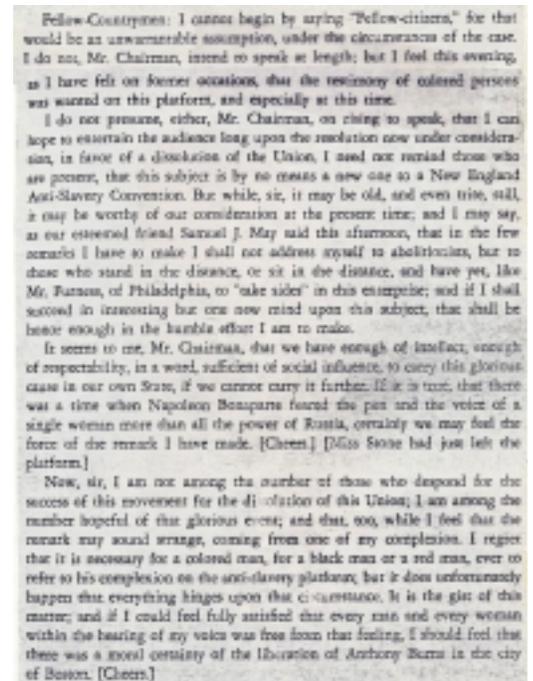


Fellow-Countrymen: I cannot begin by saying “Fellow-citizens,” for that would be an unwarrantable assumption, under the circumstances of the case. I do not, Mr. Chairman, intend to speak at length; but I feel this evening, as I have felt on former occasions, that the testimony of colored persons was wanted on this platform, and especially at this time.

I do not presume, either, Mr. Chairman, on rising to speak, that I can hope to entertain the audience long upon the resolution now under consideration, in favor of a dissolution of the Union. I need not remind those who are present, that this subject is by no means a new one to a New England Anti-Slavery Convention. But while, sir, it may be old, and even trite, still, it may be worthy of our consideration at the present time; and I may say, as our esteemed friend Samuel J. May said this afternoon, that in the few remarks I have to make I shall not address myself to abolitionists, but to those who stand in the distance, or sit in the distance, and have yet, like Mr. Furness, of Philadelphia, to “take sides” in this enterprise; and if I shall succeed in interesting but one new mind upon this subject, that shall be honor enough in the humble effort I am to make.

It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that we have enough of intellect, enough of respectability, in a word, sufficient of social influence, to carry this glorious cause in our own State, if we cannot carry it further. If it is true, that there was a time when Napoleon Bonaparte feared the pen and the voice of a single woman more than all the power of Russia, certainly we may feel the force of the remark I have made. [Cheers.] [Miss Stone had just left the platform.]

Now, sir, I am not among the number of those who despond for the success of this movement for the dissolution of this Union; I am among the number hopeful of that glorious event; and that, too, while I feel that the remark may sound strange, coming from one of my complexion. I regret that it is necessary for a colored man, for a black man or a red man, ever to refer to his complexion on the anti-slavery platform; but it does unfortunately happen that everything hinges upon that circumstance. It is the gist of this matter; and if I could feel fully satisfied that every man and every woman within the hearing of my voice was free from that feeling, I should feel that there was a moral certainty of the liberation of Anthony Burns in the city of Boston. [Cheers.]



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We have been told here this evening, Mr. Chairman, that the great trouble with Massachusetts men is to be found in their pockets or their purses. This is true to a certain extent; but is it not also true, that, outside of their pockets and their purses, there is a want of interest in the real, bona fide victims of American slavery? In other words, do we not need to have the complexion of the slave population of our country changed, at least in imagination, in order that the work may be done? I know, Sir, that men do not argue upon this question as they would then argue; I know that they do not write as they would then write; I know that they do not believe as they would then believe; I know that they do not preach as they would then preach; I know that they do not pray as they would pray, with this change of complexion.

Now, since my friend Prince, of Essex, called attention this afternoon to the character of the colored people, allow me to ask you to look in that direction for a moment; for while men live in Boston, go upon "Change, walk up and down the public streets, all the while coming in contact with colored people, they do not understand their character; they do not know that, notwithstanding the constant pressure, from the commencement of our nation's history, which has been exerted upon their manhood, their morality, upon all that is noble, magnanimous and generous in their characters, they have exhibited as many instances of noble manhood, in proportion to their number, as have been displayed by their more favored brethren of a white complexion. It was said here by Mr. Prince that the colored race is at once morally and physically brave. Do not consider me, Mr. Chairman, in alluding to this subject, as feeling vain in regard to it; I only ask that the whole truth respecting my people may be known, and where I will leave the success of their cause. But I ask the people not to act blindly with regard to it; not to make up their opinions with this great weight of prejudice on their minds. I ask them to look upon this question impartially, generously, magnanimously, patriotically, and I believe they will be converted to our movement.

Sir, I have taken note, for the last eighteen years, of the course pursued by colored people in anti-slavery meetings, for there was a time when the number of colored people present was greater than at the present time; and yesterday, I had evidence that there was some courage left with them yet. I refer to this incident only as an illustration of the character of this people

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generally in our country. There was a meeting of anti-slavery friends in the basement of Tremont Temple, and a call was made for persons to come forward and give in their names, that they might be called upon, at any moment, to discharge not only a responsible, but dangerous duty; and my heart has not been so much encouraged for many a long day as when I witnessed a large number of the colored men present walk up to that stand, with an unflinching step, and enroll their names. [Applause.]

Why is it that the anti-slavery cause should recommend itself to every well-wisher of his country? Because there are men, white men, who have never been deprived of their citizenship, not subjected to persecution, outrage and insult, who are honored for the patriotism they have exhibited; and if the demonstration of that feeling, or principle, or sentiment, or whatever you may please to call it, is worthy of honor in the white man, then it is also worthy of honor in the colored man; and the last evening that I had the privilege of speaking in this house, I endeavored, briefly, to make it clear that, on every occasion where manhood and courage have been required in this country, the number of colored people volunteering their services has been equal to that of white people, in proportion to their number, from the earliest moment of our nation's existence. [Cheers.]

Why is it that men stand aloof from this subject? Why do they look coldly upon the discussion of the question of the dissolution of the Union? I think I may safely say, Sir, that the courage and patriotism of the colored man is of a higher character than that of the white man. There is not a man of fair complexion before me who has not something in this country to protect which the colored man does not possess; and, Sir, when I see them, in the moment of danger, willing to discharge their duty to the country, I have a proof that they are the friends, and not the enemies of the country. Then, why are they treated in this manner? Why are the people not ready to go for a dissolution of the Union? If they were white, the people would say, without hesitation, "Let this Union be dissolved!"

But there is another consideration. I ask white men of what value the American Union is to them, north of the Mason and Dixon's line, and I find some of them have considerable trouble in making answer. I know there is a more potent influence than money, and that is the social influence south of Mason and Dixon's line. But what have the citizens of Boston to gain

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from it to-night? I am glad that one of our popular city papers has to-day asked, although indirectly, of what value is the American Union to the citizens of Boston and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, if they must perform such work as is being performed in and around the Court House at the present time? Look at it, gentlemen, carefully, and tell me, if you please, citizens of Boston,—white as you are, educated, as you are, wealthy, as you may be, influential, as you may be,—tell me what reward you are receiving for this almost idolatrous advocacy and defense of the American Union. Has the South honored you? When and where? Has she given you office? When? All I can gather from this whole matter is, that it is the work of education. If the editors of newspapers in Boston would right-about-face to-morrow, and recommend a different course of policy from that which has been hitherto pursued, you would soon discover a change. If the popular lyceum lecturers, instead of ridiculing the black man and traducing the black man's friends, would come up and speak in their behalf, you would find public sentiment changing in this matter. It is immaterial whether we have one organization or a hundred in this part of our country. I am satisfied that all we require to secure the success of the anti-slavery enterprise is right deeds and right words upon this subject. We want the sympathies of men on the side of the slave; we want men understanding their own rights, and daring to defend them.

I went into State Street to-day, and I heard a man say—"The black niggers would do well enough in this community; the great difficulty is with the d—d white niggers." What sort of negro hatred could prompt a man to say more? I heard a poor ignorant Irishman say, within the last forty-eight hours—"Hustle the niggers out of Court Square." I heard others say, "Kick the niggers!" "Drive them out of the country," etc. And these Irishmen are in the city of Boston, and in the United States, only on sufferance. I cannot but settle down in the conviction, that were it not for this spirit of Negro hate, we should not hear them say these things. I therefore call upon this audience, in the name of their country, their principles and their professions, to forget the arguments of Stephen S. Foster, to forget the appeals of my beloved friends, Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison, to shut their eyes to the character of the gentlemen who sit before and around me, and to go back to revolutionary times, and study the character of old John Adams, and

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Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, and tell me what there is in the character of these men to warrant the position which you, as citizens of Massachusetts, occupy to slavery and to this slaveholding Union at the present time. Can any man deny that, if John Adams, and Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, were alive to-day, they would, in view of the transactions in the city of Boston, demand the immediate dissolution of the Union? [Applause.] I believe in my soul they would. And why? Because they would hold in too high estimation their own liberties to submit such outrages. I have said before, and I repeat it again, even in view of the humble position I occupy as a black man in the State of Massachusetts, I would rather be ten thousand times blacker than I am than to be the proudest pale face that walks State Street to-day, doing the bidding of the slaveholder. [Loud cheers.]

Am I asked, Mr. Chairman, why I made this rough remark? If I am, I will answer. It has become not only a part of our education, but almost part and parcel of our nature, to look upon the colored man in this country as born to the vile inheritance of slavery, from his cradle to his grave; to have the word slave written on his brow; to do the bidding of the pale face; to go and come at his call. He must not presume to imitate the white man; if he shall, away with him to Africa on the one hand, or banish him from the State on the other. But the white man, he can go to Bunker Hill, and look upon that stone which commemorates the noble deeds of his fathers; he can go to Lexington, and bow before the memory of men who fought and bled for liberty; and from that place, he can go to Cambridge, and there be educated under the most favorable auspices; and then he can come to Boston, and live on Beacon Street or Park Street, and he can go up and down the streets, and be everywhere treated with respect and honor; and when he goes upon a steamboat, the officers do not tell him he cannot have a berth to sleep in; when he goes to a hotel he is not told that that is no place for "niggers"; when he goes before a Court, he does not find that none of his own color can sit in the jury box; but every white man is presumed to be a sovereign in this country, and qualified to meet any man in the world. But where is their manhood to-day? Men are found ready to be, here, what the most comprehensible man disdains to be in South Carolina or Virginia—a negro catcher. The Southerner will not perform such devilish work; but men born in Boston, and educated at Cambridge, volunteer to do it! Why?

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Simply because it is the custom of the times.

I ask men to throw themselves back upon their manhood; women to throw themselves back upon their womanhood, and go into the Court House,—if it must be that Anthony Burns is to be delivered up,—I do not believe that it will be necessary for any man to shoulder a musket, or carry a dagger in his bosom. Let them go there to-morrow; and then, if the victim is brought out, let some one cry out, “Rescue that man!” and I believe, as if by magic, he will be rescued. [Loud cheers.] All that is wanted is the right voice, at the right time, and in the right place, and the work will be done. In God’s name, cannot that spirit be infused into the people?

Friends! God has made us men. If you will recognize us as such, we will conduct ourselves in a manner worthy your regard and protection. All we want is a fair chance; and in just in proportion as this is granted will this recognition be made. I ask no man for his sympathy. I am simply asking of the majority, because we are in a minority, an opportunity to develop the faculties which the Creator has given us. I tell you, my friends, if we were equal in numbers to-morrow, we should not ask your aid; into our own hands we would take the vindication of our rights.

The friend who preceded me (Miss Wright) wanted to know what was to be done, in case the Union was dissolved,—she could not see what was to be gained by it. Sir, if the Union should be dissolved, leave this whole question with the slave population, and they will take care of it. [Applause.] It is the North that practically keeps them in slavery; and hence I say, that the work is with Boston men, with Massachusetts men, with New England men. When New England shall be right, then the work will be accomplished.

If you could only be black, friends, for eight and forty hours, how would you reason on this question? [Cheers.] Talk about the eloquence of the colored man! We should not have a chance to get up, with our poor speech, so many would be eager to occupy the platform. We should have a whole host of eloquent speakers. I met Mr. Choate in the street to-day, and having a stranger friend with me, I pointed him out to him; and I could not but think, as I passed him, that if Mr. Choate would come to this New England Convention, and speak as he is qualified to speak on this subject, and admit that he had been mistaken—mistaken long ago—it would do more to immortalize his name than all the victories he ever gained upon the public

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forum. [Cheers.]

I would say, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, to our friends present, do not go away from this meeting feeling prejudiced against it, but go from here and resolve what you will do when that poor fugitive is taken away. One statement I wish to make. The reports are various respecting the proceedings in the court-room. The audience are undoubtedly every one of them aware that there has been some testimony presented to-day going to show a discrepancy in the time when the slaveholders and their counsel say Burns left Virginia and the time when he was actually seen in Boston; and I have since heard, from persons interested in that direction, that considerable confidence is felt that he will be discharged. I have heard that the man claiming to be Burns's master now offers to sell him for four hundred dollars. I hope that he will not have the privilege of taking four hundred cents. I hope that if there is a Commissioner in Boston mean enough to be willing to give up Burns, he will not be purchased: for a lesson will be read from that circumstance, which will do more to aid the cause of the three and a half millions in bonds than any purchase could do. I remember reading, when I was a boy, an account of a British general, who, many years ago, was wounded three times in battle, yet he would not consent to be taken from his horse; but, receiving a fresh wound, he fell from his horse, and just before he expired, he heard the shout—"They fly!—they fly!" "Who fly?" he asked. "Our enemies," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I die happy." I hope that in this case we may hear the cry—"They fly!" And when we ask, "Who fly?" that we may hear the answer, "The slaveholders!" That shall be glory enough, and a shout shall go up that Massachusetts is redeemed.

[Loud cheers.]

I am reminded of another report, which comes from a good source, that in the event of Commissioner Loring giving Burns his freedom, or whether he shall or not, the slaveholder and his friends have determined to carry him off in the face of the purchase money, and the remonstrances and wishes of the people. I hope, therefore, that the friends will be prepared to meet any exigency that may arise, and to vindicate the laws of eternal justice and right.

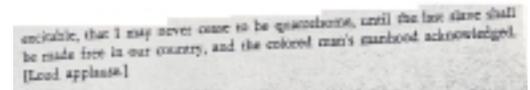
I know, Mr. Chairman, that I am not, as a general thing, a peacemaker. I am irritable, excitable, quarrelsome—I confess it, Sir, and my prayer to God is, that I may never cease to be irritable, that I may never cease to be

forum. [Cheers.]
I would say, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, to our friends present, do not go away from this meeting feeling prejudiced against it, but go from here and resolve what you will do when that poor fugitive is taken away. One statement I wish to make. The reports are various respecting the proceedings in the court-room. The audience are undoubtedly every one of them aware that there has been some testimony presented to-day going to show a discrepancy in the time when the slaveholders and their counsel say Burns left Virginia and the time when he was actually seen in Boston; and I have since heard, from persons interested in that direction, that considerable confidence is felt that he will be discharged. I have heard that the man claiming to be Burns's master now offers to sell him for four hundred dollars. I hope that he will not have the privilege of taking four hundred cents. I hope that if there is a Commissioner in Boston mean enough to be willing to give up Burns, he will not be purchased: for a lesson will be read from that circumstance, which will do more to aid the cause of the three and a half millions in bonds than any purchase could do. I remember reading, when I was a boy, an account of a British general, who, many years ago, was wounded three times in a battle, yet he would not consent to be taken from his horse; but, receiving a fresh wound, he fell from his horse, and just before he expired, he heard the shout—"They fly!—they fly!" "Who fly?" he asked. "Our enemies," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I die happy." I hope that in this case we may hear the cry—"They fly!" And when we ask, "Who fly?" that we may hear the answer, "The slaveholders!" That shall be glory enough, and a shout shall go up that Massachusetts is redeemed.
[Loud cheers.]

I am reminded of another report, which comes from a good source, that in the event of Commissioner Loring giving Burns his freedom, or whether he shall or not, the slaveholder and his friends have determined to carry him off in the face of the purchase money, and the remonstrances and wishes of all in the face of the purchase money, and the remonstrances and wishes of the people. I hope, therefore, that the friends will be prepared to meet any exigency that may arise, and to vindicate the laws of eternal justice and right.
I know, Mr. Chairman, that I am not, as a general thing, a peacemaker. I am irritable, excitable, quarrelsome—I confess it, Sir, and my prayer to God is, that I may never cease to be irritable, that I may never cease to be

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