

November 19, 1841  
Remond, Charles Lenox  
*Liberator*

Mr. Charles Lenox Remond, a gentleman of color [...] and was received with the loudest marks of approbation. He said—In rising to make some remarks on the great cause which has brought us together, I wish to preface them with one request: it is, [...] those by whom I am surrounded will do me the [...] of listening to me as attentively and as noiselessly as they may—partly in consideration of mine health, and partly for their own sake. (Hear.)  
[...] for one thing more than another, on the present occasion, it is to utter a few sentiments that are founded on the truth, and nothing [...] truth, and such being the broad and stable principle on which are grounded the [...] I would propound, and the facts to which I would direct attention. I trust that you will consider that anything which may fall from me [...] to be directed to any one sect or portion of the oppressed, but that my words are designed to a general and unbounded application to all [who] suffer under persecution or sorrow, under the [...] of the enthraller. (Cheers) There is not a single individual, of all who surround me in this assembly, who may not have it in his power to promote and forward the glorious cause, to the advocacy of which I have devoted myself; nor is there one, [...] and benefit of whose exertions in behalf of [...] unhappy] slave will not be felt and appreciated in the remote land from which I have travelled [...]. It is not the lack of friends, nor of means, nor of publications devoted to our interests, which prevents our progressing as rapidly in this holy [...] as we would wish to progress; but I know from long experience that there is wanting, on the

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[...] of the people of Ireland, England, and Scotland, strong and thorough conviction of the service and [profit] which each individual man may, in his own [...] render to the cause of liberty, by his own [...] to our ranks. (Hear, hear.) I mean not to deny that in your enlightened and intellectual [...] friends, there are many wise and good men who sympathise most cordially with us, and whose hearts bleed as they think of the heartless cruelty with which the slave is victimised; but keenly though they feel his wrongs, and deeply though they regret [sorrows], they are deterred from taking an active [role] in the efforts now making to restore him to the [...] of liberty from the mistaken and most infatuated [...] that their assistance and co-operation could be of little service. This is a fatal error, and [...] against which I cannot too emphatically fore- [...] you. (Hear, and cheers.) It is the proud prerogative of all men—even of the most lowly and un- [...]—to conduce in their own persons to the [erance] of the sacred cause of liberty and tolerance. Nor is it in words only that we should testify our love of freedom, and detestation of oppression. It is very easy to come here and pass resolutions laudatory of the one, and condemnatory of the other, but little advance will be made towards freedoms goal by our resolving, unless we take care that the tone, tenor, and practice of our lives shall [...] with our professions. How fondly do I [...] that all in this meeting—yea [...] [...] [...] even throughout the wide extent of your country—maybe induced to regard the subject in this light, and to model the practice of their lives ac-

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cordingly! I stand here to advocate a cause which, above all others, should be, and ever has been, dear to the Irish heart—the cause of liberty. Nor do I intend to ask from any Irishman that which I would not always most willingly and delightfully cede to him, if the occasion should ever arise.

(Hear and cheers.) The request which I would make of you is the request of suffering humanity—the observations I would direct to you are the observations of [...] and of truth: and, such being the case, surely there is no Irishman, worthy the name, who will consider that my request is unreasonable, or my observations ill-timed or out of place. The request [...] I now make, and have often made, is, that those who hear me will forget complexion, and that when the hateful truth is naked to their ears, that [...] exists in America, they will be inclined to consider the subject not as one of color, but of kind [...] one, the merits of which are to be decided [not by] the hue of the skin, but rather one the test therereof should be the nature and character of the being who is enslaved. Enough! he is a man, and so are ye. (Cheers.) Our love of freedom, our execration of tyrants and tyranny, are founded not merely upon our individual principles, but also upon a grand and heavenly principle which we draw from the source whence all we have of noble and of [good] is derived—the source of holy writ. This is the principle which sways the mind of the society which I represent—such, too, I feel assured is the principle of the society I address; and while we can, with truth, make such an averment, there is not a slaveholder in America—there is not a slaveholder

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in Cuba—there is not a slaveholder in India, but must admit our principle to be good. They acknowledge that principle in their words, but act in defiance of it by their promotion of slavery. We, also, recognize the same heavenly principle, but be [...] ours to act in accordance with it, by loathing, [...], condemning, and trampling under foot

the unholy cause of bondage, meet it where we may.

Many there are, I grieve to say, who are deterred from the consideration of this subject through a vain and silly thought that the question is an elaborate and complicated one, and that in the discussion of it they would become bewildered and mentally blinded, as it were. 'Tis false, most corruptly false, to say so. There is no complication in the matter. The road lies before us, clear, straight, and unwarped as is the path of truth and justice. The question is resolved into two words only—liberty or slavery? And all men who acknowledge and reverence the one as pure and holy, and who loathe and execrate the other as hateful and infamous, ought to come forward and speak the sentiments of their hearts.

These are the few things I had intended to give utterance to as prefatory to the facts I will briefly lay before you in seconding the resolution commended to my charge—after which I will take occasion to make another motion in connexion with that brought forward by my friend Allen.

The question before us—namely, that of slavery as it exists in the United States—is probably of greater moment and importance than that of the same evil as it may exist in any other land. This I say not merely because there are in the United

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The question now before us—namely, that of slavery as it exists in the United States—is probably of greater moment and importance than that of the same evil as it may exist in any other land. This I say not merely because there are in the United

States a vast number of slaves, but also because I know that there are very many countries which, in this as in other respects, take their cue (so to use the word) from America; and of this I feel assured, that while the eyes of the whole world are directed to my own guilty country, the fingers of the wise and of the good in all lands are also pointed ignominiously at that glorious charter which she pretends to have adopted as the rule of her life, but which, day by day, desecrates and dishonors—therefore it is that I consider the behavior of America on the slavery question, is looked upon with greater attention, and she exercises in this respect a more paramount influence by her example than does any other country. (Hear, hear.) I know that in the pictures which I have drawn of the atrocities to which America is witness, and in the descriptions I have given of the horrors of the slave trade in that country, I am said to have been too severe and rather exaggerated. This too was said of the first man who ever [...] the question; but in my own case, as in his, my own breast tells me the charge is unfounded, and the accusation will only have the effect of making me more zealous and energetic in the vindication of truth and humanity. (Cheers.) Some there are who are prevented from joining in the great struggle wherein we are engaged from a false and corrupt pride, for they consider (or feign to consider) that the vindication of the slaves' rights is an undignified employment; but I tell them it is an employment more dignified, more noble, more exalted than any other whatsoever in which man can be engaged. (Cheers.) It is not because the slave

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is a poor man, nor an ignorant man, nor a lowly man, that I profess myself his friend—it is because he is a despised man, an outraged man, a trampled man, a brutified man—one who, being a man, as the best of you are men, is yet herded with the things that crawl and the beasts that grovel. (Loud cheers.) It is because I know that He who has promulgated to us all truth—who is Himself the fountain of justice—the source of truth—the perfection of loveliness—was announced from the hill of Sinai, that man cannot attempt the bondage of his fellow-man without being guilty of a deadly crime. (Loud cheering.)

I mean not to draw an afflicting picture of the tortures to which the slave is subjected in the United States, and thus, by harrowing your feeling, enlist your sympathies. Sufficient to say he is a man. You are yourselves of his nature, feelings, and character—in his sufferings *you* are tortured—in his indignities *you* are insulted. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) What care I how a man is murdered?—whether he be drowned, strangled, shot, stabbed, or beheaded, is to me indifferent. I only know that he is murdered, and it little boots to him or me whether the wretch be prostrated dead upon the plain in a moment of time—or whether he is murdered piecemeal in being condemned to a hateful, lingering existence, from which man would be relieved by death, and whereof the only solace is the hope of the grave. (Great applause.)

It has been said that for slavery as it exists in British India there is a ‘Balm in Gilead,’ and it is with pleasure I assent to the proposition. (Hear,

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My bosom swells with pride and pleasure, when I reflect that I am standing before Irishmen—men who in the year 1841, have the name of philanthropists. (Hear, hear, and loud cheers.) Be it yours, my friends, to retain the lofty title, conditioned as you are as to your political influences, rather than having the name of republicans and democrats, to nurture slavery, and to countenance oppression. (Loud cheers.) Give me a monarchy—give me an oligarchy—give me an autocracy—yea, or even give me a despotic and tyrannical government, if, despite the pride of place and the ‘proud man’s contumely,’ I see the living spirit of liberty glowing bright and imperishable in the people’s breast, rather than a republicanism whose watchwords are, ‘Equality to all, and mastery to none,’ but whose deeds belie their splendid promises, and whose actions are those of oppression and persecution. (Cheers.) ‘Despotism’ is a fearful scourge; but there is no delusion in the word. ‘Despotism’ is not a sound which wins softly, but deceptively, on the ear, lulling it to ruin: it closes no man’s mouth—it steals not away the sense—it blinds not the victim; stern and detestable in itself, it falls strongly and detestably on the ear; but give it to me, with all its horrors, rather than that which is, in itself, a lie—professing, indeed, to be all that is sweet and goodly, but doing such deeds as, to think of, makes men’s blood to

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freeze. (Immense applause.)

Flattering though this applause cannot but prove to my feelings, I will, however, experience a sentiment of far greater rapture, if, in some six or eight months hence, when in my own country, I shall learn that the call which I this evening make upon you has been responded to, not in words merely, but in deeds: then, indeed, will I feel great delight in having visited your Hibernian country; for I will know that I stood before men who have not merely professed their love and devotion for liberty, but whose life and actions are testimonials of the sincerity of the words they have uttered in witness thereof. (Cheers.)

One word more with reference to British India. It has been my high privilege, for the last few years, to have been associated with George Thompson, the eloquent advocate of the slave in the West Indies. He has been successful in his noble enterprise as regards the West Indies; and never have I listened to him for half an hour upon this subject, that I did not feel the truth of what Mr. Allen avers, that if Great Britain would strike the chains off the slaves in America and elsewhere, it must be by giving encouragement to India. In British India is to be found the instrument which will put to death American slavery. If British India may produce, in as great excellence and abundance, those things which are now imported from America at the expense of slave toil, why should not Britain give the preference to the former country? It is only consistent with her well-known love of liberty that she should do so. Look to the confessions of the slaveholders

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themselves, and you will find it there avowed that the people of England, Ireland, and Scotland, have this power vested in their own hands. Many worthy persons in my own country are deterred from giving their aid and co-operation to the anti-slavery cause, from an apprehension which, to my mind, is exceedingly silly and unfounded. (Hear.) Their objection to do so is, that they imagine the slaveholders have, in their own hands, the means of putting down all abolitionists, for that they (the slaveholders) have threatened that, in case an effort were made to emancipate the slaves, they would dissolve the American Union. Very many good and well-intentioned men in America would have lent us their assistance long ago, were it not for this threat, that the slaveholders would dissolve the American Union. Now, if in this assertion there was or could be one iota of truth—the smallest particle of rationality—I would grant that the objection should have some weight; but the thing is preposterous; beyond all parallel. (Hear, hear.) Why, the very thought is absurdity. What does the American Union mean? Nothing more than this, that the twenty-six States of America are joined together in government and civil rights. The Union is but a parchment document, and as there is no hill so lofty that it may not be surmounted, no space of ocean so boundless that it may not be traversed, there is nothing more possible than that the Union might be dissolved. But is it probable? Suppose that the Union were dissolved to-morrow, by what power or agency, let me ask, would it be possible for the holders to retain their slaves greater in number than

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themselves? (Loud cries of 'hear, hear.') To whom should the slaveholders look for sympathy, co-operation, and support, in their endeavors to keep these wretches in bondage? Will they look to the free States? Certainly not, for the very deed of dissolution precludes the possibility of that. Will they look to Mexico? No; for the Mexicans regard them with an eye of the rankest jealousy. Will they look to Canada? The thought is absurd. Will they look to the West Indies? What! ask men who are themselves but just liberated to aid in forging chains for other wretches! Who will believe it? Spain is the only land to which they can turn their eyes; but Spain has her own foes to trouble her, and the demon of slavery lurks within her own confines. Where, then, will they look for sympathy, and whither will they fly for aid? (Hear.) Every door is shut against them. Ah, Sir, believe me, the moment when the American Union is dissolved, that instant the power of the slaveholder is prostrated in the dust. Hopeless, helpless, friendless, they become an isolated class of beings, having nothing to depend on but their own strength, and that is weakness indeed. Then will rouse the crushed worm, turning on its torturer, and, in the fierce indignation of outraged men, the slaves will demand the right of measuring arms with their masters. (Immense cheering.)

[A voice from the gallery—"Heaven speed the day!"]

Mr. Remond—I do not think I shall myself live to see that day, but that such would be the effect of a dissolution of the American Union I feel confident-

themselves? (Loud cries of 'hear, hear.') To whom should the slaveholders look for sympathy, co-operation, and support, in their endeavors to keep these wretches in bondage? Will they look to the free States? Certainly not, for the very deed of dissolution precludes the possibility of that. Will they look to Mexico? No; for the Mexicans regard them with an eye of the rankest jealousy. Will they look to Canada? The thought is absurd. Will they look to the West Indies? What! ask men who are themselves but just liberated to aid in forging chains for other wretches! Who will believe it? Spain is the only land to which they can turn their eyes; but Spain has her own foes to trouble her, and the demon of slavery lurks within her own confines. Where, then, will they look for sympathy, and whither will they fly for aid? (Hear.)

Every door is shut against them. Ah, Sir, believe me, the moment when the American Union is dissolved, that instant the power of the slaveholder is prostrated in the dust. Hopeless, helpless, friendless, they become an isolated class of beings, having nothing to depend on but their own strength, and that is weakness indeed. Then will rouse the crushed worm, turning on its torturer, and, in the fierce indignation of outraged men, the slaves will demand the right of measuring arms with their masters. (Immense cheering.)

A voice from the gallery—"Heaven speed the day!"

Mr. Remond—I do not think I shall myself live to see that day, but that such would be the effect of a dissolution of the American Union I feel confident-

ly assured (hear.) Where is the man, who, if asked to become a slave, would not hurl back the offer indignantly in the teeth of the oppressor?— Nay, where is the woman—where the child? The slaves of the United States are men, women, and children; and that they are as worthy this appellation, nay, worthier, perhaps, than the denizens of more favored lands, is amply testified by their patient and enduring conduct under contumely and outrage, for they, like yourselves, have preferred rather to suffer wrong, than to do wrong. (loud cheers.) I care not, then, for the insolent threat of those contumacious masters, for if the slaveholders of our country were to dissolve the Union some time next year—if it were to be dissolved at twelve o'clock in the day, it is my firm conviction that before one o'clock (and that is but a single hour) there could not be found a solitary slave throughout the wide dominion of our land. (cheers.) To suppose, therefore, that the slaveholders are serious in their haughty threat, bears absurdity on its very front: they'll never do it. They would not be so foolish—so thoroughly destitute of common sense as to dissolve the American Union, because forsooth it might be forbidden them to expose their slaves for sale, whip them with thongs, or brand them with iron within the confines of the land.

Is there amongst yourselves, think you, a single man who would be so detestably cruel, so utterly heartless, as to brand his sheep, his oxen, or his horse? For the sake of human nature, I trust there is not one; yet in the guilty land from which I have travelled hither, you will find men calling them-

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find it in their hearts to stand unmoved and [...] by, while the sleeve is turned up of the wretched helot's garment, and the noise of the red-hot iron, branding the word 'slave' in the flesh of his fellow-man, is hissing in his ears (sensation.) I ask of you are you men? and, being men, will you acknowledge or endure such a system as this? (no, no.) Who is there that can visit the Egyptian Hall in London, and having seen there the picture of a slave-market, will not turn away in disgust and indignation, and vow himself from that moment out the inveterate and implacable enemy of that atrocious system which brings ruin, infamy, and disgrace, on human nature, and which can have first originated only in motives unearthly and infernal? Look at this state of things, and, freemen as you are yourselves, say will you suffer your fellow-men thus to be trampled on, and insulted with impunity?— Forget the past, but dwell with minds, calm as the intensity of your honest indignation will suffer them to be calm, on the present condition of the slave, and prove that you are worthy of the freedom you yourself enjoy by aiding to unshackle him (loud applause.) Only picture to your mind's eye one man presuming in the face of high heaven, and before the civilized world, to spread such wild havoc among his fellow-men as that which I have seen spread by a single slaveholder! When I see a woman condemned to wear such a collar as it were cruelty to bind around the neck of a dog, working in that collar, eating in it, aye, even sleeping in it,

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for no other crime than merely that of having asked permission to visit her child in an adjoining plantation—when, I repeat, I look on sights like these, my frame shudders with disgust—my blood freezes, and my heart bursts with indignation as I exclaim, ‘If these things be the result of Christianity or of patriotism, may heaven deliver me from the influence of either!’ (loud cheers.) Such is the system which prevails in many districts of the United States—such the hateful system that I beg of you to aid me in destroying. Who, Sir, that looks around and views such scenes as have met my eye full often, could believe that we have the authority of heaven itself for averring, ‘that God has made of one blood the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth?’ Yet, so it is. What I now demand of all Irishmen is, not merely that they should assent to the resolutions we may here propose, nor be content in merely promising that they will further my plans, but that their whole lives will be a system of unceasing warfare against the inhuman principles of slavery. And, in the name of truth and of justice—in the name of Him who is the God of truth and justice—in the name of dishonored humanity, and of the unhappy slave, whatever be the hue of the skin he wears, whether white or black, blue (if such might be,) or red—I call upon you, Irishmen, to extend to the oppressed and enthralled man, under whatsoever sun he may be found, that aid and co-operation, that sympathy and affection, which you would wish, were you in similar circumstances, should be extended to yourselves. (Cheers.)

I regret not, my friends, having made allusion to

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the brandings and other inhuman cruelties practiced by the slaveholders on their unhappy victims—for, as soon will I believe the school-boy's wild and idle tale of the phantom who affrighted him, as believe that anything I have uttered can shock the delicacy of any one around me. The recital will, I know, have a salutary effect upon the well organized mind. It may shock the sensibility, but it will inspirit you the rather to use your best exertions to annihilate this cruel system. I mean not here to be understood as saying, that every slaveholder in America brands his slaves—I care not, though there be but one branded slave, it is enough for me. That one being, so disfigured and disgraced, is a man, and it behoves not those, who are of the same kind, to stand quiescently by, and suffer such an outrage on their fellow-man. (Cheers.) Yet such an outrage is actually attempted under the American laws. Oh, let such laws be disowned and repudiated by all who love liberty, and abhor oppression. Let Irishmen shun a land, however goodly, however fair, where deeds are done which call to heaven for vengeance—let them say to the Americans, 'Long have we wished to visit your country; but never will we soil a foot by planting it on your shore until such enormities as now disfigure your national character shall have been done away with and atoned for.'—(Cheers.) Let them tear the flag of freedom down, which flaunts absurdly over a recreant land which has nurtured oppression and makes liberty a mockery, while she pretends to extol its sacred cause.

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deeply I venerate that good and mighty man, who has put himself forth and undaunted and fearless champion of liberty and the rights of man in every clime the sun adorns. (A peal of applause here burst from the whole assembly which almost made the walls to shake, and which continued for several minutes.) I could wish, my friends, that if you consider me worthy the honor of your approbation, you would do me the favor of applauding with somewhat more of discretion and good judgment. I was about to say something with reference to a man who is justly dear to all your hearts, but you interrupted me in the middle of my sentence, and I am not sure that I have not forgotten all that I intended to utter.

(Laughter and cheers.) When, not many months ago, Mr. O'Connell, in the discharge of his duty as a public man and the advocate of liberty, asserted in his place in the House of Commons that there were to be found in Virginia many men who were not merely slaveholders, but even slave-breeders, and furthermore, that the gentleman who discharged the office of American ambassador at the English court, was himself a slaveholder, this latter person, instead of disproving the averment, challenged Mr. O'Connell to fight a duel. (Laughter.) As soon as he did so, and that the fact of his being a slaveholder had become known, that instant all Ireland should have raised her voice against him, and he should have been politely requested to pack up and return to his own estates, for that Irishmen were not in the habit of being called out to fight for having told the truth. (Cheers and laughter.) What a pretty fellow was this to represent a great nation at the court of St.

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*Liberator*

James's!—a man who felt himself so troubled and scandalized by the truth, that the fighting of a duel was the only device he could have recourse to for healing his wounded honor. Such a man was not fit to have had a local habitation among a free people. He ought to have been ashamed to have visited free and happy England. Can any more eloquent evidence be adduced of the state of things in my own guilty land than that which is comprised in this fact, that America dispatches as her ambassador to the Court of St. James's, not the representative of human liberty—not a man whose life bore evidence of the zeal and faithfulness wherewith he obeyed the doctrines of republicanism, but a man who is himself actually one of the greatest slaveholders in the United States! Should the words which I now utter chance to reach the ears of Mr. Stevenson, it may be, perhaps, that he will challenge me, too, to fight a duel with him; but he should wait until I had learned the art of doing so first, and I fear that so long a postponement might be considered inconvenient. (Laughter.) But perhaps I am wandering from my subject. I hold in my hand a resolution, which I will now read for you, and for which I am anxious for your assenting voices. It is this—

'That we receive in the fullest acceptance the scripture declaration 'that God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth:' and that to attach any stamp of inferiority or degradation to any portion of the human family, however the Creator has dyed their skins of a deeper hue, is, in our deliberate opinion, at once wicked and anti-Christian,'

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Mr. Remond continued at considerable length, and having animadverted in fluent and forcible language of the sinful and infamous prejudice against [.....] cluded his eloquent appeal in the following words: And now my friends, in resuming my seat, I have nothing further to say unless it be to express my unfeigned gratitude, and that of the Anti-Slavery Society, to the proprietor of this house, who, in the most generous manner, has laid it gratuitously at our disposal. (Cheers.) It is a new edifice, and if I were asked to what purpose a structure intended for the service of the Irish public should on the first night of its opening be devoted, I would unhesitatingly say that the project which would most ennoble it and that which would be dearest to the Irish heart, would be such an one as we who are here assembled within these walls are now engaged in—a project which derives its origin from the best and purest feelings of our nature, and whose object is none other than that holy and god-like one of elevating to the station and glorious dignity of a man, him who is degraded and dishonored almost beyond the level of the beast. If in the course of the remarks which I have this evening offered, I may have said anything in reference to my native country—America—which, may perhaps be looked upon as severe and unmittigated in its tone—I regret that I cannot make amends—I grieve to think, nor that I should have so spoken, but that I should have been compelled so to speak. (Hear, hear and cheers.) I have testified only to that which I have seen—I have born evidence solely to that which I have wit-

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I love thee—witness Heaven above  
That I, that land—that people love;  
And, rail thy slanders as they will,  
Columbia, I will love thee still.  
Nor love thee less when I do tell  
Of crimes which in thy bosom dwell.  
Oh! that my weakest words might roll,  
Like Heaven's own thunder through thy soul.  
There is oppression in thy hand,  
A sin corrupting all the land;  
There is within thy gates a pest,  
Gold and a Babylonish vest,  
Not hid in shame's concealing shade,  
But broad against the sun displayed.  
Repent thee, then, and quickly bring  
Forth from the camp the accursed thing;  
Consign it to remorseless fire,  
Watch till the latest sparks expire—  
Then, strew its ashes on the wind,  
Nor leave an atom wreck behind.  
Then shall thy wealth and power increase—  
Then shall thy people dwell in peace,  
On thee the Almighty's glory rest,  
And all on earth in thee be blest!

Mr. Remond concluded amidst the most enthusiastic applause, by seconding the resolution proposed by Mr. Allen, and moving that which he read in the course of his eloquent appeal.

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