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KELLEY, W. D. 1814-1890.
ADDRESSES OF THE HON. W. D.
KELLEY, MISS ANNA E.
DICKINSON . . .

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ADDRESSES

OF THE

HON. W. D. KELLEY, MISS ANNA E. DICKINSON, AND
MR. FREDERICK DOUGLASS,

AT A MASS MEETING, HELD AT NATIONAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA, JULY 6, 1863, FOR
THE PROMOTION OF COLORED ENLISTMENTS.

The efficiency of colored troops having been demonstrated by recent battles in the Southwest, several hundred gentlemen of Philadelphia addressed a memorial to the Secretary of War, asking authority to raise three regiments for three years or the war, from among the colored population of Pennsylvania. Permission to this effect was promptly given by the following communication from the Adjutant-General's Office:—

HEAD QUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE.
Washington, June 22d, 1863.

THOMAS WEBSTER, Esq.,
Philadelphia, Pa.

SIR: I am instructed by the Secretary of War to inform you that you are hereby authorized, as the representative of your associate petitioners, to raise in Philadelphia, or the eastern part of Pennsylvania, three Regiments of Infantry, to be composed of colored men, to be mustered into the service of the United States for three years, or during the war. To these troops no bounties will be paid.

They will receive ten dollars per month and one ration, three dollars of which monthly pay may be in clothing.

The organization of these regiments must conform strictly to the provisions of General Order No. 110, Current Series, War Department, a copy of which is herewith.

The prescribed number of Commissioned Officers will be appointed as provided in General Orders Nos. 143 and 144, War Department, 1863, copies of which are herewith inclosed and your especial attention invited thereto.

An officer will be detailed to muster these troops into service, by companies if necessary.

It must be distinctly understood that but one regiment is to be recruited at a time; thus, the organization of the first regiment must be completed and the regiment mustered into the service before the recruiting of the second is commenced.

The troops raised under the foregoing in-

structions will rendezvous at Camp William Penn, Chelton Hills, near Philadelphia, where they will be received and subsisted as soon as they are enlisted, and an officer will be assigned to duty at that post to take command of them on their arrival and make the necessary requisitions for supplies.

It is expected and desired that you should confer with Major George L. Stearne, A. A. G., U. S. Vols., and Recruiting Commissioner for U. S. Colored Troops, now in your city, for the purpose of assisting you in this work. You will please keep him advised of your progress.

I have the honor to be,

Very Respectfully,

Your obed't serv't.

C. W. FOSTER.

The better portion of the colored population of Philadelphia at once took a lively interest in the movement, and the first regiment is in process of rapid completion. To bring the matter fairly before their brethren, they resolved to call a mass meeting at National Hall, on the evening of July 6th. That spacious hall was densely crowded with a mixed audience, in which were a large number of women, and the utmost enthusiasm prevailed.

The following gentlemen were selected as officers:—

President—Rev. Stephen Smith.

Vice-Presidents—Rev. Jonathan C. Gibbs, William Whipper, Benjamin B. Moore, Rev. Jeremiah Asher, Jacob C. White, Rev. J. B. Trusty, David B. Bowser, James McC. Crum-mill, Rev. Jabez P. Canappell, Henry Mintz, Rev. James Underdue, John P. Burr, Rev. Wm. J. Alston, Samuel Williams, John W. Pace, James Brown, Henry Jones, Thomas Jordan, William H. Riley, Rev. Jesse Louden, Henry W. Cropper, Thomas J. Dorsey, Wilkinson Jones, Robert Alger, Daniel George, John C. Bewers, M. Bascom.

Secretaries—Eben D. Bassett, Jacob C. White, Jr., Octavius Y. Catto.

SPEECH OF THE HON. W. D. KELLEY.

My fellow-citizens, before proceeding to the consideration of the grave question which brings us together, let me say that the Rebel army of Northern Virginia is no more. [Immense cheering.] As an organization, it will never leave the soil of Pennsylvania, though fragments of it may straggle across the Potomac. [Renewed cheering.] Henceforth Virginia is dedicated to freedom! [Cheers.] West Virginia was freed by the suffrages of her patriotic men, and Virginia by the power of the United States. [Applause.] Never again will the insolent aristocracy of the Old Dominion breed fair-skinned and blue-eyed girls, or stalwart black men, for the slave markets of the far South. [Long continued cheering.]

Citizens of African descent, it is to you I would speak. Are you content to spend your lives as boot-blacks, barbers, waiters, and in other pursuits little, if any better than servile or menial, when the profession of arms—the terrible but glorious work of war—invites you to acknowledged manhood, freedom and honor? [Applause, and cries of No, no.]

After two hundred years of unmitigated oppression, Providence has opened the way for the Africo-American to prove his manhood to the world, and command the respect and gratitude of those of his fellow-citizens whose cupidity and prejudice have enslaved and degraded him. Will you not spring to arms and march to the higher destiny that awaits your race, though it may require your mangled bodies to strew the glorious pathway? [Cheering, and cries of Yes, yes.] Yes, you will. Let it not be said that the Third United States Colored Volunteers, though a Pennsylvania regiment, contained but few or no Philadelphians. But fill its ranks quickly. You will bear at its head the flag around which freedmen and their descendants should most proudly rally.

The flag of Pennsylvania, the first commonwealth, kingdom or empire to abolish slavery—the Commonwealth whose act of emancipation—a solemn expression of gratitude to God for the freedom he had vouchsafed to its people—antedates British emancipation more than forty years—is the one we ask you to carry aloft. It is the symbol of our honor and greatness. We cheerfully confide it to your hands, assured that you will carry it in triumph to any point at which treason has raised its rebellious head, and under its folds prove to mankind that each one of you is, in the sterner elements of manhood, a match for the haughtiest aristocrat of the Confederacy. [Applause.]

Old men, despite the disabilities under which you labor, some of you have accumulated wealth; we do not ask you to enlist—we want

the young and vigorous. But when you go to your homes to-night do your duty—gather about you your able-bodied sons, and let them know that if they prove cowards in this grand crisis of the history of your race, you will disinherit and denounce them. Mothers, you love your sons—but think you that you love them better than did the mothers of the brave white boys and men who have borne our banners over so many terrible fields? No, you will not claim this; gather, then, your sons around you, and spurn him who will not prove that when you suffered the pangs of maternity it was to give birth to a man. And, girls, I have a word to say to you. The fellow who shrinks from the smell of gunpowder is very apt to be afraid of thunder. I have known such to creep into bed during a storm, and beg to be covered up closely. If, during this war, some spruce young dandy troubles you with a tender question, let him know that you would rather marry the wooden leg and empty jacket sleeve of a war-worn hero than any man who might require you to tuck him up during every thunder storm. [Cheers and laughter.]

And now, white men and women, let me have a word with you. Will you assist the Supervisory Committee in the work it has in hand? Will you give to these brethren of the heroes of Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend your broadest, fullest sympathy? Will you pour in upon Congress memorials in overwhelming numbers, demanding that, as to pay and pension, they shall be treated as liberally as other soldiers are? [Cheers, and cries of Yes, we will.] Will you watch over their widows with fraternal care, and see that their orphans are secured such educational opportunities as a great and humane Commonwealth should provide for the orphans of patriots who have laid down their lives in her cause and under her flag? [Renewed cries of Yes, and we will.] Yes, I am sure that in these respects you will be just, and I hope you will be generously magnanimous.

In the gloomy days through which we have just passed, I have been buoyant with hope amounting to faith. Behind the dark and heavy cloud that hung so oppressively near us, I saw, in the rapidly developing providences of God, the sure promise of victory and peace. During weary, sorrowing months and years of war, we have sighed for "the coming man" who was to bring us these great blessings. We have not found him. Not Butler nor Banks, nor Fremont, nor Grant, nor Rosecrans, nor Meade—though he has invested our quiet Gettysburg with the combined glories of Magenta and Solferino—has shown himself to

be the man whose genius and power were to deliver us from protracted war. To admit this is but to admit that our great soldiers are not ubiquitous. Donelson and Vicksburg, each in turn; New Orleans, Port Hudson, and Gettysburg, have each been worthy the attention of a great General. Shall we then cease to hope for him whose coming Hope has so long prophesied? Oh, no! He waits our bidding. He is the Colored Man! He has made Port Hudson the Thermopylae of his race; he occupies and surrounds Richmond; he is ready to intercept Lee's stragglers in the Shenandoah Valley; he occupies the strongholds of Tennessee; he will give you Charleston, which is in his power, and, in distant Texas, he will

respond with a joyous "Aye, aye," to your call, and run the Union flag to the top of every staff upon her prairies; he holds at his mercy every acre of Confederate territory; as a chattel, he feeds, clothes and arms every rebel soldier; as a MAN, assured of your sympathy, he will crush every rebel stronghold. Yes, sneer at or doubt it as you may, the negro is the "coming man" for whom we have waited. Give him the chance to attest his nature at all those points around which our white brethren perish, in swamp and hospital, and, throttling and crushing his old oppressor, he will give us speedy victory, and a peace that shall never again be disturbed by civil war. [Tremendous and long-continued cheering.]

SPEECH OF MISS ANNA E. DICKINSON.

THE People of the United States have decreed justice; the Almighty has answered them with victory. (Applause.) Month after month we have struggled with rebellion in arms; month after month, through more than two years of war, have waited for decisive victory in the East. In vain. Why? We had wealth and strength, numbers and power, intellect and energy, in the North. No one questions the heroism of the men we have sent into the field; men represented by that one who, left dying on a battle-field of the West, was asked by a friend, "Do you regret?" answered, "No; I—we all, are willing that our bodies should form the bridges and ladders, that the coming thousands may cross and mount, to plant their victorious banners on the shattered citadel and conquered wall;" and so died. (Sensation.) No one questions the heroism of these men, sent by the North to martyrdom. We were unselfish, too; those who stayed gave freely of treasure, as those who went gave freely of life. We had culture to put against their ignorance; schools against rum-shops; churches against race-courses; the brain of New England against the degradation of South Carolina. We have twenty millions against eight millions. We failed. The South gained battles, won victories, trampled our banners in the dust; demanded and received from the world the recognition of the courage and determination of her soldiers.

Yet to-night we are rejoicing over a victory which wipes off all old scores of the army of the Potomac. (Cheers.) This South, triumphant through the hatred which is genius; which in its strength reminds one of the story of an old Scotch king, who, seeing a great robber, with his splendid surroundings and the equipments of his band, turned to a knight, saying, "What lacks that knave a king should have?" "Sire," was the answer, "right and legitimacy." So this South, chiefly victorious

through all this terrible conflict, aided by a despotism, almost recognized by the governments of the earth—what has it needed that besems a nation? It has needed the corner stone of justice and the foundation of liberty. To-night, with its walls rocking to and fro, its supporters are flying from Gettysburg, with its ruins falling on their heads. (Applause.) The North stands triumphant, because the people have clambered up to the stand-point of freedom, and from thence have hurled their missiles on the advancing hosts of despotism. The President's threatened proclamation of September 22d, 1862;—the actual proclamation of January 1st, 1863, has had the stamp and seal of everlasting endurance set to it, by the people, in the Mass. 54th and 55th, and the Pennsylvania 3d United States Colored Volunteers (Long continued applause.)

True, through the past we have advocated the use of the black man. For what end? To save ourselves. We wanted them as shields as barriers, as walls of defence. We would not even say to them, fight *beside* us. We would put them in the *front*; their brains contracted, their souls dwarfed, their manhood stunted; mass them together; let them die! That will cover and protect us. Now we hear the voice of the people, solemn and sorrowful, saying, "We have wronged you enough; you have suffered enough; we ask no more at your hands; we stand aside, and let you fight for your own manhood, your future, your race." (Applause.) Anglo-Africans, we need you; yet it is not because of this need that I ask you to go into the ranks of the regiments forming to fight in this war. My cheeks would crimson with shame, while my lips put the request that could be answered, "Your soldiers? why don't you give us the same bounty, and the same pay as the rest?" I have no reply to *that*. (Sensation.)

But for yourselves; because, after ages of

watching and agony, your day is breaking; because your hour is come; because you hold the hammer which, upheld or falling, decides your destiny for weal or woe; because you have reached the point from which you must sink, generation after generation, century after century, into deeper depths, into more absolute degradation; or mount to the heights of glory and of fame.

The cause needs you. This is not our war, not a war for territory; not a war for martial power, for mere victory; it is a war of the races, of the ages; the stars and stripes is the people's flag of the world; the world must be gathered under its folds, the black man beside the white. (Cheers and applause.)

Thirteen dollars a month and bounty are good; liberty is better. Ten dollars a month and no bounty are bad; slavery is worse. The two alternatives are put before you; you make your own future. The to be will, in a little while, do you justice. Soldiers will be proud to welcome as comrades, as brothers, the black men of Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend. Congress, next winter, will look out through the fog and mist of Washington, and will see how, when Pennsylvania was invaded and Philadelphia threatened, while white men haggled over bounty and double pay to defend their own city, their own homes, with the tread of armed rebels almost heard in their streets; black men, without bounty, without pay, without rights or the promise of any, rushed to the beleaguered capital, and were first in their offers of life or of death. (Cheers and applause.) Congress will say, "These men are soldiers; we will pay them as such; these men are marvels of loyalty, self-sacrifice, courage; we will give them a chance of promotion." History will write, "Behold the unselfish heroes; the eager martyrs of this war." (Applause.) You hesitate because you have not all. Your brothers and sisters of the South cry out, "Come to our help, we have nothing." Father! you hesitate to send your boy to death; the slave father turns his face of dumb entreaty to you, to save his boy from the death in life; the bondage that crushes soul and body together. Shall your son go to his aid? Mother! you look with pride at the young manly face and figure, growing and strengthening beside you! he is yours! your own. God gave him to you. From the lacerated hearts, the wrung souls of other mothers, comes the wail, "My child, my child, give me back my child!" The slave-master heeds not; the government is tardy; mother! the prayer comes to you; will you falter?

Young man! rejoicing in the hope, the courage, the will, the thews and muscles of young manhood—the red glare of this war falls on the faces and figures of other young men, distorted with suffering, writhing in agony, wrenching their manacles and chains—shouting with despairing voices to you for help—shall it be withheld? (Cries of No! No!)

The slave will be freed—with or without you. The conscience and heart of the people

have decreed that. (Applause.) Xerxes, scourging the Hellespont: Canute commanding the waves to roll back, are but types of that folly which stands up and says to this majestic wave of public opinion, "Thus far." The black man will be a citizen, only by stamping his right to it in his blood. Now or never! You have not homes!—gain them. You have not liberty!—gain it. You have not a flag!—gain it. You have not a country!—be written down in history as the race who made one for themselves, and saved one for another. (Immense cheering.)

Professor E. D. Bassett then read the following address and resolution, which was adopted by acclamation:—

"Men of Color, to Arms! Now or Never!
This is our golden moment. The Government of the United States calls for every able-bodied colored man to enter the army for the three years' service, and join in fighting the battles of liberty and the Union. A new era is open to us. For generations we have suffered under the horrors of slavery, outrage, and wrong; our manhood has been denied, our citizenship blotted out, our souls seared and burned, our spirits cowed and crushed, and the hopes of the future of our race involved in doubts and darkness. But how the whole aspect of our relations to the white race is changed! Now, therefore, is our most precious moment. Let us rush to arms! Fail now, and our race is doomed on this soil of our birth. We must now awake, arise, or be forever fallen. If we value liberty; if we wish to be free in this land; if we love our country; if we love our families, our children, our homes—we must strike now while the country calls; we must rise up in the dignity of our manhood, and show by our own right arms that we are worthy to be freemen. Our enemies have made the country believe that we are craven cowards, without soul, without manhood, without the spirit of soldiers. Shall we die with this stigma resting on our graves? Shall we leave this inheritance of shame to our children? No! a thousand times no! We will rise! The alternative is upon us; let us rather die freemen than live to be slaves. What is life without liberty? We say that we have manhood—now is the time to prove it. A nation or a people that cannot fight may be pitied, but cannot be respected. If we would be regarded men; if we would forever silence the tongue of calumny, of prejudice and hate, let us rise now and fly to arms! We have seen that valor and heroism our brothers displayed at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend; though they are just from the galling, poisoning grasp of slavery, they have startled the world by the most exalted heroism. If they have proved themselves heroes, cannot we prove ourselves men? Are freemen less brave than slaves? More than a million white men have left comfortable homes and joined the armies of the Union to save their country; cannot we leave

ours, and swell the hosts of the Union, to save our liberties, vindicate our manhood, and deserve well of our country!

"Men of color! All races of men—the Englishman, the Irishman, the Frenchman, the German, the American—have been called to assert their claim to freedom and a manly character by an appeal to the sword. The day that has seen an enslaved race in arms has, in all history, seen their last trial. We can now see that our last opportunity has come! If we are not lower in the scale of humanity than Englishmen, Irishmen, white Americans, and other races, we can show it now.

"Men of color! brothers and fathers! we appeal to you!—by all your concern for yourselves and your liberties; by all your regard for God and humanity; by all your desire for citizenship and equality before the law: by all your love for the country—to stop at no subterfuge, listen to nothing that shall deter you from rallying for the army. Come forward and at once enroll your names for the three years' service. Strike now, and you are henceforth and forever freemen!

"Moreover, we, the colored people of Philadelphia, in mass meeting assembled, do most emphatically and unitedly express our firm belief that we not only ought, but may and will raise a full regiment of ten companies of eighty men each, of colored volunteers for the

United States service, within the next ten days, in our own city of Philadelphia."

Judge KELLEY then said: I have requested the Chairman to permit me to present to you the next speaker.

In this world of constant mutation it often happens that the bodies of dead men enter available into the estates of the living. Hamlet tells us that—

"Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
May stop a flaw to keep the wind away."

And the old English song says—

"This brown jug that foams with mild ale,
Out of which I now drink to sweet Kate of the vale,
Was once Toby Philpot, a thirsty old soul,
As e'er drew a bottle or fathomed a bowl."

But you all remember historic or poetic illustrations of the fact that dead men's bodies are often of commercial value to the living.

The speaker about to address you illustrates in his person the converse of that proposition. How personal estate may convert itself into a man. He was a *thing*, a chattel, part of the personal estate of Thomas Auld, a Maryland planter, but under the inspiration of freedom has been converted into an accomplished gentleman, a pungent and finished writer, and glowing and potent orator. I present to you Mr. FREDERICK DOUGLASS, of Rochester, N. Y.

SPEECH OF MR. FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW-CITIZENS—I shall not attempt to follow Judge Kelley and Miss Dickinson in their eloquent and thrilling appeals to colored men to enlist in the service of the United States. They have left nothing to be desired on that point. I propose to look at the subject in a plain and practical common-sense light. There are obviously two views to be taken of such enlistments—a broad view and a narrow view. I am willing to take both, and consider both. The narrow view of this subject is that which respects the matter of dollars and cents. There are those among us who say they are in favor of taking a hand in this tremendous war, but they add they wish to do so on terms of equality with white men. They say if they enter the service, endure all the hardships, perils and suffering—if they make bare their breasts, and with strong arms and courageous hearts confront rebel cannons, and wining victory from the jaws of death, they should have the same pay, the same rations, the same bounty, and the same favorable conditions every way afforded to other men.

I shall not oppose this view. There is something deep down in the soul of every man present which assents to the justice of the claim thus made, and honors the manhood and

self-respect which insists upon it. [Applause.] I say at once, in peace and in war, I am content with nothing for the black man short of equal and exact justice. The only question I have, and the point at which I differ from those who refuse to enlist, is whether the colored man is more likely to obtain justice and equality while refusing to assist in putting down this tremendous rebellion than he would be if he should promptly, generously and earnestly give his hand and heart to the salvation of the country in this its day of calamity and peril. Nothing can be more plain, nothing more certain than that the speediest and best possible way open to us to manhood, equal rights and elevation, is that we enter this service. For my own part, I hold that if the Government of the United States ordered nothing more, as an inducement to colored men to enlist, than bare subsistence and arms, considering the moral effect of compliance upon ourselves, it would be the wisest and best thing for us to enlist. [Applause.] There is something ennobling in the possession of arms, and we of all other people in the world stand in need of their ennobling influence.

The case presented in the present war, and the light in which every colored man is bound

to view it, may be stated thus. There are two governments struggling now for the possession of and endeavoring to bear rule over the United States—one has its capital in Richmond, and is represented by Mr. Jefferson Davis, and the other has its capital at Washington, and is represented by "Honest Old Abe." [Cheers and long-continued applause.] These two governments are to-day face to face, confronting each other with vast armies, and grappling each other upon many a bloody field, north and south, on the banks of the Mississippi, and under the shadows of the Alleghenies. Now, the question for every colored man is, or ought to be, what attitude is assumed by these respective governments and armies towards the rights and liberties of the colored race in this country; which is for us, and which against us! [Cries of That's the question.]

Now, I think there can be no doubt as to the attitude of the Richmond or confederate government. Wherever else there has been concealment, here all is frank, open, and diabolically straightforward. Jefferson Davis and his government make no secret as to the cause of this war, and they do not conceal the purpose of the war. That purpose is nothing more nor less than to make the slavery of the African race universal and perpetual on this continent. It is not only evident from the history and logic of events, but the declared purpose of the atrocious war now being waged against the country. Some, indeed, have denied that slavery has anything to do with the war, but the very same men who do this affirm it in the same breath in which they deny it, for they tell you that the abolitionists are the cause of the war. Now, if the abolitionists are the cause of the war, they are the cause of it only because they have sought the abolition of slavery. View it in any way you please, therefore, the rebels are fighting for the existence of slavery—they are fighting for the privilege, the horrid privilege, of sundering the dearest ties of human nature—of trafficking in slaves and the souls of men—for the ghastly privilege of scourging women and selling innocent children. [Cries of That's true.]

I say this is not the concealed object of the war, but the openly confessed and shamelessly proclaimed object of the war. Vice-President Stephens has stated, with the utmost clearness and precision, the difference between the fundamental ideas of the Confederate Government and those of the Federal Government. One is based upon the idea that colored men are an inferior race, who may be enslaved and plundered forever and to the heart's content of any men of a different complexion, while the Federal Government recognizes the natural and fundamental equality of all men. [Applause.]

I say, again, we all know that this Jefferson Davis government holds out to us nothing but fetters, chains, auction-blocks, bludgeons, branding-irons, and eternal slavery and degradation. If it triumphs in this contest, woe, woe, ten thousand woes, to the black man! Such of us as are free, in all the likelihoods

of the case, would be given over to the most execruciating tortures, while the last hope of the long-crushed bondman would be extinguished forever. [Sensation.]

Now, what is the attitude of the Washington government towards the colored race? What reasons have we to desire its triumph in the present contest? Mind, I do not ask what was its attitude towards us before this bloody rebellion broke out. I do not ask what was its disposition when it was controlled by the very men who are now fighting to destroy it when they could no longer control it. I do not even ask what it was two years ago, when McClellan shamelessly gave out that in a war between loyal slaves and disloyal masters, he would take the side of the masters against the slaves—when he openly proclaimed his purpose to put down slave insurrections with an iron hand—when glorious Ben. Butler [Cheers and applause], now stunned into a conversion to antislavery principles (which I have every reason to believe sincere), proffered his services to the Governor of Maryland, to suppress a slave insurrection, while treason ran riot in that State, and the warm, red blood of Massachusetts soldiers still stained the pavements of Baltimore.

I do not ask what was the attitude of this government when many of the officers and men who had undertaken to defend it, openly threatened to throw down their arms and leave the service if men of color should step forward to defend it, and be invested with the dignity of soldiers. Moreover, I do not ask what was the position of this government when our loyal camps were made slave hunting grounds, and United States officers performed the disgusting duty of slave dogs to hunt down slaves for rebel masters. These were all dark and terrible days for the republic. I do not ask you about the dead past. I bring you to the living present. Events more mighty than men, eternal Providence, all-wise and all-controlling, have placed us in new relations to the government and the government to us. What that government is to us to-day, and what it will be to-morrow, is made evident by a very few facts. Look at them, colored men. Slavery in the District of Columbia is abolished forever; slavery in all the territories of the United States is abolished forever; the foreign slave trade, with its ten thousand revolting abominations, is rendered impossible; slavery in ten States of the Union is abolished forever; slavery in the five remaining States is as certain to follow the same fate as the night is to follow the day. The independence of Hayti is recognized; her Minister sits beside our Prime Minister, Mr. Seward, and dines at his table in Washington, while colored men are excluded from the cars in Philadelphia; showing that a black man's complexion in Washington, in the presence of the Federal government, is less offensive than in the city of brotherly love. Citizenship is no longer denied us under this government.

Under the interpretation of our rights by

Attorney General Bates, we are American citizens. We can import goods, own and sail ships, and travel in foreign countries with American passports in our pockets; and now, so far from there being any opposition, so far from excluding us from the army as soldiers, the President at Washington, the Cabinet and the Congress, the generals commanding and the whole army of the nation unite in giving us one thunderous welcome to share with them in the honor and glory of suppressing treason and upholding the star-spangled banner. The revolution is tremendous, and it becomes us as wise men to recognize the change, and to shape our action accordingly. [Cheers and cries of We will.]

I hold that the Federal government was never, in its essence, anything but an anti-slavery government. Abolish slavery to-morrow, and not a sentence or syllable of the Constitution need be altered. It was purposely so framed as to give no claim, no sanction to the claim of property in man. If in its origin slavery had any relation to the government, it was only as the scaffolding to the magnificent structure, to be removed as soon as the building was completed. There is in the Constitution no East, no West, no North, no South, no black, no white, no slave, no slaveholder, but all are citizens who are of American birth.

Such is the government, fellow citizens, you are now called upon to uphold with your arms. Such is the government that you are called upon to co-operate with in burying rebellion and slavery in a common grave. [Applause.] Never since the world began was a better chance offered to a long enslaved and oppressed people. The opportunity is given us to be men. With one courageous resolution we may blot out the hand-writing of ages against us. Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters U. S.; let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder, and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on the earth or under the earth which can deny that he has earned the right of citizenship in the United States. [Laughter and applause.] I say again, this is our chance, and woe betide us if we fail to embrace it. The immortal bard hath told us:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
We must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures."

Do not flatter yourselves, my friends, that you are more important to the government

than the government is to you. You stand but as the plank to the ship. This rebellion can be put down without your help. Slavery can be abolished by white men; but liberty so won for the black man, while it may leave him an object of pity, can never make him an object of respect.

Depend upon it, this is no time for hesitation. Do you say you want the same pay that white men get? I believe that the justice and magnanimity of your country will speedily grant it. But will you be ever nice about this matter? Do you get as good wages now as white men get by staying out of the service? Don't you work for less every day than white men get? You know you do. Do I hear you say you want black officers? Very well, and I have not the slightest doubt that in the progress of this war we shall see black officers, black colonels, and generals even. But is it not ridiculous in us in all at once refusing to be commanded by white men in time of war, when we are everywhere commanded by white men in time of peace? Do I hear you say still that you are a son, and want your mother provided for in your absence?—a husband, and want your wife cared for?—a brother, and want your sister secured against want? I honor you for your solicitude. Your mothers, your wives and your sisters ought to be cared for, and an association of gentlemen, composed of respectable white and colored men, is now being organized in this city for this very purpose.

Do I hear you say you offered your services to Pennsylvania and were refused? I know it. But what of that? The State is not more than the nation. The greater includes the lesser. Because the State refuses, you should all the more readily turn to the United States. [Applause.] When the children fall out, they should refer their quarrel to the parent. "You came unto your own, and your own received you not." But the broad gates of the United States stand open night and day. Citizenship in the United States will, in the end, secure your citizenship in the State.

Young men of Philadelphia, you are without excuse. The hour has arrived, and your place is in the Union army. Remember that the musket—the United States musket with its bayonet of steel—is better than all mere parchment guarantees of liberty. In your hands that musket means liberty; and should your constitutional right at the close of this war be denied, which, in the nature of things, it cannot be, your brethren are safe while you have a Constitution which proclaims your right to keep and bear arms. [Immense cheering.]

**Headquarters of Commission for United States Colored Troops
No. 1210 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.**

The following is the official order authorizing the recruiting of Colored Troops :

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Adjutant General's Office,
WASHINGTON, June 17th, 1863. }

General Orders, No. 178.

Major GEORGE L. STEARNS, Assistant Adjutant General United States Volunteers, is hereby announced as Recruiting Commissioner for the United States Colored Troops. Subject to such instructions as he may from time to time receive from the Secretary of War.

By order of the Secretary of War.

(Signed)

E. D. TOWNSEND,

Assistant Adjutant-General.

To Major GEO. L. STEARNS, Assistant Adjutant-General U. S. Volunteers.

The undersigned is prepared to issue the proper authorization to colored men to enlist recruits for the armies of the United States. He will receive applications from those desirous of being made commissioned officers, and transmit the same to the Board of Inspection at Washington, and will be glad to give full information on all matters connected with this branch of the service to those who may seek it.

The undersigned has the co-operation of a committee of sixty citizens of Philadelphia. The agent of the said committee is R. R. CORSON, who is likewise the agent of the undersigned.

CAMP WILLIAM PENN, at Cheltenham Hills, has been selected as the camp for instruction, and Lieut. Colonel LEWIS WAGNER placed in command of it. All recruits will be mustered in by companies of eighty men, and by squads, and immediately uniformed, equipped, and sent to the camp.

Squads of men will be subsisted until companies are completed by the committee of citizens, at such localities as their agents may designate.

Papers in the interior of the State will copy this advertisement one time, and send a paper containing same, with bill, to these Headquarters.

Communications by letter will be promptly answered.

GEORGE L. STEARNS,

Major and A. A. G. Recruiting Commissioner for U. S. Colored Volunteers.

**Office of Supervisory Committee for Recruiting Colored Regiments.
No. 1210 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.**

TO MEN OF COLOR:

By the existing Militia Laws, the Governor has not the power to accept your service for three months. You are, therefore, the more urgently invited to

VOLUNTEER FOR THE WAR,

under the authorization of the War Department.

Two Dollars premium is paid for each recruit.

Ten Dollars Bounty is also paid to each recruit by the undersigned, upon the presentation of the muster in roll of each full company of eighty men. Proper persons are invited to call at these Headquarters for authority to recruit.

R. R. CORSON,

Agent.

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