and exceeding wary. The first one who came within reach felt the [illegible] of his lash. Sometimes for hours he would keep them running in all directions, dodging around the corners of the [illegible]. Occasionally he would come upon one unawares, and if he succeeded in inflicting a fair, round blow, it was a feat that much delighted him. The younger children, and the aged, who had become inactive, suffered then. In the midst of the confusion he would slily take his stand behind a cabin, waiting with raised whip, to dash it into the first black face that peeped cautiously around the corner.

At other times he would come home in a less brutal humor.

Then there must be a merry-making. Then all must move to the measure of a tune. Then Master Epps must needs regale his melodious ears with the music of a fiddle. Then did he become buoyant, elastic, gaily "tripping the light fantastic toe" around the piazza and all through the house.

Threats, at the time of my sale, had informed him I could play on the violin. He had received his information from Ford. Through the importunities of Mistress Epps, her husband had been induced to purchase me one during a visit to New-Orleans. Frequently I was called into the house to play before the family, Mistress being passionately fond of music.

All of us would be assembled in the large room of the great house, whenever Epps came home in one of his dancing moods. No matter how worn out and tired we were, there must be a general dance. When properly stationed on the floor, I would strike up a tune.

"Dance, you d—d niggers, dance," Epps would shout.

Then there must be no halting or delay, no slow or languid movements; all must be brisk, and lively, and alert. "Up and down, heel and toe, and away we go," was the order of the night. Epps' portly form mingled with those of his dusky slaves, moving rapidly through all the mazes of the dance.

Usually his whip was in his hand, ready to fall about the ears of the presumptuous thrall, who dared to rest a moment, or even stop to catch his breath. When he was himself exhausted, there would be a brief cessation, but it would be very brief. With a flash, and crack, and flourish of the whip, he would shout again, "Dance, niggers, dance," and away they would go once more, pell-mell, while I, spurred by an occasional sharp touch of the lash, sat in a corner, extracting from my violin a marvelously quick-stepping tune. The mistress often upbraided him, declaring she would return to her father's house at Cheneyville; nevertheless, there were times she could not restrain a burst of laughter, on witnessing his uproarious pranks. Frequently, we were thus detained until almost morning. Bent with excessive toil—actually suffering for a little refreshing rest, and feeling sadder as if we could cast ourselves upon the earth and weep, many a night in the house of Edwin Epps have his unhappy slaves been made to dance and laugh.

Notwithstanding these deprivations in order to gratify the

whim of an unreasonable master, we had to be in the field as soon as it was light, and during the day perform the ordinary and accustomed task. Such deprivations could not be urged at the scales in extenuation of any lack of weight, or in the cornfield for not hoeing with the usual rapidity. The whippings were just as severe as if we had gone forth in the morning strengthened and invigorated by a night's repose. Indeed, after such frantic revels, he was always more sour and savage than before, punishing for slighter causes, and using the whip with increased and more vindictive energy.

Ten years I toiled for that man without reward. Ten years of my incessant labor has contributed to increase the bulk of his possessions. Ten years I was compelled to address him with down-cast eyes and uncovered head—in the attitude and language of a slave. I am indebted to him for nothing, save undeserved abuse and stripes.

Beyond the reach of his inhuman thong, and standing on the soil of the free State where I was born, thanks be to Heaven, I can raise my head once more among men. I can speak of the wrongs I have suffered, and of those who inflicted them, with upraised eyes. But I have no desire to speak of him or any other one otherwise than truthfully. Yet to speak truthfully of Edwin Epps would be to say—he is a man in whose heart the quality of kindness or of justice is not found. A rough, rude energy, united with an uncultivated mind and an avaricious spirit, are his prominent characteristics. He is known as a "nigger breaker," distinguished for his faculty of subduing the spirit of the slave, and priding himself upon his reputation in this respect, as a jockey boasts of his skill in managing a refractory horse. He looked upon a colored man, not as a human being, responsible to his Creator for the small talent entrusted to him, but as a "chattel personal," as mere live property, no better, except in value, than his mule or dog. When the evidence, clear and indisputable, was laid before him that I was a free man, and as much entitled to my liberty as he—when, on the day I left, he was informed that I had a wife and children, as dear to me as his own belong to him, he only raved and swore, denouncing the law that took me from him, and declaring he would find out the man who had forwarded the letter that disclosed the place of my captivity, if there was any virtue or power in money, and would

to life. He thought of nothing but his loss, and cursed me for having been born free. He could have stood unmoved and seen the tongues of his poor slaves torn out by the roots—he could have seen them burned to ashes over a slow fire, or gnawed to death by dogs, if it only brought him profit. Such a hard, cruel, unjust man is Edwin Epps.

(1853)

be educated in brain without becoming cowardly in body; and that a people without a standing army may yet rise as one man when Freedom needs defenders.

May God help us to redeem this oppressed and bleeding State, and to bring this people back to that simple love of Liberty without which it must die amidst its luxuries, like the sad nations of the elder world. May we gain more iron in our souls, and have it in the right place;—have soft hearts and hard wills, not as now, soft wills and hard hearts. Then will the iron break the Northern iron and the steel no longer; and "God save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts!" will be at last a hope fulfilled.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

from *Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act at Peoria, Illinois*

A frontier lawyer and one-term congressman from 1847 to 1849, Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) was spurred to reenter public life by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854. For those who would misinterpret his First Inaugural Address as a sign of his indifference to slavery, Lincoln's speech at Peoria is an essential corrective. Speaking in response to Senator Stephen Douglas's three-hour oration, Lincoln made clear how fundamentally slavery, in his view, plagued America.

I particularly object to the NEW position which the avowed principle of this Nebraska law gives to slavery in the body politic. I object to it because it assumes that there CAN be MORAL right in the enslaving of one man by another. I object to it as a dangerous dalliance for a free people—a sad evidence that, feeling prosperity we forget right—that liberty, as a principle, we have ceased to revere. I object to it because the fathers of the republic eschewed, and rejected it. The argument of "Necessity" was the only argument they ever admitted in favor of slavery; and so far, and so far only as it carried them, did they ever go. They found the institution existing among us, which they could not help, and they cast blame upon the British King for having permitted its introduction. BEFORE the constitution, they prohibited its introduction into the north-western Territory—the only country we owned, then free from it. AT the framing and adoption of the constitution, they forbore to so much as mention the word "slave" or "slavery" in the whole instrument. In the provision for the recovery of fugitives, the slave is spoken of as a "PERSON HELD TO SERVICE OR LABOR." In that prohibiting the abolition of the African slave trade for twenty years, that trade is spoken of as "The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States NOW EXISTING, shall think proper to admit," &c. These are the only provisions alluding to slavery. Thus, the thing is hid away, in the constitution, just as an afflicted man hides away a wen or a cancer, which he dares

not cut out at once, lest he bleed to death; with the prom… nevertheless, that the cutting may begin at the end of a gi… time. Less than this our fathers COULD not do; and some the… WOULD not do. Necessity drove them so far, and farther, the… would not go. But this is not all. The earliest Congress, unde… the constitution, took the same view of slavery. They hedged … and hemmed it in to the narrowest limits of necessity.

In 1794, they prohibited an out-going slave-trade—that … the taking of slaves FROM the United States to sell.

In 1798, they prohibited the bringing of slaves from Afric… INTO the Mississippi Territory—this territory then compris… what are now the States of Mississippi and Alabama. This … TEN YEARS before they had the authority to do the same thing … as to the States existing at the adoption of the constitution.

In 1800 they prohibited AMERICAN CITIZENS from trading in … slaves between foreign countries—as, for instance, from Afric… to Brazil.

In 1803 they passed a law in aid of one or two State laws, … restraint of the internal slave trade.

In 1807, in apparent hot haste, they passed the law, nearly … year in advance, to take effect the first day of 1808—the very … first day the constitution would permit—prohibiting the Afric… slave trade by heavy pecuniary and corporal penalties.

In 1820, finding these provisions ineffectual, they declared … the trade piracy, and annexed to it, the extreme penalty … death. While all this was passing in the general government … five or six of the original slave States had adopted systems … gradual emancipation; and by which the institution was rapidly … becoming extinct within these limits.

Thus we see, the plain unmistakable spirit of that age, … slavery, was hostility to the PRINCIPLE, and toleration, … NECESSITY.

But NOW it is to be transformed into a "sacred right" … braska brings it forth, places it on the high road to … and perpetuity; and, with a pat on its back, says to it, "… and God speed you." Henceforth it is to be the chief jewel … the nation—the very figure-head of the ship of State. Little … little, but steadily as man's march to the grave, we have … giving up the OLD for the NEW faith. Near eighty years ago … began by declaring that all men are created equal; but …

… from that beginning we have run down to the other declara… …, that for SOME men to enslave OTHERS is a "sacred right … of self-government." These principles can not stand together. They are as opposite as God and mammon; and whoever holds … to the one, must despise the other. When Pettit, in connection … with his support of the Nebraska bill, called the Declaration of … Independence "a self-evident lie" he only did what consistency … and candor require all other Nebraska men to do. Of the forty … -odd Nebraska Senators who sat present and heard him, no one … rebuked him. Nor am I apprized that any Nebraska newspaper, … or any Nebraska orator, in the whole nation, has ever yet re… -buked him. If this had been said among Marion's men, South… -erners though they were, what would have become of the man … who said it? If this had been said to the men who captured … André, the man who said it, would probably have been hung … sooner than André was. If it had been said in old Independence … Hall, seventy-eight years ago, the very door-keeper would have … throttled the man, and thrust him into the street.

Let no one be deceived. The spirit of seventy-six and the … spirit of Nebraska, are utter antagonisms; and the former is … being rapidly displaced by the latter.

Fellow countrymen—Americans south, as well as north, … shall we make no effort to arrest this? Already the liberal party … throughout the world, express the apprehension "that the one … retrograde institution in America, is undermining the principles … of progress, and fatally violating the noblest political system … the world ever saw." This is not the taunt of enemies, but the … warning of friends. Is it quite safe to disregard it—to despise … it? Is there no danger to liberty itself, in discarding the earliest … practice, and first precept of our ancient faith? In our greedy … haste to make profit of the negro, let us beware, lest we "cancel … and tear to pieces" even the white man's charter of freedom.

Our republican robe is soiled, and trailed in the dust. Let … us repurify it. Let us turn and wash it white, in the spirit, if … not the blood, of the Revolution. Let us turn slavery from its … claims of "moral right," back upon its existing legal rights, and … its arguments of "necessity." Let us return it to the position … our fathers gave it; and there let it rest in peace. Let us re-adopt … the Declaration of Independence, and with it, the practices, … and policy, which harmonize with it. Let north and south—let

all Americans—let all lovers of liberty everywhere [illegible] great and good work. If we do this, we shall not only [illegible] saved the Union; but we shall have so saved it, as to make [illegible] to keep it, forever worthy of the saving. We shall have [illegible] it, that the succeeding millions of free happy people, the world over, shall rise up, and call us blessed, to the latest generations.

[illegible] 1862.

MARY HAYDEN GREEN PIKE

from *Ida May: A Story of Things Actual and Possible*

Born into a Maine family of abolitionists and married to the future Republican congressman Frederick Augustus Pike, Mary Hayden Green Pike (1824–1908) was inspired by the success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to attempt her own antislavery novel. The result was *Ida May*, an immediate success that sold sixty thousand copies within two years and went through multiple editions in Britain and the United States. In the chilling passage excerpted here, a band of child-snatching slave traders hold six terrified black children in a cave as they prepare to head south and sell them.

The joints of this door were concealed by the strips of board that had been taken down, and it opened directly into the cave, which was spacious, dry, and well ventilated by a large aperture in the roof. This opening, which had evidently been formed by the same stream of water that originally hollowed out the cave, led, by a winding subterranean course, nearly to the top of the mountain, where it had a small outlet under a flat rock; and the sound of human voices, the neighing of horses, the shouts of laughter, and the screams of distress, which, thus mysteriously conducted, had been sometimes heard around that spot by the solitary wood-cutter or huntsman, had given the whole vicinity an evil name. There were few who ascended the mountain, even by day, without a thrill of superstitious fear, and not a man in all the country round would have lingered upon it after dark; so that the unearthly horror which had gradually invested the place was an additional shield to the perpetrators of these deeds of wickedness.

In one side of the cavern a few rude stalls had been constructed, and here the three horses of the kidnappers were tied, while, on the other side, huddled together on a heap of straw, were six negro children, who had been stolen within a few months from different parts of the country, and brought here for safe keeping, until a sufficient number were collected to fill

have been easy enough; for though not rich, my fortune was still equal to the purchase.

In my eyes Aurore was priceless. Would she also appear so in the eyes of her young mistress? Was my bride for sale on any terms? But even if money should be deemed an equivalent would Mademoiselle sell her to me? An odd proposal, that of buying her slave for my wife! What would Eugénie Besançon think of it?

The very idea of this proposal awed me; but the time to make it had not yet arrived.

"I must first have an interview with Aurore, demand a confession of her love, and then, if she consent to become mine, my wife—the rest may be arranged. I see not clearly the way, but a love like mine will triumph over everything. My passion nerves me with power, with courage, with energy. Obstacles must yield; opposing wills be coaxed or crushed; everything must give way that stands between myself and my love! 'Aurore! I come! I come!"

CHARLES SUMNER

from *The Crime Against Kansas*

The great abolitionist and senator from Massachusetts Charles Sumner (1811–1874) was a leading force against slavery in the U.S. Congress from his election in 1851 through the Civil War. Active in the movement as early as 1835, he opposed the annexation of Texas and the Mexican-American War, campaigned for the desegregation of Boston public schools, and once the Civil War began, lobbied Lincoln for immediate emancipation. His May 19–20, 1856 Senate speech is one of his most famous not only for its colorful rhetoric, lambasting "the harlot, Slavery" and the deluded southern Don Quixotes who worshipped her, but for the vicious response it provoked. Congressman Preston Brooks of South Carolina assaulted Sumner with a cane on the floor of the Senate, beating him unconscious. It would be three years before Sumner returned to the Senate.

MR. PRESIDENT, you are now called to redress a great transgression. Seldom in the history of nations has such a question been presented. Tariffs, Army bills, Navy bills, Land bills, are important, and justly occupy your care; but these all belong to the course of ordinary legislation. As means and instruments only, they are necessarily subordinate to the conservation of Government itself. Grant them or deny them, in greater or less degree, and you will inflict no shock. The machinery of Government will continue to move. The State will not cease to exist. Far otherwise is it with the eminent question now before you, involving, as it does, Liberty in a broad Territory, and also involving the peace of the whole country with our good name in history for evermore.

Take down your map, sir, and you will find that the Territory of Kansas, more than any other region, occupies the middle area of North America, equally distant from the Atlantic on the east, and the Pacific on the west; from the frozen waters of Hudson's Bay on the north, and the tepid Gulf Stream on the south, constituting the precise territorial center of the whole North Continent. To such advantages of situation, on the very

highway between two oceans, are added a soil of unsurpassed richness, and a fascinating, undulating beauty of surface, with a health-giving climate, calculated to nurture a powerful and generous people, worthy to be a central pivot of American institutions. A few short months only have passed since this spacious mediterranean country was open only to the savage, who ran wild in its woods and prairies; and now it has already drawn to its bosom a population of freemen larger than Athens crowded within her historic gates, when her sons, under Miltiades, won Liberty for mankind on the field of Marathon; more than Sparta contained when she ruled Greece, and sent forth her devoted children, quickened by a mother's benediction, to return with their shields or on them; more than Rome gathered on her seven hills, when, under her kings, she commenced that universal sway, which afterwards embraced the whole earth; more than London held, when, on the fields of Crecy and Agincourt, the English banner was carried victoriously over the chivalrous hosts of France.

Against this Territory, thus fortunate in position and population, a Crime has been committed, which is without example in the records of the Past. Not in plundered provinces or in the cruelties of selfish governors will you find its parallel; and yet there is an ancient instance, which may show at least the path of justice. In the terrible impeachment by which the great Roman Orator has blasted through all time the name of Verres, amidst charges of robbery and sacrilege, the enormity which most aroused the indignant voice of his accuser, and which still starts forth with strongest distinctness, arresting the sympathetic indignation of all who read the story, is, that away in Sicily he had scourged a citizen of Rome—that the cry "I am a Roman citizen" had been interposed in vain against the lash of the tyrant governor. Other charges were, that he had carried away productions of art, and that he had violated the sacred shrines. It was in the presence of the Roman Senate that this arraignment proceeded; in a temple of the Forum; amidst crowds such as no orator had ever before drawn together—thronging the porticos and colonnades, even clinging to the house-tops and neighboring slopes—and under the anxious gaze of witnesses summoned from the scene of crime. But an audience grander far—of higher dignity—of more various people and

of wider intelligence—the countless multitude of succeeding generations, in every land, where eloquence has been studied or where the Roman name has been recognized—has listened to the accusation, and throbbed with condemnation of the criminal. Sir, speaking in an age of light and in a land of constitutional liberty, where the safeguards of elections are justly placed among the highest triumphs of civilization, I fearlessly assert that the wrongs of much-abused Sicily, thus memorable in history, were small by the side of the wrongs of Kansas, where the very shrines of popular institutions, more sacred than any heathen altar, have been desecrated; where the ballot-box, more precious than any work, in ivory or marble, from the cunning hand of art, has been plundered; and where the cry "I am an American citizen" has been interposed in vain against outrage of every kind, even upon life itself. Are you against sacrilege? I present it for your execration. Are you against robbery? I hold it up to your scorn. Are you for the protection of American citizens? I show you how their dearest rights have been cloven down, while a Tyrannical Usurpation has sought to install itself on their very necks!

But the wickedness which I now begin to expose is immeasurably aggravated by the motive which prompted it. Not in any common lust for power did this uncommon tragedy have its origin. It is the rape of a virgin Territory, compelling it to the hateful embrace of Slavery; and it may be clearly traced to a depraved longing for a new slave State, the hideous offspring of such a crime, in the hope of adding to the power of Slavery in the National Government. Yes, sir, when the whole world, alike Christian and Turk, is rising up to condemn this wrong, and to make it a hissing to the nations, here in our Republic, *force*—ay, sir, FORCE—has been openly employed in compelling Kansas to this pollution, and all for the sake of political power. There is the simple fact, which you will vainly attempt to deny, but which in itself presents an essential wickedness that makes other public crimes seem like public virtues.

But this enormity, vast beyond comparison, swells to dimensions of wickedness which the imagination toils in vain to grasp, when it is understood, that for this purpose are hazarded the horrors of intestine feud, not only in this distant Territory, but everywhere throughout the country. Already the muster has

begun. The strife is no longer local, but national. Even now, while I speak, portents hang on all the arches of the horizon, threatening to darken the broad land, which already yawns with the mutterings of civil war. The fury of the propagandists of Slavery, and the calm determination of their opponents, are now diffused from the distant Territory over wide-spread communities, and the whole country, in all its extent—marshaling hostile divisions, and foreshadowing a strife, which, unless happily averted by the triumph of Freedom, will become war fratricidal, parricidal war—with an accumulated wickedness beyond the wickedness of any war in human annals, justly provoking the avenging judgment of Providence and the avenging pen of history, and constituting a strife, in the language of the ancient writer, more than *foreign*, more than *social*, more than *civil*; but something compounded of all these strifes, and in itself more than war; *sed potius commune quoddam ex omnibus, et plus quam bellum.*

Such is the Crime which you are to judge. But the criminal also must be dragged into day, that you may see and measure the power by which all this wrong is sustained. From no common source could it proceed. In its perpetration was needed a spirit of vaulting ambition which would hesitate at nothing, a hardihood of purpose which was insensible to the judgment of mankind; a madness for Slavery which should disregard the Constitution, the laws, and all the great examples of our history; also a consciousness of power such as comes from the habit of power; a combination of energies found only in a hundred arms directed by a hundred eyes; a control of Public Opinion through venal pens and a prostituted press; an ability to subsidize crowds in every vocation of life—the politician with his local importance, the lawyer with his subtile tongue, and even the authority of the judge on the bench; and a familiar use of men in places high and low, so that none, from the President to the lowest border postmaster, should decline to be its tool; all these things and more were needed; and they were found in the Slave Power of our Republic. There, sir, stands the criminal—all unmasked before you—heartless, grasping, and tyrannical—with an audacity beyond that of Verres, a subtlety beyond that of Machiavel, a meanness beyond that of Bacon, and an ability beyond that of Hastings. Justice to Kansas can be

secured only by the prostration of this influence; for this is the power behind—greater than any President—which succors and sustains the Crime. Nay, the proceedings I now arraign derive their fearful consequence only from this connection.

In now opening this great matter, I am not insensible to the austere demands of the occasion; but the dependence of the crime against Kansas upon the Slave Power is so peculiar and important, that I trust to be pardoned while I impress it by an illustration, which to some may seem trivial. It is related in Northern mythology, that the god of Force, visiting an enchanted region, was challenged by his royal entertainer to what seemed a humble feat of strength—merely, sir, to lift a cat from the ground. The god smiled at the challenge, and, calmly placing his hand under the belly of the animal, with superhuman strength, strove, while the back of the feline monster arched itself upwards, even beyond reach, and one paw actually forsook the earth, until at last the discomfited divinity desisted; but he was little surprised at his defeat, when he learned that this creature, which seemed to be a cat, and nothing more, was not merely a cat, but that it belonged to and was a part of the great Terrestrial Serpent, which, in its innumerable folds, encircled the whole globe. Even so the creature, whose paws are now fastened upon Kansas, whatever it may seem to be, constitutes in reality a part of the Slave Power, which, with loathsome folds, is now coiled about the whole land. Thus do I expose the extent of the present contest, where we encounter not merely local resistance, but also the unconquered sustaining arm behind. But not of the vastness of the Crime attempted, with all its woe and shame, I derive a well-founded assurance of a commensurate greatness of effort against it, by the aroused masses of the country, determined not only to vindicate Right against Wrong, but to redeem the Republic from the thraldom of that Oligarchy, which prompts, directs, and concentrates, the distant wrong.

Such is the Crime, and such the criminal, which it is my duty in this debate to expose, and, by the blessing of God, this duty shall be done completely to the end. But this will not be enough. The Apologies, which, with strange hardihood, have been offered for the Crime, must be torn away, so that it shall stand forth, without a single rag, or fig-leaf, to cover its vileness. And, finally, the True Remedy must be shown. The subject is

complex in its relations, as it is transcendent in importance; and yet, if I am honored by your attention, I hope to exhibit it clearly in all its parts, while I conduct you to the inevitable conclusion that Kansas must be admitted at once, with her present Constitution, as a State of this Union, and give a new star to the blue field of our National Flag. And here I derive satisfaction from the thought, that the cause is so strong in itself as to lose even the infirmities of its advocates; nor can it require anything beyond that simplicity of treatment and moderation of manner which I desire to cultivate. Its true character is such, that, like Hercules, it will conquer just so soon as it is recognized.

My task will be divided under three different heads; *first*, THE CRIME AGAINST KANSAS, in its origin and extent; *secondly*, THE APOLOGIES FOR THE CRIME; and *thirdly*, THE TRUE REMEDY.

But, before entering upon the argument, I must say something of a general character, particularly in response to what has fallen from Senators who have raised themselves to eminence on this floor in championship of human wrongs; I mean the Senator from South Carolina, [Mr. BUTLER,] and the Senator from Illinois, [Mr. DOUGLAS,] who, though unlike as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, yet, like this couple, sally forth together in the same adventure. I regret much to miss the elder Senator from his seat; but the cause, against which he has run a course with such activity of animosity, demands that the opportunity of exposing him should not be lost; and it is for the cause that I speak. The Senator from South Carolina has read many books of chivalry, and believes himself a chivalrous knight, with sentiments of honor and courage. Of course he has chosen a mistress to whom he has made his vows, and who, though ugly to others, is always lovely to him; though polluted in the sight of the world, is chaste in his sight—I mean the harlot, Slavery. For her his tongue is always profuse in words. Let her be impeached in character, or any proposition made to shut her out from the extension of her wantonness, and no extravagance of manner or hardihood of assertion is then too great for this Senator. The frenzy of Don Quixote, in behalf of his wench, Dulcinea del Toboso, is all surpassed. The asserted rights of slavery, which shock equality of all kinds, are cloaked by a fantastic claim of equality. If the slave States cannot enjoy what, in mockery of the great fathers of the Republic, he misnames equality under the

Constitution—in other words, the full power in the National Territories to compel fellow-men to unpaid toil, to separate husband and wife, and to sell little children at the auction block—then, sir, the chivalric Senator will conduct the State of South Carolina out of the Union! Heroic knight! Exalted Senator! A second Moses come for a second exodus!

But not content with this poor menace, which we have been twice told was "measured," the Senator, in the unrestrained chivalry of his nature, has undertaken to apply opprobrious words to those who differ from him on this floor. He calls them "sectional and fanatical;" and opposition to the usurpation in Kansas he denounces as "an uncalculating fanaticism." To be sure, these charges lack all grace of originality, and all sentiment of truth; but the adventurous Senator does not hesitate. He is the uncompromising, unblushing representative on this floor of a flagrant *sectionalism*, which now domineers over the Republic, and yet with a ludicrous ignorance of his own position—unable to see himself as others see him—or with an effrontery which even his white head ought not to protect from rebuke, he applies to those here who resist his *sectionalism* the very epithet which designates himself. The men who strive to bring back the Government to its original policy, when Freedom and not Slavery was national, while Slavery and not Freedom was sectional, he arraigns as *sectional*. This will not do. It involves too great a perversion of terms. I tell that Senator, that it is to himself, and to the "organization" of which he is the "committed advocate," that this epithet belongs. I now fasten it upon them. For myself, I care little for names; but since the question has been raised here, I affirm that the Republican party of the Union is in no just sense *sectional*, but, more than any other party, *national*; and that it now goes forth to dislodge from the high places of the Government the tyrannical sectionalism of which the Senator from South Carolina is one of the maddest zealots.

To the charge of fanaticism I also reply. Sir, fanaticism is found in an enthusiasm or exaggeration of opinions, particularly on religious subjects; but there may be a fanaticism for evil as well as for good. Now, I will not deny, that there are persons among us loving Liberty too well for their personal good, in a selfish generation. Such there may be, and, for the sake of their example, would that there were more! In calling them

"fanatics," you cast contumely upon the noble army of martyrs, from the earliest day down to this hour; upon the great tribunes of human rights, by whom life, liberty, and happiness, on earth, have been secured; upon the long line of devoted patriots, who, throughout history, have truly loved their country; and, upon all, who, in noble aspirations for the general good and in forgetfulness of self, have stood out before their age, and gathered into their generous bosoms the shafts of tyranny and wrong, in order to make a pathway for Truth. You discredit Luther, when alone he nailed his articles to the door of the church at Wittenberg, and then, to the imperial demand that he should retract, firmly replied, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God!" You discredit Hampden, when alone he refused to pay the few shillings of ship-money, and shook the throne of Charles I.; you discredit Milton, when, amidst the corruptions of a heartless Court, he lived on, the lofty friend of Liberty, above question or suspicion; you discredit Russell and Sidney, when, for the sake of their country, they calmly turned from family and friends, to tread the narrow steps of the scaffold; you discredit those early founders of American institutions, who preferred the hardships of a wilderness, surrounded by a savage foe, to injustice on beds of ease; you discredit our later fathers, who, few in numbers and weak in resources, yet strong in their cause, did not hesitate to brave the mighty power of England, already encircling the globe with her morning drum-beats. Yet, sir, of such are the fanatics of history, according to the Senator. But I tell that Senator, that there are characters badly eminent, of whose fanaticism there can be no question. Such were the ancient Egyptians, who worshipped divinities in brutish forms; the Druids, who darkened the forests of oak, in which they lived, by sacrifices of blood; the Mexicans, who surrendered countless victims to the propitiation of their obscene idols; the Spaniards, who, under Alva, sought to force the Inquisition upon Holland, by a tyranny kindred to that now employed to force Slavery upon Kansas; and such were the Algerines, when in solemn conclave, after listening to a speech not unlike that of the Senator from South Carolina, they resolved to continue the slavery of white Christians, and to extend it to the countrymen of Washington! Ay, sir, extend it! And in this same dreary catalogue faithful history must record all who now, in an

enlightened age and in a land of boasted Freedom, stand up, in perversion of the Constitution and in denial of immortal truth, to fasten a new shackle upon their fellow-man. If the Senator wishes to see fanatics, let him look round among his own associates; let him look at himself.

(May 19–20, 1856)