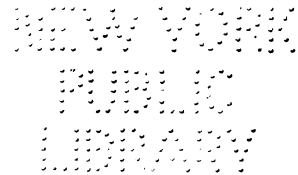


In Memoriam

# Frederick Douglass

To live—that freedom, truth and life  
Might never know eclipse—  
To die, with woman's work and words  
Aglow upon his lips,—  
To face the foes of human kind  
Through years of wounds and scars,—  
It is enough ;—lead on—to find  
Thy place amid the stars."

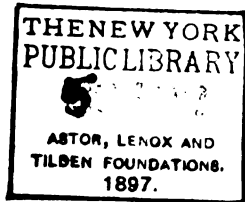
—*Mary Lowe Dickinson.*



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**Memorial Services.**  

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**Addresses and Sermons.**

(175)

## MEMORIAL SERVICES.

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### ADDRESSES AND SERMONS.

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SERMON BY THE REV. FRANCIS J. GRIMKÉ, OF THE  
FIFTEENTH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., MARCH 10, 1895.

“And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day?”—2 Samuel iii. 38.

On the evening of the twentieth of February there passed from the stage of action the greatest negro that this country has yet produced; one of the most illustrious citizens of the Republic, and one of the most remarkable men of the century now drawing to a close. The shock which the announcement of his death produced was all the more startling, inasmuch as it was entirely unexpected. There was nothing to indicate that the end was near. Suddenly, unexpectedly, the summons came, and in a moment the noble form which all men knew and delighted to look upon, was laid low.

To say that we miss him; that we are deeply, profoundly saddened by the thought that we shall no longer hear his voice, or see his face in our social and public gatherings; that we shall no longer have his great strong arm to lean upon, and his wise counsel to guide us in the hour of darkness and doubt, in our efforts to solve the perplexing problems which still confront us as a race, in this country, in the face of a cruel and bitter race prejudice,—is but feebly to express the sentiment that we all feel this morning. As David felt over the death of Jonathan, so do we feel. 2 Sam. i. 17-27: “And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son: The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not

empty. Saul and Jonathan were pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided. They were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions.

“How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle. O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!”

The sorrow, the deep, the almost inexpressible sorrow, which this man felt for his dead friend, do we feel for this great man who has now passed beyond our ken, “into the Silent Land, into the land of the great departed.”

Our purpose this morning, is not, however, to use this occasion to pour out our lamentations, but rather to look back over that remarkable career covering a period of nearly eight decades, with the view of forming some estimate of the man, of the debt we owe him, and of getting from his life courage and inspiration for the future.

1. As to the man. He was by nature cast in a great mould,—physically, intellectually and morally. Physically, what a splendid specimen of a man he was; tall, erect, massive, and yet moving with the grace and agility of an Apollo. How Phidias or Michael Angelo would have delighted to carve in marble or to cast in bronze that noble form and figure! It was always a pleasure to me, just to look at him. His presence affected me like some of the passages of rugged grandeur in Milton, or as the sight of Mont Blanc, rising from the Vale of Chamouni, affected Coleridge, when for the first time he looked upon that magnificent scene. I think all who came in contact with him felt the spell of his splendid presence. The older he grew, the whiter his locks became, the more striking was his appearance and more and more did he attract attention wherever he appeared,—whether in our streets or in our public assemblies. I was never more impressed with this fact than at the great Columbian Exposition in Chicago. One morning I had the pleasure of going with him to the Art Gallery. There were several things that he wanted to show me, he said. The first thing we stopped before was a piece of statuary, “Lincoln Dying.” We had been standing there but a few moments before a great crowd gathered about us. I was absorbed in what he was saying and did not at first notice it, but he took in the situation at once,—it was an old story to him,—and said, “Well, they have come,—let us pass on.” And wherever he went in the building, the same thing was repeated. It seemed to me as if nearly everybody knew him; but even people who were entirely ignorant of whom he was, were attracted by his remarkable appearance.

Intellectually, what a splendid specimen of a man he was. His intellect was of a very high order. He possessed a mind of remarkable acuteness and penetration, and of great philosophical grasp. It was wonderful, how readily he resolved effects into their causes and

with what ease he got down to the underlying facts and principles of whatever subject he attempted to treat. Hence he was always a formidable antagonist to encounter. No man ever crossed swords with him who was not forced to acknowledge, even when he did not agree with him, his transcendent ability. He had the faculty of seeing at a glance the weak points in an opponent's position, and with the skill of a trained dialectician, knew how to marshal all the forces at his command, in the form of facts and principles, in refutation of the same. It was to me a constant delight to witness the play of his remarkable powers of mind, as they came out in his great speeches and published articles. He had a strong, mighty intellect. They called him the Sage of Anacostia; and so he was,—all that that term applies,—wise, thoughtful, sound of judgment, discriminating, far seeing.

Morally, what a splendid specimen of a man he was,—lofty in sentiment, pure in thought, exalted in character. Upon the loftiest plane of a pure and noble manhood he lived and moved. No one need ever be ashamed to call his name. There he stands, in the serene, beautiful white light of a virtuous manhood. For more than fifty years he has been before the public, not infrequently during that time the object of the bitterest hatred; and yet, during all these years, in the face of the strongest opposition, with the worst passions arrayed against him, no one has dared even to whisper anything derogatory of him, or in any way reflecting upon the purity of his life, or upon the honesty and integrity of his character. There have been among us, in the past history of our race, men who were richly endowed intellectually, and who, like him, also possessed that rarest of gifts,—the mighty gift of eloquence; men who could hold entranced great audiences by the hour, the fame of whose eloquence has come down to us: but when you have said that of them, you have said all. Beyond that you dare not go. When it comes to character, which infinitely transcends all mere intellectual endowments, or even the gift of eloquence, we are obliged to hang our heads and remain silent, or go backward and cover their shame; but not so here. No one need ever hang his head when the name of Frederick Douglass is mentioned, or feel the necessity of silence. No man need ever go backward to cover anything in *his* life. There is the record, covering a period of more than fifty years. Read it and put your hand upon anything in it, if you can. Character, character, has been one of the things for which his name has always stood.

Physically he was great. Intellectually he was great, and morally he was great. Had he not been, whatever may have been his other gifts and graces, he never could have risen to the place of power and influence which, for more than a generation, he has occupied. He never could have won for himself the universal respect in which he is held to-day. Had he not been sound morally, we would not be here to-day to say what we are saying, nor would any such gathering as assembled

in this city one week ago last Monday, to pay the last tribute of respect to his memory, have been witnessed. It was because, in addition to the admiration which all felt for his transcendent intellectual endowments and his marvelous eloquence there was the conviction that back of, and beyond, and above all these, there was a pure and exalted manhood. It was because we could say of him as Mark Antony said of Brutus :

“His life was gentle, and the elements  
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, This was a man.”

One of the things that I am especially proud of to-day, is, that this greatest representative that our race has yet produced, was a pure man, a man of unblemished reputation, a man of sterling integrity of character, whose example we can commend to our children, and to the generations that are yet to come.

Let us make much of this, and let the fiat go forth; let it ring out from every pulpit and from every school-house, from every hilltop and from every valley, that any man who aspires to leadership among us, must be pure. In the presence of the splendid record that is before me, with the full knowledge of what this man was, of what his sentiments were, I stand here to-day, and in the name of Frederick Douglass, I say to this black race, all over this country, stand up for pure leadership! Honor the men and the men only, whose character you can respect, and whose character you can commend to your children.

“God give us men;  
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;  
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;  
Men who possess opinions and a will;  
Men who have honor; men who will not lie:  
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog  
In public duty, and in private thinking.”

And such was the great man whose memory we honor to-day.

“Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mt. Zion,” is what the Psalmist wrote as he looked out upon the Holy City; and so we feel to-day, as we look upon this man, that there is a beauty, a moral beauty, in that life, that is to us, and will remain to us, a joy forever.

In attempting to analyze this life, with a view of forming some estimate of it, there are several things to be taken into consideration,—the circumstances under which it began, the obstacles it had to contend with, and what it became.

As to the circumstances under which he was born. These may be briefly set forth in two statements. (1) He was born a colored man. He was identified with a despised race,—a race that had no rights which white men were bound to respect. The condition of the colored people of

this country,—even the free colored people,—eighty years ago, were sad, inexpressibly sad. There was not even a glimmer of light on the horizon. All was dark, and gloomy, and discouraging. (2) He was born a slave, a piece of property, a chattel, a thing to be bought and sold, to be cuffed and kicked about at the will of another.

The fundamental assumption underlying the system of slavery was the supposed inferiority of the negro,—the natural, inherent, God-ordained inferiority. Its great aim was to crush out of him every noble aspiration; to degrade him to the level of the brute, and to make him a mere beast of burden. Hence it made it a crime for him to learn to read and write, almost to think. He was to have no views or opinions of his own. He was simply to reflect those of others; to be obedient to the mandates of the master. Its whole code of ethics was summed up in the injunction, "Servants, obey your masters." This man was born under this accursed system, a system which entirely ignored the fact that he was a man, or that he had the right to exercise any of the prerogatives of a man. This was the prevailing sentiment, not only in the South, but it was largely the prevailing sentiment in the North. Church and State were alike in league with the South against the negro. Almost the entire North was pro-slavery. It was worth almost a man's life to say a word against the Slave Power. It was in Boston, the cradle of Liberty, that Garrison was dragged through the streets by a "broad-cloth mob." It was in the State of Connecticut that Prudence Crandall's school was destroyed because she dared to admit colored pupils. What Theodore Parker said in his great sermon, entitled "The True Idea of a Christian Church!" perfectly reflects the then existing sentiment of the North. "Are there not three million brothers of yours and mine, in bondage here, the hopeless sufferers of a savage doom; debarred from the civilization of our age; the barbarians of the nineteenth century; shut out from the pretended religion of Christendom; the heathens of a Christian land; chained down from the liberty inalienable in man; the slaves of a Christian Republic? Does not a cry of indignation ring out from every legislature in the North? Does not the Press war with its million throats and a voice of indignation go up from East and West, out from the hearts of freemen? Oh, no! There is none of that cry against the mightiest sin of this age. The rock of Plymouth, sanctified by the feet which led a nation's way to freedom's large estate, provokes no more voice than the rottenest stone in all the mountains of the West. The few who speak a manly word for truth and everlasting right, are called fanatics; bid be still, lest they spoil the market. Great God! and has it come to this, that men are silent over such a sin? 'Tis even so. Then it must be that every church that dares assume the name of Christ, that dearest name to men, thunders and lightens on this hideous wrong. That is not so. The Church is dumb, while the State is only silent. While the servants of the people are only asleep, "God's ministers are dead."



Such were the conditions under which this man was born, and such were the adverse circumstances against which he had to contend.

In looking back over this life, in studying it carefully, as he himself has written it out, the first thing that impresses us, and that gives promise that something may yet come out of it, is his rebellion against this system under which he was born. It asserted his inferiority. It declared that he was created simply for the convenience and the pleasure of others. This, in his inmost soul, he branded as a lie. Slave though he was, there came welling up into his soul the conviction that he was a man; and with that conviction its necessary corollary, that, being a man, he ought to be free. Byron, in his "Prisoner of Chillon," speaks of the "Eternal spirit of the chainless mind:" and it was this spirit that came into his soul, and that came there never, never to be extinguished. The consciousness, "I am a man! I ought to be free!" are the two first steps in the progress of this life upwards.

A third step was soon taken, when he plead with his mistress for the privilege of learning to read, and, by her assistance, mastered the alphabet, thereby getting hold of the key which was to unlock for him the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. One of the most pathetic things in this history is the eagerness, the avidity, with which this little slave boy appropriated the crumbs of knowledge that lay about him. In imagination I can see him now, with his spelling-book concealed under his coat, pressing into his service his little white playfellows whom he met along the streets as he was sent on errands, or during his hours of play,—making them his teachers. The spirit of liberty is not only stirring in this boy's breast, but a thirst for knowledge is also taking possession of him. The immortal mind, that marvelous thing we call the intellect, is beginning to work. The alphabet is soon mastered; the ability to read is soon acquired, and one book, at least, comes into his possession:—"The Columbian Orator," from which he drank in great draughts of the bracing air of liberty, as he studied the utterances of such men as Chatham, Fox, Pitt, and others. Thus his ideas were enlarged and his desire to be free greatly stimulated. The truth of what his master had said to his mistress, when forbidding her to continue to instruct him, "Learning will do him no good, but a great deal of harm, making him disconsolate and unhappy," he began now keenly to realize, for he became more dissatisfied with his condition than ever.

In this frame of mind, a fourth step soon followed,—the solemn purpose and determination to be free is formed. It was the natural and logical outcome of what had gone before. I am a man. I ought to be free. I will be free. Garrison said, "I am in earnest. I will not excuse. I will not equivocate. I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." And in the same spirit this man says, "I will be free." No emancipation proclamation, no stroke of the pen of the immortal Lincoln, gave freedom to him. He wrote his own emancipation

proclamation. He struck, with his own hands, the fetters from his limbs. On the third of September, 1838, he turned his back forever, upon slavery, and quietly settled down in the town of New Bedford, Mass., where he labored, putting in coal, digging cellars, working on the wharves, and doing whatever he could get to do that was honorable, in order to make an honest living for himself and his family. Let our young people take note of that! It may give them a hint or suggestion that may be of service to them in the future. This man was not ashamed to work. It is hard for us to think of him as putting in coal, digging cellars, and as working as a common laborer on the wharves; and yet he did, and was not ashamed of it either. All honest toil was honorable in his estimation. In his new environments, in order to keep from starving, it was necessary for him to work, and he did work, and work hard. He did not forget, however, in the midst of his struggles to keep soul and body together, that he also had a mind which needed to be fed. He still had a desire to improve himself, the old love for knowledge still burned within him. And hence all the leisure he could command, he gave to the cultivation of his mind. He read books, and he read the newspapers, especially that great fountain-head of anti-slavery thought and sentiment, the *Liberator*. This paper he read carefully week by week, as it came out, with ever increasing interest and profit. And so things went on until 1841, when quite unexpectedly to himself, and only three years after his escape from slavery, he loomed into notice, and then began that marvelous career which ended only two weeks ago last Wednesday. Incredible as it may seem, in the short space of nine years from his escape, he was lecturing to great audiences, both in this country and in England,—captivating them by the magic of his eloquence and by his masterly appeals in behalf of his enslaved brethren, and was also the editor of a paper which took rank with such papers as the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, and others. The most wonderful thing about it all is, not that he was able to talk to great audiences, and edit a paper, but that he was able to do these things so well? Men heard him with astonishment, they questioned and even doubted his story, and wondered whether his speeches and editorials were not written for him. It seemed incredible to them that he could ever have been a slave, or that he had so recently made his escape, or that he had no educational advantages. Some said right out that they did not believe it. Either they must deny his story, or else admit that he was a prodigy. And this they were not ready to do. Even many who were disposed to be friendly were not quite prepared, at that time, to concede the possibility of a negro prodigy. Their doubts did not deter him, however. While they were puzzling their brains, and philosophizing about him, he moved steadily on. Day by day he continued to grow, to expand, to develop. More and more did he attract attention, and more and more did he make his influence felt. It was not long before he won his way to the very front rank, and took his place by the side

of the greatest of the anti-slavery leaders. Fifty-five years ago this man was unknown, save to a few in the town of New Bedford. To-day, he is known everywhere. Fifty-five years ago the name of Frederick Douglass was no more than any other name. To-day, it is one of earth's honored names. On Wednesday, February 20, when he passed away, the whole civilized world took note of it, and acknowledged that one of earth's great men had fallen.

The *Star* of this city, in commenting on his death, says: "Of remarkable men, this country has produced at least its quota, and among those whose title to eminence may not be disputed, the figure of Frederick Douglass is properly conspicuous. Born into captivity, and constrained for years by anti-educational environment, he nevertheless achieved greatness such as rewards the conscientious efforts of but few."

The *Philadelphia Press* says: "The death of Frederick Douglass has been followed by wide public notice of the honors he has received, the consideration with which he has been treated, and the positions he has filled. But it is worth while remembering, in the interest of justice and equality,—twin duties of the Republic,—that these honors and this consideration were both infinitely less than he would have received in any other civilized country in the world." An ex-editor in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* says: "That the whirligig of time brings its revenges was never better illustrated than in the death columns of the newspapers yesterday. In one column, imposing headlines announced the demise of Frederick Douglass, ex-slave, of Talbot County, Maryland. In another, two lines served to chronicle the death of the last Charles Carroll, of Carrollton. The latter inherited great wealth and a proud name in American annals. The other was born a piece of animated chattels, without a name, taking the proud one of the master who owned him, and afterward discarding it for that of Douglass, with a double 'a.' The one came from an ancestor who signed the Declaration of Independence. The other left children and grandchildren who are proud to claim him as an ancestor who helped to make possible the Proclamation of Emancipation. These are our two great charters of liberty. When history makes its final award, it will not give a higher place to Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, for that Magna Charta that left the black man enslaved, than to Frederick Douglass for the labors of a lifetime in securing that other, which washed out the blot on the 'scutcheon of the nation. It was an unconscious realization of the platitude of the Declaration of Independence, that all men are created equal, so long a mockery where all men were not free, that the newspapers should almost overlook the descendant of the 'signer' in paying an obituary tribute to the slave-born hero who earned a renown greater than ancestry ever conferred."

The *Philadelphia Record* says: "Frederick Douglass was the most famous citizen of Washington. No other Washingtonian, white or black, has the world-wide reputation that he had. Indeed, when you stop to think of it, it would be difficult to name any other man, white

or black, in the whole country, who would be as well known in every corner of the world, as is Frederick Douglass. Lincoln and Grant were such men, but I cannot think of anyone now, except President Cleveland and ex-President Harrison, who are, *ex-officio*, so to speak, our world-wide celebrities. Dr. Holmes was the last of our men of letters who had this world-wide fame, and no other class of men or of women seems to have produced an international character in our time. Our great lawyers are perhaps known by lawyers the world over; our great physicians by physicians; clergymen by clergymen; journalists by journalists; business men by business men, and so on; but where is the man or woman who is known in all countries by people of all classes?" These are but samples of the many comments which his death has called forth.

There have been other men in the history of our country, who have risen from humble beginnings to places of power and influence. Lincoln was a rail splitter. Grant was a tanner. Garfield was a canal driver. These men had no such obstacles to overcome, however, as this man had. They were not identified with a despised race. They were not born slaves. Public sentiment was not against them. The schools and colleges of the land were not closed to them. Every avenue was open to them. In his case, however, the very reverse was true. And yet, in spite of his environments, with everything to discourage him: with obstacles like mountains rising before him at every step; by the sheer force of his character, by almost superhuman efforts,—for it seems almost like a miracle now, as we look back over that life,—

"On with toil of heart and knees and hands,  
Through the long gorge to the far light, he won  
His way upward,"

to a place by their side. And there he stands and will stand: not by sufferance either, but by right. Indeed, in view of all the circumstances; when we remember where he began and where he ended; what his environments were, and what he became; he is, it seems to me, the most conspicuous and shining example of the century, of what ability, and pluck, and character, and hard work, can do to carve out a great and honorable career, in spite of adverse circumstances. His example stands colossal, to borrow an expression from Tennyson, yes, that is the only word that expresses it, colossal.

Notice in the second place, if you please, the debt we owe to this man. Why should we, as a race, honor the memory of Frederick Douglass? What has he been to us? What has he done for us? It is impossible fully to estimate his services; nor shall I attempt, in the limited time that is at my command this morning, to do so. A few things may be said, however, that will enable us, in a measure, at least, to approximate the greatness of these services.

In the first place, he consecrated to the welfare of this race, his splendid oratory. Who that ever heard him, can ever forget? Which

of us has not felt the thrill of his magnetic utterances? And they tell us that he was nothing in his later days to what he used to be in the prime of his splendid manhood. This tongue of fiery eloquence he gave to his race, and who can estimate the influence of that voice as it rang out in every part of this country, in behalf of his oppressed and enslaved brethren? Wherever he went he attracted great audiences.

In 1852, at a meeting in one of the large halls in Philadelphia, he spoke for two hours to an audience which filled every seat and packed the aisles. Ten o'clock came, and he stopped, amid the cries of "Go on! Go on!" He stopped and said: "I don't often have the chance to talk to such an audience of friends. You who are standing are certainly wearied. We will take a five minutes' recess and allow any one to retire who wishes to do so." The time was up, and he spoke for another hour and a quarter, but not a man or woman left. Three hours and a quarter is a long time to sit and listen, much less to stand, and yet such was the power of his eloquence, that men forgot that they were standing, and ceased to take note of the time.

A writer in the New York *Evangelist* describes a scene which took place in that city, and which will give us some idea of what the effect of this man was, as he went from place to place, a living protest against the barbarism of slavery. He says: "When Anthony Burns was taken by slave-hunters in the streets of Boston, and Dred Scott was handed over in Missouri to his captors, by a Supreme Court decision, the end of forbearance had come, the limit of endurance was passed, the slave power had humiliated the nation. In those days it was necessary for politicians to 'trim ship' with extraordinary vigilance and adroitness. To them Douglass seemed a spectre of defeat. If he lifted those once manacled arms before the people, even before they caught the tremulous tones of his magical voice, they were swayed by uncontrollable emotion. Once, in the old Broadway Tabernacle, filled up to the dome, as Douglass was announced, the vast crowd sprang up as one man, and the *Marseillaise* hymn, with a refrain, 'Free soil, free speech, free press, free men,' rolled out through doors and windows, blocking the street with lingering listeners for a hundred yards either way. Meanwhile Douglass stood with bowed head, and great tears coursing down his cheeks. His very presence was often more effective than the eloquence of other men."

In the second place, he consecrated to the service of his race his time, and all the powers of his body and mind. He labored incessantly. He was instant in season and out of season. He worked by day and by night. He was at it, and always at it. The wonder is that his iron constitution did not give way. He himself tells us that he used to write all day and then take the train and go off at night and speak, returning the same evening, or early the next morning, only to resume his work at his desk.

In addition to writing and speaking, he was also an active agent in the Underground Railroad, and from his house many a fugitive crossed the line into Canada. He labored also in many other ways.

Some men have said that Douglass was selfish; that he always had an eye to his own interest; implying that it was not the race that he was thinking of so much as himself. For this base insinuation, for that is the only term which properly characterizes it, I have only the utmost contempt. When I think of how richly this man was endowed, of the great services which he rendered to freedom and remember that his salary was only \$450 a year; when I think of his self-sacrificing efforts to carry on his paper, the *North Star*, putting every cent that he could into it, even mortgaging the house over his head, I say I do not believe it. I have read his life carefully, and I have had the honor of knowing him intimately for a number of years, and as I look back over those years, I can recall nothing that would in any way, justify such an accusation. In the summary which he gives at the close of Part II of his life, we get a true insight into the spirit which animated him during his long and eventful life, as well as the motives which prompted him to make a record of that life. He says: "It will be seen in these pages that I have lived several lives in one: first, the life of slavery; secondly, the life of a fugitive from slavery; thirdly, the life of comparative freedom; fourthly, the life of conflict and battle; and fifthly, the life of victory, if not complete, at least assured. To those who suffered in slavery I can say, I, too, have suffered. To those who have taken some risks and encountered hardships in the flight from bondage, I can say, I, too, have endured and risked. To those who have battled for liberty, brotherhood and citizenship, I can say, I, too, have battled. And to those who have lived to enjoy the fruits of victory, I can say, I, too, live and rejoice. If I have pushed my example too prominently for the good taste of my Caucasian readers, I beg them to remember that I have written in part for the encouragement of a class whose aspirations need the stimulus of success. I have aimed to show them that knowledge can be obtained under difficulties; that poverty may give place to competency; that obscurity is not an absolute bar to distinction, and that a way is open to welfare and happiness to all who will resolutely and wisely pursue that way; that neither slavery, stripes, imprisonment nor proscription need extinguish self-respect, crush manly ambition or paralyze effort; that no power outside of himself can prevent a man from sustaining an honorable character and a useful relation to his day and generation; that neither institutions nor friends can make a race to stand unless it has strength in its own legs; that there is no power in the world that can be relied upon to help the weak against the strong, or the simple against the wise; that races, like individuals, must stand or fall by their own merits. I have urged upon them self-reliance, self-respect, industry, perseverance, and economy. Forty years of my life have been given to the cause of my people and if I had forty

years more, they should all be sacredly given to the same great cause."

There is not a taint of selfishness there. If any man ever lived who carried this race upon his heart, who desired to see it succeed, and who labored earnestly for its freedom, for its elevation, for its protection under the laws and in order that it might have a fair chance in the race of life, that man was Frederick Douglass. He loved this race with all the depth and strength of his great soul. One of the most touching things I ever heard of him was told me by a friend. He happened to call at the house while Mr. Douglass was preparing his great speech on Southern Outrages. He took this friend into his study and read him portions of that speech, and when he came to the part which described the sufferings of our poor brethren in the South, great strong man though he was, the tears ran down his cheeks and choked his utterance so that he was unable to proceed. Tell me that this man was selfish, that he was thinking only of himself? It will be a long time before this black race will have another Douglass to lean upon; a long time before it will find another man to carry it in his heart of hearts, as he did. "Forty years of my life I have given to the cause of my people, and if I had forty more, they should be all sacredly given to the same great cause," is not the utterance of selfishness but of a great soul whose chief desire was the good of his people. As the exiled Jews felt toward the Holy City, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy," so felt he toward this race. It was ever uppermost in his thoughts, and never did he forget it for a moment.

In the third place, it was due largely to the influence of Mr. Douglass, that the colored man was allowed to shoulder his musket and strike a blow for his own freedom and for the preservation of the Union. In chapter eleventh of his *Life*, entitled "Secession and War," he says: "When the government persistently refused to employ colored troops; when the emancipation proclamation of General John C. Fremont, in Missouri, was withdrawn; when slaves were being returned from our lines to their masters; when Union soldiers were stationed about the farm-houses of Virginia to guard and protect the master in holding his slaves; when Union soldiers made themselves more active in kicking colored men out of their camps than in shooting rebels; when even Mr. Lincoln could tell the poor negro that "he was the cause of the war," I still believed, and spoke as I believed, all over the North, that the mission of the war was the liberation of the slave, as well as the salvation of the Union: and hence, from the first, I reproached the North that they fought the rebels with only one hand, when they might strike effectively with two;—that they fought with their soft white hand, while they kept their black iron hand chained and helpless behind them; that they fought the effect, while they protected the

cause, and that the Union cause would never prosper till the war assumed an anti-slavery attitude and the negro was enlisted on the loyal side. In every way possible,—in the columns of my paper and on the platform, by letters to friends at home and abroad, I did all that I could to impress this conviction upon this country."

And when the general government finally came to its senses, and Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts, was given permission to raise two colored regiments, it was through the columns of his paper that the cry rang out, "Men of color, To arms! To arms!" It was his pen that wrote the burning words, "Liberty won by white men would lose half its lustre. Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow." "Better even die free, than to live slaves." "By every consideration which binds you to your enslaved fellow countrymen and to the peace and welfare of your country—by every aspiration which you cherish for the freedom and equality by yourselves and your children; by all the ties of blood and identity which make us one with the brave black men now fighting our battles in Louisiana and in South Carolina, I urge you to fly to arms and smite with death the power that would bury the government and your liberty in the same hopeless grave." He also took a very active interest in securing just and fair treatment for the colored soldiers, after his services were accepted. To this end he not only wrote and spoke, but visited Washington and had an interview with President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, in which he urged the right of the colored soldiers to receive the same wages as the white soldiers; the right of the colored soldier to receive the same protection when taken prisoner, and be exchanged as readily and on the same terms, as any other prisoner; that if Jefferson Davis should shoot or hang colored soldiers in cold blood, the United States Government should, without delay, retaliate in kind and degree upon Confederate prisoners in its hands, and that, when colored soldiers performed great and uncommon services on the battlefield, they should be rewarded by distinctions and promotions, precisely as white soldiers are rewarded for like services." And he never ceased to press this matter upon the attention of those in authority until the end he aimed at was accomplished.

In the fourth place, he rendered also most important services in bringing about the enfranchisement of the race. Even Mr. Garrison and other anti-slavery leaders questioned, at first, the wisdom of such a step, but this man never doubted, never hesitated. To him suffrage was necessary to enable the negro to protect himself, and hence, to it he addressed himself with all the earnestness of his nature, using all the means within his power to secure it for him. "From the first," he says, "I saw no chance of bettering the condition of the freedman until he should cease to be merely a freedman and should become a citizen. I insisted that there was no safety for him or for anybody else in America outside the American government; that to guard, protect



and maintain his liberty, the freedman should have the ballot; that the liberties of the American people were dependent upon the ballot box, the jury box, and the cartridge box; that without these, no class of people could live and flourish in this country; and this was now the word for the hour with me, and the word to which the people of the North willingly listened, when I spoke. Hence, regarding as I did, the elective franchise as the one great power by which all civil rights are obtained, enjoyed and maintained under our form of government, and the one without which freedom to any class is delusive, if not impossible, I set myself to work with whatever force and energy I possessed, to secure this power for the newly emancipated millions." With this end in view he, with other gentlemen, brought the matter to the attention of President Johnson, and the next morning published a letter which was very widely commented upon, and which had the effect of bringing the subject prominently before the country. He also spoke very earnestly before the National Loyalists' Convention which met in Philadelphia in September, 1866. He also labored personally with many Senators, when the matter was before that body, visiting them daily and pressing upon them the necessity and the justice of the measure. And so he continued to work until he had the satisfaction of seeing it enacted into law, in the form of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

There are many other things that might be mentioned under the general head which we are considering, but time will not permit. Suffice it to say that, during the last half century, there has been no measure looking to the betterment of our condition as a people in this country, in which he has not been a leading actor. For more than fifty years he has allowed no opportunity to pass unimproved, in which, either by his voice or pen, he could make the way easier and the future brighter for this race. Whenever we have needed a defender, he has always been on hand. Whenever there were rights to be asserted, he has always stood ready to make the demand, never lagging behind, but always at the front. For more than fifty years he has stood as a sentinel on the watch-tower, guarding with the most jealous care the interests of this race. I remember how I felt when he was appointed Minister to Haiti. I did not want him to go, and I wrote and told him so, and told him why. It was because I felt that we could not spare him out of the country. It seemed to me that our interests would not be quite so safe if he were away. The very fact that he was here filled me with the assurance that all would be well. And this is the way, I think, we all felt a sense of security in the consciousness of the fact that he was in our midst.

In politics he was a Republican. He loved the grand old party of liberty,—but when it proved recreant to its trust; when it was ready to sacrifice the negro, to trample him in the dust, to put him aside, out of deference to popular prejudice: then it was that he turned upon it,

and cauterized it with actual lightning. I shall never forget the article which he wrote on the reasons for the defeat of the Republican party, which was published, I think, in *Harper's Weekly*. It was a masterly arraignment of that party for its cowardice and its perfidy, and showed how deeply concerned he was for the welfare of this race, and how he was ever looking out for its interests. In the twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is represented in the great day of solemn account, as saying to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." And this is what we can all say, to-day, as a race, as we think of this man. He has been all to us that is here implied. In our distress and suffering, in our hours of loneliness and despondency, when we have felt discouraged and sick at heart, he has stood by us, and watched over us, and ministered to our necessities, and cheered us by his voice and presence. What is it that he has not done? In what way has he not manifested his interest? What more could he have done than he has done?

There are many other things that I would like to speak of, had I the time. I would like to speak of some of his personal traits and characteristics: of his gentleness, his sympathetic nature, his tenderness, his generosity, his great-heartedness. There was nothing mean, or close-fisted, or penurious, about him. God blessed him with means, and he used it for the glory of his Maker, and the good of his fellow men. He was all the time giving to some good cause, or reaching out a hand to help the needy. We went to him when we started the movement for the purchase of the building on Eleventh street, for the use of the Young Men's Christian Association,—which was made necessary because black men were shut out of the one on New York avenue; let it be said to their shame! I never pass that building and look up at the name inscribed upon it,—“Christian Association,”—without feeling that it is a libel upon the holy religion of Jesus Christ. As well write it over the portals of perdition, as there, and expect me to believe it. It is a lie! The great man whom we honor to-day, utterly loathed the spirit which made such a lie possible, and which, years ago, nearly drove, and to-day, is driving, some of our most gifted men into infidelity. If there is any Christianity there, it is a spurious Christianity. It is not the Christianity of the Bible. There was no colorphobia in Christ, and there is none in Christianity, whatever may be the practice of so-called Christian men and women.

When we were making arrangements to purchase the building on Eleventh street, as I have said, we, in company with the International Secretary, Mr. Hunten, called upon Mr. Douglass, and laid the matter before him. He listened to us, and when we were through said,

"Gentlemen, I am not a rich man,—I cannot give you as large a subscription as I would like to, but I will do something. Put me down for two hundred dollars." And that is but a sample of what he was constantly doing.

Many years ago, in the city of Baltimore, before he made his escape from slavery, while he was working in one of the shipyards, he was set upon by some of the white laborers, mobbed, and dreadfully beaten, and came very near losing his life. The cry was, "Kill the nigger!" Among those who took up that cry, and who tried very hard to kill him, was a man who, up to a short time ago, was still living in Baltimore. He was then old, decrepit, sick, and in great destitution. Mr. Douglass heard of it, called upon him, spoke kindly to him and, in parting, left a ten dollar bill in his hand. It was a beautiful thing for him to do. It was a noble thing, and it was just like him. He was all the time doing noble things. God bless his memory and give us more men like him.

I might also speak of his love of the beautiful, in art and in nature. At the great Columbian Exposition, the Art Gallery was a constant delight to him. He reveled in its treasures. And how he loved all nature, the flowers, and the grass, and the trees, and the birds, and the drifting clouds, and the blue sky, and the stars. He had a poet's love for nature. With Wordsworth he could say:

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

How often I have heard him speak, as I have sat with him on the front porch of his beautiful home, or under the trees on the hillside, with the lovely landscape stretching out on all sides around us,—of the pleasure which it gave him, the satisfaction,—how it rested him to commune with nature.

I might also speak of his love for music, his passionate love for music, especially the music of the violin. He had a kind of reverence for that instrument. It seemed to him almost like a living thing. How lovingly he handled it. With what enthusiasm he spoke of it. He could hardly resist the temptation of speaking to a man who carried a violin. He used to say "No one man can be an enemy of mine who loves the violin." He never missed an opportunity of hearing a great violinist. He heard them all. It was his favorite instrument. Not even Paganini himself had a more passionate love for it. He delighted also in vocal music, especially in sacred music,—in the old hymns of Zion that breathe the sentiment of love, of trust, and of hope. One of his favorite hymns was:

"Jesus, my Saviour, to Bethlehem came,  
Seeking for me! Seeking for me!"

With the refrain:

Oh, it was wonderful—blest be His name!  
Seeking for me, for me!"

Another was:

"In Thy cleft, O Rock of Ages  
Hide Thou me;  
When the fitful tempest rages,  
Hide Thou me;  
Where no mortal arm can sever  
From my heart Thy love forever,  
Hide me, O Thou Rock of Ages,  
Safe in Thee."

That hymn I shall never forget. The last time it was my privilege to be at his house, only a few weeks before he passed away, after dinner was over, we all repaired to the parlor, and he himself suggested that we should have some music. His grandson Joseph was there, and we knew therefore that there was a rich treat in store for us. In the singing he was the principal figure. Standing in the broad space opening into the hall, with violin in hand, he struck up the last mentioned hymn, "In Thy cleft, O Rock of Ages!" and sang it through to the very end, with a pathos that moved us all. We all spoke of it afterwards. It seemed to so take hold of him. The closing lines especially, seemed to touch the great depths of his nature. I can almost hear now, the deep mellow tones of that voice, and feel the solemnity that pervaded the room as he sang the words:

"In the sight of Jordan's billow,  
Let Thy bosom be my pillow;  
Hide me, O Thou Rock of Ages,  
Safe in Thee,"

as if he had a kind of presentiment that the end was near, that he was already standing on the very brink of that Jordan over which he has since passed, and over which, one by one, we shall all pass. The prayer which he uttered that night,

"Let Thy bosom be my pillow,  
Hide me, O Thou Rock of Ages,  
Safe in Thee."

I believe has been answered. His noble head was pillowed, I believe, on the bosom of the "Strong Son of God," when he fell asleep in death, and that he is safe in Him.

It is hard to realize that he is no longer among us; that we shall no longer see his noble form, nor hear his eloquent voice, nor receive from him the gracious benediction of that radiant smile which so often played upon his face.

He is gone, but the memory of his great deeds remains. Never, can we forget him. Never, can we cease to hold him in grateful remembrance. What he was, and what he did, will remain to us forever, a joy and an inspiration.

“Mourn for the man of amplest influence,  
Yet clearest of ambitious crime:  
Our greatest, yet with least pretence,  
Rich in saving common sense,  
And, as the greatest only are,  
In his simplicity, sublime.  
O good gray head which all men knew,  
O voice, from which their omens all men drew,  
O iron nerve to true occasion true;  
Oh! fallen at length, that tower of strength,  
Which stood foursquare to all the winds that blew.”

To those of us who are members of the race with which he was identified, let me say, Let us keep his shining example ever before us. Let each one of us, individually and personally, endeavor to catch his noble spirit; to walk upon the same lofty plane of a pure and exalted manhood, upon which he moved; and together, in the consciousness of the fact that he is no longer with us, let us consecrate ourselves, with whatever powers we may possess, to the furtherance of the great cause to which he gave his life.

And may I not also, in his name, appeal to the members of the opposite race, especially to those who revere his memory, to join with us in continuing to fight for the great principles for which he contended, until, in all sections of this fair land, there shall be equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race, color, or previous condition of servitude; until to borrow the language of another, “character, not color, shall stamp the man and woman,” and until black and white shall clasp friendly hands, in the consciousness of the fact that we are all brethren, and that God is the father of us all.