

Mr. President,—In rising to address this assembly, on the great question of slavery, I feel what I cannot find language to express. When I consider the millions of my fellow men that are now growing under the chains of slavery, the tyranny of their oppressors, and the apathy of North on this subject. I hardly know where to begin or where to end. But in no way could I address you more to the purpose than to call your attention to the resolution which I hold in my hand.

It is argued by many that we are “pursuing a wrong course,” in carrying our principles out at the polls, but sir, for one, I have no fears on that point; let time, that is called “the touchstone of character to man,” show to future generations the course we pursued in 1842; they will award to us *consistency* in our conduct, honesty of purpose, and entire devotedness to the cause of holy and impartial freedom. (hear, hear.)

The opposition which the friends of Liberty have had to encounter, in advocating the cause of the oppressed, has been overruled by God, who is the author of good, for the furtherance of the principles they maintain, and the spread of freedom. The abolitionists are not of those who are enervated in the germ and blossom of life, and dandled on the downy lap of prosperity to inglorious repose; but as the historian remarked of Philip, from those adverse fortunes which could not break their spirits, they have learned patience, humility and wisdom; they have found ample resources in their own minds made strong by *exertion* and rich by *experience*. (loud cheering.)

But sir, far be it from us to ascribe the glory to ourselves. All our success is of God, “who raiseth up one nation and putteth down another;” yes, that Almighty Being who said, “let there be light and there was light,”

Mr. President,—In rising to address this assembly, on the great question of slavery, I feel what I cannot find language to express. When I consider the millions of my fellow men that are now growing under the chains of slavery, the tyranny of their oppressors, and the apathy of the North on this subject, I hardly know where to begin or where to end. But in no way could I address you more to the purpose than to call your attention to the resolution which I hold in my hand.

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has called into being the Spirit of this age, to bring out his oppressed poor from under their "task-masters;" and it is enough for us to be used as instruments in the hand of God, in accomplishing his glorious purposes. (yes, yes)

Of so much importance do I consider the present position of the Liberty Party, in terminating the accursed system of slavery, from which I myself have been delivered, that I desire all its members may regard themselves as laborers, *under God*, in this great moral vineyard. His voice calls upon the dressers of that vineyard to bring to their aid all those means which lie in their power, whether moral or political, to remove the deadly evil from his heritage. To accomplish the object in view we must feel for the slaves "as bound with them," we must place ourselves, so far as we can, in their position, and go forward with the fixed consciousness that we are *free* and *enslaved* with them. (hear, hear.)

It is maintained by many that we are to judge men by their complexion, and not by their moral worth. This spirit of *caste* the friends of freedom have trodden under foot; but it is not dead; it too often shows itself in our country, exerting a withering influence on those who cherish it, and chilling the heart's blood of those against whom it is exerted. But he who is considered so offensive for the complexion his Creator has given him, has the assurance that God "is no respecter of persons;" and those who make this distinction are to be pitied for their ignorance of the works of God, and of the attributes of His character. It is amusing to see how this prejudice against color operates. You ask one of those color-haters, when he does not want your votes, if he is in favor

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of emancipation, and he says, "O no! it would destroy the country! I don't believe in your amalgamation!" but place the same political demagogue in view of the door of the Capitol, and he is quite another man: give him encouragement of political preferment, and he is—what is he not?—he is in favor of abolitionism, or any other ism that will enable him to accomplish his purpose!

It puts me in mind of the anecdote which is related of the Bishop of Rochester, who, before his preferment was in the most obscure circumstances, clad with the habiliments of poverty, and known by the name of John Delancey. The *Bishop* was loud in his denunciations of sin in all its forms, and often reproved those who used profane language, though he was known to have been formerly notorious for that sin. But his sacerdotal office did not entirely conceal his deformity of character, for he still indulged himself in *swearing in private*. One day he was heard by one of his parishioners taking God's holy name in vain; the man, of course, was confounded by his Bishop's profanity, and reproved him for it. The Bishop replied that he "did not swear as the Bishop of Rochester but as John Delancey." "But I would like to know," retorted the honest peasant, "what will become of the Bishop of Rochester when the Devil gets John Delancey! (hear) The fact was, the Bishop of Rochester was the same man a John Delancey, his priestly robes could not conceal his wickedness or change his character. And that man who has "despised the day of small things" and heaped reproach on our cause, in the face of self-evident truths, and in violation of the commands of God, can be very gracious and humane, now that the friends of Freedom are augmenting their forces and acquiring more and more energy at the ballot box. Such

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men, while clinging to the old pro-slavery parties would [fain] ride into power, on the backs of the time-worn, weather-beaten soldiers of abolition. But while they stand in their present position, they are not to be trusted with the guardianship of the rights of freemen; and whatever may be their professions, they are against us still.

The time is not far distant when the Liberty Party will be the most powerful party in our country; nothing can arrest its progress; our principles are sound, founded, as they are, upon eternal truth and justice, and

“That man is doubly armed,  
Who hath his quarrel just.”

Efforts may indeed be made to oppose our onward course, but the mighty current of Anti-Slavery feeling [will] break through every barrier, like that “Father of Waters” which rolls its vast volume through the land of the Tyrant, increasing in power by being obstructed, till it overcomes all opposition, bearing on its surface or casting aside every obstacle, and moving onward with increasing velocity and grandeur to the bosom of the ocean. (applause.) What, Sir, has the slave power done to oppose our progress? The voice of the [sainted] Lovejoy cries to us from the ground in tones of god-like power, to “*go forward*”; but did the spilling of his blood quench the holy fire of abolition in Alton? Did the destruction of Birney’s press in Cincinnati prevent the spread of the startling facts of and awful truths on the subject of slavery? No, Sir, they only urge on the cause of freedom, and hasten the day of its final and glorious triumph.

But, sir, the Dark Spirit of Slavery hovers not only around Alton, but over our whole Union, from Maine to the Sabine, there are to be found men who bow in sub-

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serviency to the Slave Power. She is casting her huge shadow over our whole domain, and not content with her present limits, efforts are now making to enlarge her empire, and there is reason to fear that Texas, with its mass of abominations, *will be fastened upon the Union after all.*

Bur, Sir, even this may be overruled to the destruction of the system. The North will not bear it. The mighty mass of slaves concentrated upon the extreme South will not bear it. Look at Eastern Virginia, with her soil worn out and good for nothing, by the effects of slavery, once rich and fertile as the Garden of Eden. See her now raising men, women and children to sell by the head and pound, in the New Orleans market; her citizens subsisting by the traffic of human flesh in violation of the Constitution of the United States, and bringing down upon our nation the righteous indignation of Heaven and the scorn of civilized man. Do you ask, were I there, trampled under foot by these traders in the souls of men, what I would do? I can't say precisely what I should do—but, sir, in the language of Shakespeare I will say, All that man dares do, I would do. (Applause.)

Ah, sir, those heaving fires that formerly burst forth like the lava of a burning volcano, upon the inhabitants of Southampton and elsewhere, when the colored man rose and asserted *his rights to humanity and liberty*, are kept in check, only by the abolitionists. They hold open the safety valve of the nation;—and these *enemies of the country*, as they are called, are the very men, sir, that prevent a general insurrection of the slaves from spreading carnage and devastation throughout the entire South. They confide in the assurances of the abolition-

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ists that something is doing to hasten the day when they “shall sit under their own vine and their own fig tree,” and their claims to liberty and happiness be asserted and ESTABLISHED BY LAW. Yes, Sir. I repeat it,—the slaves *know* throughout the entire South, of the movement of the abolitionists, they know they have friends in the North in whom they may *confide* in case they are driven to desperation. (True, true)

But we are told “the slaves could not take care of themselves if they were free.” Not take care of themselves! when now they take care of themselves, and their masters too, and that under the blighting influence of slavery, with their energies crippled by its withering curse.”

Take off from them the heavy chains under which they groan, and gratitude would spontaneously flow from every heart that now bleeds in slavery, gratitude to their benefactors, and loyalty to the government which had legislated in their behalf, while hope would “light up a smile,” not “in the aspect of woe,” but in prospect of possessing the fruits of their labor, their wives and their children, as was intended by their Creator, and their songs would rehearse the acts and glory of their deliverers down to the end of time. I cannot harbor the thought for a moment that their deliverance will be brought about by violence. No; our country will be do deaf to the cries of the oppressed; so regardless of the commands of God, and her highest interests. No, the time for a last stern struggle has not yet come (may it never be necessary) The finger of the Almighty will hold back the trigger, and his all powerful arm will sheath the sword till the oppressor’s cup is full. (Hear, hear.)

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The slaveholders count upon numbers; we upon *truth*, and it “is powerful and will prevail.” Whoever will read the Declaration of Independence carefully, will be convinced that it is on our side, the text book of our party—setting forth, as it does, “that all men are created equal,” what is the inference to be drawn from it in regard to the slaves? Why that they all are *to do just as other men do*. It asserts that “*all men*” are entitled to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Not this man here, and that man there, but “ALL MEN” are equally entitled to the inalienable rights and privileges with which they are endowed by their Creator. Such language as is embodied in the Declaration of Independence would lead the framers of it, were they now living, to fight in our cause.

Is it said that it is folly to pass these resolutions, and take such a position as is occupied by the Liberty Party? There are, I know, professed abolitionists, who say that we can never accomplish our object, and who prophecy our overthrow. To them I would say, that, standing on the rock of principle, no weapon of the enemy can prevail against us; and in conclusion I would remind them of the anecdote of an honest man from Dublin, who while laying the foundation of a wall was laughed at by his neighbors. “You may build your wall,” said they, “five feet high, and four feet abroad, and when Jack Frost comes, he will throw it over.” “Oh, then, retorted the builder, “I make it four feet high and five feet broad, and then if Jack overturns it, *it will be a foot higher than ever.*” (Laughter and applause.)

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