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TO THE

COLOURED PEOPLE

OF PHILADELPHIA.

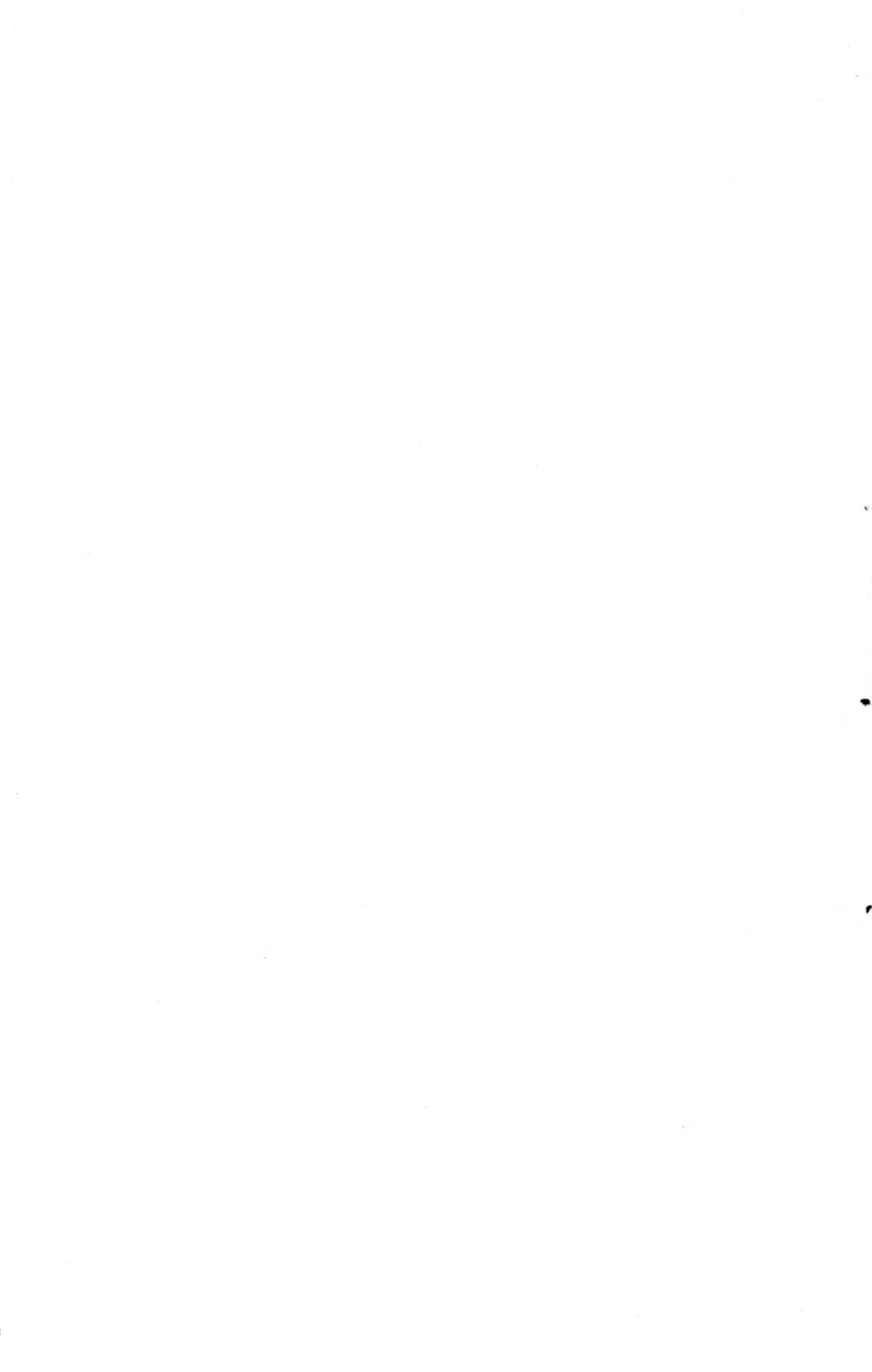
*Delivered at Bethel Church, on the evening
of the 12th of 3rd mo. 1833.*

BY EVAN LEWIS.

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ADDRESS, &c.

MY FRIENDS,—I present myself before you this evening, for the purpose of calling your attention to subjects of importance to you as a people, and crave your candid and deliberate attention to the facts and arguments which I shall bring to your notice. I hope I may, without presumption, or subjecting myself to the charge of egotism, be permitted to say, that from the time I was eighteen years old to the present hour, I have felt a deep and abiding interest in the happiness and prosperity of this people: and it is this feeling, and a desire to be useful to you, that has brought me before you at this time. Yet I come not here at my own suggestion alone. In the task I have assumed, I have the approbation and support of the friends with whom I act, the members of the Pennsylvania Society, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c.

Many are the wrongs and sufferings endured by your countrymen, inflicted upon them by the cruelty and avarice of the white man, the sight and contemplation of which has caused humanity to mourn over your unhappy destiny. But it is not my purpose to excite in any of you, painful feelings, nor to awaken in your bosoms the dormant passions. My business is, not to call forth indignant sentiments, but to promote peace and charity,—to inculcate a spirit of kindness and love to all men, and to draw your attention to rational and practical means of improving your condition. But as a prelude to what I have to offer on this point, it may be interesting to take a brief survey of the origin of slavery in Christendom.

It must be obvious to all who have read the New Testament, impartially, that slavery has no advocate there. Not a precept can be found, from the beginning to the end, which is not utterly opposed to the felonious crime of stealing a man and selling him. The sermon of Christ,

recorded by the Evangelist Matthew, contains more than one hundred precepts, which, taken singly, are each of them totally incompatible with that complication of iniquity, comprehended in the system of slavery inflicted upon the African race by *professed* christians. I hold it to be a solecism of the grossest kind—an abuse of words—a perversion of the use of language—an outrage against the authority and example of Christ and his apostles,—a climax to all gradations of absurdity, to call the defender and upholder of this system, as practiced in the world at this time, *a christian*. As well might the man who swallows large potations of spirituous liquors, and who daily and hourly wallows in beastly intoxication, be denominated *temperate* and *sober*. Yet there are now more than five millions of the human race, of African descent, held in unconditional bondage by nations professing christianity.

The slavery that had existed among the heathen nations of Europe disappeared when the light of the gospel spread itself over that quarter of the globe. How then can we account for the prevalence in modern christendom, of a species of slavery, more cruel and oppressive than that practiced by the nations of antiquity? We shall state a few leading facts, from which it will appear that it was commenced by the desperate adventurers who flocked to the new world which was opened to European enterprise by the discovery of the western continent,—men, whose actions proved that they knew nothing of christianity but the name, and who were actuated by a chivalrous spirit of adventure, and an insatiable thirst for gold. The acquisition of the precious metals seemed to be the leading object of pursuit with the Spaniards who first settled in the West Indies, and on the southern continent of America. To obtain them, they reduced the natives to slavery, and compelled them to work in the mines. The cruelties and hardships inflicted upon them by their task masters reduced their numbers so rapidly, that the whole race were likely to become extinct. Whether their innate love of liberty was too strong to permit them long to survive the enjoyment of its blessings, or whether their constitutions were naturally too feeble to sustain the servitude to which they were reduced, certain it is that they wasted away like snow before the sun, and it was soon perceived that some other

source must be sought, for supplying the waste of human life, or slavery would soon cure itself by extirpating all its victims.

In the year 1517, the first authority was given for importing slaves from Africa into the Spanish dominions of South America. In that year the Emperor Charles the Fifth, gave a patent to one of his favourites, to import four thousand Africans. In that year the slave trade began; and though the same Emperor, twenty-five years after, put a stop to the trade, and ordered all slaves in his American Islands to be made free; yet by his first grant, a door had been opened which to this moment has never been effectually closed. And permit me to add, that it never will be closed until slavery itself is abolished. The wicked traffic is nourished and sustained by the corrupt system; and so long as the flesh and sinews of human beings are bought and sold, and command a high price, so long will the cupidity and avarice of man find means to steal his fellow man for gain.

But though the Emperor Charles the Fifth, in the latter part of his reign, abolished slavery in his dominions, yet upon his retiring from the government, it was again revived, and with it the trade to Africa was resumed.

The first importations of slaves from Africa, by authority of the British government, was in the year 1562, during the reign of queen Elizabeth. The queen appears to have had serious doubts of the propriety of permitting this traffic from its commencement. She expressed her concern lest the Africans should be carried from their own country without their consent, and declared that it would be detestable, and call down the vengeance of heaven upon the undertakers. Nothing could have induced a princess, entertaining such sentiments, and possessing the absolute authority which she possessed, to permit so horrible a traffic to be carried on by any of her subjects, but the deception practiced upon her, and the pains taken to keep her ignorant of its true character.

Sir John Hawkins was the first Englishman who disgraced himself and brought dishonour on his country, by engaging in the African slave trade. "Having commenced his bloody proceedings, he, with the most consummate deception, represented to the queen that they, (the persons brought

from Africa) were voluntary slaves; that it was pure mercy which had induced him to carry them to the Isles of the West; that their souls were precious in his sight, and that their conversion to christianity was the object at which he aimed." The queen strictly commanded him not to carry any of the natives from their own country without their free consent. He promised compliance with her injunctions: but so little regard had he for his promise, or the sacred rights of human beings, that in his next voyage he seized and forcibly carried off many of the natives and sold them as slaves.

Thus the trade was commenced with fraud and violence; and, as if to divest it of every redeeming quality, which could, in the least degree, tend to alleviate its enormity, or palliate its guilt, the hypocritical pretence of conversion to christianity was made the pretext for setting at defiance the laws both of God and man.

"Their souls were precious in his sight!" Such sentiments, uttered on such an occasion, make the heart sick. How much, alas! does this mock philanthropy resemble the kindred benevolence of our own time. They were first brought to this western world, because their souls were precious, and in order that they might be converted to christianity. And now, after keeping them and their descendants nearly three hundred years in heathen darkness, and worse than Egyptian bondage, their souls again become precious in the sight of their task masters; and, in the overflowings of their benevolence, they have discovered that Africa is the land of promise to them, where alone they can enjoy the lights of science, the benefits of liberty and civilization, and the comforts of religion.

It is not my attention to occupy much of your time this evening with giving you an exposition of the scheme of colonization in Africa. My sentiments on this subject are well understood by all who know me. I have never concealed them. I have never changed my opinion on this subject since the year 1817. The affected benevolence with which the project has been clothed, appears to me to be as hollow and hypocritical as the pretensions of Sir John Hawkins in regard to the conversion of the natives of Africa to christianity by loading them with chains; and its fruits will be found, in the end, to be as bitter to the taste,

and as deleterious in their effects as those of the slave trade. A noxious weed cannot bear grapes, nor a poisonous plant figs—neither can the root from which the plan of colonization spring, nor the principles upon which it is sustained and defended, be productive of good to the African race, however plausibly and skilfully its revolting doctrines may be covered with the mantle of benevolence and philanthropy. It is but a whited sepulchre at best, finely painted and garnished indeed on the outside, but filled with dead men's bones, and all manner of uncleanness. Will any think me too censorious? I would not be uncharitable; but I am bound in conscience to speak the truth without fear. And if I do this, I must use such language as will express the honest convictions of my understanding.

We have an unerring rule by which to judge of men—not by their words, but by their actions—not by their profession, but by their practice. And when profession and practice are totally incompatible—when pompous and high sounding professions of benevolence and sympathy for the African race are accompanied by an avowed determination to grant freedom to none held in slavery, except on *condition* of transportation to a foreign land, we have a right to pronounce the professions hypocritical.

I could go on to prove the truth of all I have said from facts which have been made public—facts too, which the advocates of the scheme cannot and dare not deny, because officially known and sanctioned by themselves. But I need not dwell upon the subject now. Your sentiments, as well as my own, are no secret to the world. They have been repeatedly expressed and published. And as they accord with what has been said, no argument is required to convince you of what you already know.

We have seen how slavery and the slave trade commenced in the new world—that the love of gold was the first moving cause—that it was began in fraud and violence, and the deepest hypocrisy. It has since been sustained and continued by cupidity and avarice, and by that love of domineering over his fellow men, which takes such strong hold of those who have once tasted power. England planted the colonies of North America, and entailed upon them the curse of slavery. The climate of the southern sections of this continent was more congenial to the African con-

stitution, and the soil to the successful cultivation of those agricultural products which could be obtained by slave labour, than the northern. Hence the greatest number of slaves is found in the south. But none of the colonies were entirely without them. The abolition of slavery in Pennsylvania forms an important era in the history of our country. It is intimately connected with the labours of the Abolition Society.

The Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery, for the relief of free coloured people unlawfully held in bondage, and for improving the condition of the African race, was formed in 1774, about fifty-nine years ago, while these states were colonies of Great Britain. The celebrated Dr. Rush was one of its founders; and among the first members are enrolled the names of many of the fathers, or most conspicuous characters belonging to the Society of Friends. The objects designed to be accomplished by the formation of this society, as will appear from the title assumed, were threefold. First, to promote the abolition of slavery; secondly, to relieve free coloured persons unlawfully held in bondage; and thirdly, to improve the condition of the African race. These objects are highly important in their nature, and in their ends, truly benevolent; worthy the character of those christian philanthropists, who like the good Samaritan of old, showed their faith by their works of charity and deeds of love—in combining their efforts to loose the fetters of the captive—to check the hand of oppression and lawless violence, and to heal the wounds inflicted upon their sable brethren by the hand of the spoiler. These separate objects of exertion, to which the labours of the society were directed, will be briefly noticed in the order in which they occur in the title.

I think I am safe in saying that this society was the first ever formed in this country or in Europe, for similar purposes. I have never learned of any of so old a date. At the time of its formation, slavery existed in every one of the then colonies, now States of North America. Men of every sect or denomination of christians, except one, held their fellow men in unconditional bondage; and that one had but recently wiped away this stain upon the christian character. Only sixteen years before the formation of this society, the Yearly Meeting of Friends of Pennsylvania, had adopted

the resolution to separate from their communion, all those of their members who should thereafter, refuse to manumit their slaves.

In the year 1787, thirteen years after its formation, the society was enlarged by the addition of many new members; and Dr. Benjamin Franklin, the friend of liberty and of man, was appointed president. Since that period, we find the names of Rush, Wistar, and Rawle, at its head as presiding officers—men whose literary attainments, unblemished characters, and practical benevolence would have done honour to any society, to any city, or to any nation.

A society composed of men of the first standing in the State, associated for promoting the noblest objects that ever engaged the attention, and called forth the energies of christian man, in behalf of his fellow man, would be likely to attain, in a moral and religious community, a high degree of popularity and influence. Such appears to have been the fact in the early period of which we are now speaking. How this influence was exerted will be seen in events which followed.

The legislature of Pennsylvania passed an act, dated March 1, 1780, for the gradual abolition of slavery, which prescribed a definite and fixed limit to the system in this state; and it is presumed that the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, by its influence and popularity in the state, hastened the accomplishment of this important measure. The provisions of this act, and the sound moral reasons upon which the legislature predicate its expediency, are so interesting and appropriate, that I cannot refrain from reading to you, a part of the preamble to the oldest Abolition law to be found on our statute books.

“It is not for us to inquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know that all are the work of an Almighty hand. We find in the distribution of the human species, that the most fertile as well as the most barren parts of the earth, are inhabited by men of different complexions from ours, and from each other; from whence we may reasonably as well as religiously infer, that He, who placed them in their various situations, hath extended equally his care and protection to all, and that it becometh not us to counteract his

mercies. We esteem it a peculiar blessing granted to us, that we are enabled this day to add one more step to universal civilization, by removing, as much as possible, the sorrows of those who have lived in undeserved bondage, and from which, by the assumed authority of the kings of Great Britain, no effectual relief could be obtained. Weaned by a long course of experience from those narrow prejudices and partialities we had imbibed, we find our hearts enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards men of all conditions and nations; and we conceive ourselves at this particular period extraordinarily called upon, by the blessings which we have received, to manifest the sincerity of our profession, and to give a substantial proof of our gratitude.

“ And whereas the condition of those persons who have heretofore been denominated negro and mulatto slaves, has been attended with circumstances which not only deprived them of the common blessings that they were by nature entitled to, but has cast them into the deepest afflictions by an unnatural separation and sale of husband and wife from each other and from their children, an injury, the greatness of which can only be conceived by supposing that we were in the same unhappy case. In justice, therefore, to persons so unhappily circumstanced, and who, having no prospect before them whereon they may rest their sorrows and their hopes, have no reasonable inducement to render their service to society, which they otherwise might, and also in grateful commemoration of our own happy deliverance from that state of unconditional submission to which we were doomed by the tyranny of Britain, *Be it enacted*, That all persons, as well negroes and mulattoes as others, who shall be born within this state from and after the passing of this act, shall not be deemed and considered as servants for life or slaves; and that all servitude for life or slavery of children in consequence of the slavery of their mothers, in the case of all children born within this state from and after the passing of this act as aforesaid, shall be, and hereby is, *utterly taken away, extinguished and for ever abolished.*”

Thus the work of abolition commenced in Pennsylvania. In its progress it has emancipated half the states of this confederacy from the sin and scourge of slavery. Besides, there is a spirit aroused in other states, which will never

rest till the fetters of oppression are burst asunder, and the Ethiopian captive shall be liberated, and stand "redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled." Light has gone forth, which will enlarge its sphere of influence, and increase in brightness, till the selfishness and cupidity of man shall yield to the clear evidences of truth, and the imperious demands of justice and humanity.

The time must come—it is now hastening—I speak it not presumptuously, but without doubts or misgivings—the time is hastening with rapid strides, when the African race in this country, shall be free. I see it in the signs of the times—in the uneasiness and bustle and threats and empty vapouring of southern politicians—in the distraction of their councils and the madness of their measures—in their heart-burnings and jealousy of the growing prosperity of the free states, and in the general conviction among the intelligent slave-holders, that exhaustion of the soil, and poverty of the planter must result from the present system. "The enemy is wroth because he perceives that his time is short." I behold it in the measures of colonization men for removing you out of their sight. I see it in the progress of the human mind—in the increasing intelligence and opening talents of coloured men. But above all, when I reflect that all events are subject to the control of an overruling providence, who governs according to the councils of his own will,—who made of one blood all the families of the earth, and who will judge the nations in righteousness, I feel assured that a way will be opened for the emancipation of your countrymen, and that the time for its accomplishment is drawing near. Let us then all lift up our hearts in prayer that the time may be hastened, and that it may be accomplished peaceably, and without violence or bloodshed.

The second object of the Pennsylvania Society, as we have said before, was the relief of free persons unlawfully held in bondage. It is not possible now to ascertain with any thing like precision, the numbers thus relieved through the agency of this society. But many hundreds, if not thousands, of the description mentioned, have been rescued from the man-stealer through their means. Under the pretence of recovering what are technically called fugitives from labour, or in other words, runaway slaves, many free persons have been seized,—a forged advertisement descri-

bing their persons produced, and their identity sworn to by an idle vagrant who would swear to any thing for a trifling reward. A system of kidnaping was extensively carried on upon this plan, some years ago, which called forth the vigilance and activity of the society to protect the hapless victims, and to prosecute and punish the culprits. But of latter years fewer cases of this kind occur than formerly. The services of the society are not so frequently required in this department as formerly. Still they have a standing committee, prepared to act on any emergency that may occur.

The third object of their association, opens a wide field for the exercise of their philanthropy. And in the present state of the coloured population of this state, slavery having long since been abolished, and cases of kidnaping not very frequent, the improvement of the condition of the African race, seems to be the great and leading object of their pursuit, which I think you will acknowledge they have not neglected. How is the condition of the African race to be improved? I answer, in a variety of ways and by a variety of means. By encouraging among you habits of industry, economy, and sobriety,—by using our influence to remove prejudice against your colour—by endeavoring to get your youth instructed in the machanic arts—by establishing schools and promoting education among you. Education is the most important of all the means that can be devised for improving your condition; and it has received a corresponding attention from the Abolition Society. The funds of the society are now employed, and have been, as many of you know, for many years, to support schools for the education of your children. They have expended large sums in the purchase of property and in the erection of buildings; and their resources are principally expended in the support of the schools taught in them. Their funds are not sufficient to make these schools entirely free. And, therefore, they look to the coloured people, who are of ability to give their children an education, to second their laudable endeavours to improve their condition.

We are gratified to perceive an increasing desire in the coloured people of this city to give their children a good education. Cherish this feeling, and embrace every means in your power for intellectual culture. We hail it as a prelude to your further advancement in respectability and use-

fulness. For what is man without cultivation? A mental desert, a wilderness of ignorance and error. It is the *mind* that rules and governs the man, and gives one man a real superiority over another. Our Creator has placed us in a world capable of supplying all our wants—he has endowed us by nature, with the noble faculty of reason, and given us a restless desire for the acquisition of knowledge. But though all our wants are supplied from the earth, it does not yield them spontaneously without cultivation. It does not produce bread ready baked and meat ready cooked, nor clothes ready made to our hands. Houses do not spring up out of the ground ready built, to shelter us from the rigors of the season. All these things are acquired by labour. But labour, if properly directed, will certainly procure them. If we sat idly waiting for the earth to supply our wants, we should soon perish. Just so it is with the mind. It is a soil capable of almost unlimited improvement by cultivation; but without it, it must always remain barren and unfruitful. If we neglect to cultivate and improve our minds we shall never rise to the dignity of rational intelligencies, nor fill the station in creation for which providence designed us. But the fruits of application and diligence in the culture of the mental soil, are as certain as the results of our labour in the tillage of our fields and our gardens. Our intellectual faculties will be improved and strengthened, and we shall make advances in the acquisition of useful knowledge, in exact proportion to our application and industry.

I repeat it, the mind makes the man. The Creator designed us to be the lords of his creation—to rule and govern all inferior orders of being, and even to subject the laws of nature to our service. But it is only by the enlightened, the cultivated mind, that these purposes can be accomplished. Man is, of all animals, the most helpless, until reason teaches him the means of providing for his wants, and of protecting himself from injury. In a state of nature without a knowledge of the arts and sciences, his condition is but little better than that of the beasts that roam in the desert. But when his latent powers are improved and strengthened by exercise, and grow to their full dimensions by culture, when science sheds her light upon his understanding, and the arts which so essentially promote civilization and

fruitfulness. The skill and industry of the husbandman will be needed to bring it under successful tillage. It must be cleared of extraneous incumbrances. The seed must be sown, and its germination guarded from injury; the growing crop demands the care of the farmer, to clear it of noxious weeds, which would prevent its coming to maturity. The soil of African intellect is like the land that has long lain uncultivated, exposed to the depredations and inroads of every lawless intruder. We wish to see it reclaimed from this neglected state. We wish to see it planted, and watered, and tilled with the same care that has been bestowed upon ours; and we are convinced, that it will be as fruitful in talent and genius as it was when Africa was the centre of science and learning.

I wish to encourage among you sentiments of self-respect—an elevation of feeling which will cause you to rise superior to all the disadvantages which surround you. I do not mean by self-respect that kind of foolish pride which is apt to supply the place of common sense. I do not mean that vain and idle conceit of ourselves which always indicates an empty head and a light and frivolous mind. By self-respect I mean a consciousness of the high destinies for which we were created—a feeling which revolts at the commission of a mean or criminal action. If we rightly consider the noble gifts with which our Creator has endowed us—the high responsibilities under which we are placed—the part we are destined to act—the important relative and social duties we are called upon to perform, and the great and glorious end for which we were made—even the enjoyment of an immortal existence in a future state of being, it will inspire us with this kind of self-respect of which I have been speaking—it will restrain us from degrading the noblest work of the Creator, by conduct unbecoming the dignified station we were designed to occupy in his works.

Education will contribute essentially to promote this regard for character, which is one of the safeguards of virtue. Experience has proved that criminal offences against the laws have diminished, in Europe, in exact proportion to the extension of education among the common people. The best educated communities have been found to be the most moral and respectable. The same effect will be produced among you, by the operation of the same cause. Education,

if general among you, would effectually rescue your character from all the odium that has been cast upon it.

Let me then encourage you to send your children to school, when you have it in your power. By the exertions of your friends, free public schools have been opened in this city, for the instruction of coloured children in the rudiments of learning. To these such of you can get your children admitted, as do not feel able to pay for their tuition at the Clarkson school. This last named institution, under the present arrangement, is designed for boys who are prepared for the higher branches, and it is hoped you will feel ambitious to promote its success, and to extend its benefits. It is the design of the present managers of that school to have a course of popular lectures delivered in the Clarkson Hall, if they should feel encouraged after making the trial, by a reasonable prospect of advantage thence resulting, to the coloured people. A beginning will be made next week, and they will be continued if your attention is given, and an interest excited among you. The subjects of the lectures will be varied according to circumstances. One of the objects contemplated is to excite a spirit of inquiry and a taste for useful knowledge, and to stimulate your people to read, examine and investigate for themselves. And now having occupied so much of your time and attention, I think I cannot close this address more appropriately than by reading to you the last legacy of Elisha Tyson to the people of colour. You have all heard, I presume, of that prince of philanthropists, that apostle of liberty, that intrepid and dauntless advocate of your injured cause. A few days before his death he wrote an address to the coloured people of this country, which I am now about to read. It may truly be said to be a voice from the grave. And I think the advice it contains, coming as it does from the great champion of your cause, when about to bid adieu to all terrestrial things, cannot be too often repeated, or too highly appreciated

THE FAREWELL ADDRESS OF
ELISHA TYSON,

*Of the city of Baltimore, to the People of Colour, in the
United States of America.*

It has long been in my heart as a duty I owe you, and now near the close of my day, the impression remains with increased force upon my mind, to leave some advice, as a legacy to you, and as an evidence of the deep and affectionate solicitude I feel for your welfare. It is well known to some of you that I have for the last forty years, sustained many trying conflicts on your account; but if I have shared largely in these, I have the consolation of believing myself to have been imperiously called upon to espouse your cause; and I now feel the reward of an approving conscience, under the reflection that I may, in some degree, have been instrumental in promoting the melioration of your condition, or in the legal recovery and securing of some of your individual rights.

In looking back through the period of time, during which I have been engaged as your advocate, how great appears the change, both in your condition as a people, and in the minds even of slave holders towards you! The force of justice, and the power of religious principle, have so operated upon many of those who held you in bondage, that by voluntary emancipation many thousands of you have been restored to the rank of freemen. We now behold you a numerous and increasing people, set at liberty to share in rights and privileges, in which you are deeply interested, and upon the proper exercise or abuse of which, may depend the thralldom or enlargement of your yet enslaved brethren.

You will permit me to bring into view some of those circumstances which, within the last forty years, have combined to improve your condition, and which, I conceive, are calculated to produce further results of the utmost importance to you. You now have the privilege of holding, and many of you are in actual possession of considerable property—

others of you are liberally rewarded for their industry, and to all of you who have been emancipated, the means are offered of rendering yourselves comfortable in the world, and of diffusing blessings to your offspring as well as to those of your colour generally. Under these favors, for which you stand immediately indebted to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, both civil and religious improvements are advancing amongst you. Your friends rejoice in perceiving the number of schools established and encouraged for the education of your children; because they view in the cultivation of the human mind, not only a preparation for freedom, but also a qualification for increased usefulness to civil society at large, believing in the important truth, that in proportion as barbarism and ignorance amongst you shall yield to light and knowledge, civilization and refinement will render you more valuable both to yourselves and to the community in which you live. They also observe with deep interest the worship-houses erected for your accommodation, in many places, in which you are permitted undisturbedly to assemble, for the public acknowledgment due to the God and Father of us all. In adverting to this momentous consideration, I feel an ardent desire, that you may entertain just conceptions, both of the importance of religion, and of the nature and obligations of divine worship. The most solemn act in which the mind of man can possibly be engaged, is the worship of God. The aid of words is not necessary to communicate our wants, neither is the utmost exertion of the powers of the human voice capable of reaching the Divine ear, with any increased certainty. True worship is the adoration of the soul; and when clothed in vocal expressions, it ought to be with reverence and awe, and under a demeanor, marked by that decency and order, which the knowledge of a God of order necessarily implies. In communicating these sentiments, I feel the warmest solicitude, that your religious assemblies, under whatever name you may meet, may be acceptable to the Divine Being; and that they may be so conducted as to claim the respect, even of your enemies.

I will now call your attention to the importance of the relation in which such of you as are at liberty, stand to those who are in bondage. I desire to convince you, that your conduct, whether good or evil, will have a powerful

influence in loosening, or in riveting the chains of such of your oppressed fellow descendants of Africa as may yet remain in slavery. How lamentable is the reflection that the misconduct of some amongst you, who are enjoying the rights and privileges of freemen, should afford ground for the assertion that you are unworthy of liberty, and that this abuse of your privileges should furnish a pretext for perpetuating the sufferings and oppressions of your brethren who remain under the galling yoke of bondage! I assuredly believe, that not only those who are at liberty, but that those also who are enslaved, may become the instruments of alleviating the sufferings of one another, or, on the contrary, of aggravating and continuing those sufferings, by prejudicing the minds, and rendering callous the feelings of Slave Holders against you. Under this view it is the earnest desire of my heart, not only that the free people of color, but also that such as are in slavery, may so conduct themselves, as to make strong and powerful appeals to the humanity and justice of those who hold them in bondage. Religion, under its true and vital obligations, would lead those of you who are at liberty, to observe integrity and uprightness of conduct. It would make you examples in industry, in sobriety, and in honesty. It would render you happy in yourselves, and it would secure to you the confidence and favors of the white people, by proving to them that you were not unworthy of the rights you enjoyed. The same would likewise be its conspicuous and important benefits to those yet held in bondage; it would lead these to be faithful servants, to fill up the duties laid upon them, however hard their allotment, with a due regard even to the interests of their masters; and instead of indulging the malignant passions of depraved human nature, which go to render evil for evil, their souls would be directed in prayer to God, that the eyes of their oppressors might be opened to see, and their hearts softened to feel, for the wrongs and sufferings of the descendants of Africa. They would confide in the overruling and superintending Providence of the Almighty—of him who heard the cries, and brought out of Egyptian bondage, a numerous people formerly, long subjected to the cruelty of hard task masters, who “made them serve with rigour,” and embittered their lives with heavy oppression.

Having thus expressed myself in relation to those who are now at liberty, and also to those who are yet in slavery in the United States generally, but very especially to you of the middle states, and of Baltimore, the city of my residence, in behalf of whom, my agency has, on many occasions, been more immediately exerted, I feel myself impelled under the deepest concern for your welfare, and from a sense of the duty which I believe I owe to you, to say yet further, that my mind is impressed with a clear and full conviction that the Arm of Omnipotence is stretched out for your enlargement—that he is manifesting his power by his influences upon the hearts of our rulers, and that he is enlightening the minds and mitigating the feelings of many of those who yet hold you in bondage.

Many are the advocates who are raised up even in the councils of nations, to plead your cause, both in reference to the foreign trade, and to domestic slavery. The wrongs and the cries of Africa and her descendants have not only reached the ears of the Infinite Jehovah, but have touched the hearts of thousands, with feelings of philanthropy, under which they are becoming instruments in the Divine hand, in loosening your chains. And whilst I view with joyous anticipation, the great and interesting certainty, that slavery in our country is drawing to an end, and that thousands and tens of thousands of the descendants of Africa are becoming restored to the rights of freemen, my heart is animated with the warmest solicitude that the great purposes of the Almighty, in relation to you as a people, may not be retarded by any indiscretions on your part. I believe it to be the design of Infinite Wisdom, not only to furnish in your case a proof of the very important truth, that slavery, being in itself inherently wrong, cannot always exist, but that it is also his sacred determination to manifest his omnipotence by bringing good out of this evil. In accordance with these views, I religiously believe, that the day will come in which the people of colour in these United States, emerging from a state of slavery, will be made instrumental in diffusing both civil and religious benefits, to the dark and benighted regions of Africa. Under considerations like these, how great is the responsibility which rests upon you, and how serious the duties you owe to God, to yourselves individually, and to one another!

Having said thus much in discharge of the solemn and last debt, which I have believed I owe to you, I now close this my farewell address: in doing which the effusions of my heart reach forth to the God of all grace, earnestly desiring that under the dispensations of his Providence, the light of his truth may be your light, that it may lead, guide and direct you, in every difficulty, and under every extremity, and that he may finally give you an inheritance in the regions of eternal life, with "that great multitude which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and people."

ELISHA TYSON.

Baltimore, 2d Mo. 1824.

