Could we trace the record of every human heart, the aspirations of every immortal soul, perhaps we would find no man so imbruted and degraded that we could not trace the word liberty either written in living characters upon the soul or hidden away in some nook or corner of the heart. The law of liberty is the law of God, and is antecedent to all human legislation. It existed in the mind of Deity when He hung the first world upon its orbit and gave it liberty to gather light from the central sun.

Some people say, set the slaves free. Did you ever think, if the slaves were free, they would steal everything they could lay their hands on from now till the day of their death—that they would steal more than two thousand millions of dollars (applause)? Ask Maryland, with her tens of thousands of slaves, if she is not prepared for freedom, and hear her answer: “I help supply the cofflegangs of the South.” Ask Virginia, with her hundreds of thousands of slaves, is she not weary with her merchandise of blood and anxious to shake the gory traffic from her hands, and hear her reply: “Though fertility has covered my soil, though a genial sky bends over my hills and vales, though I hold in my hand a wealth of water-power enough to turn the spindles to clothe the world, yet, with all these advantages, one of my chief staples has been the sons and daughters I send to the human market and human shambles” (applause). Ask the father South, and all the cotton-growing States chime in, “We have need of fresh supplies to fill the ranks of those whose lives have gone out in unrequited toil on our distant plantations.”

A hundred thousand new-born babes are annually added to the victims of slavery; twenty thousand lives are annually sacrificed on the plantations of the South. Such a sight should send a thrill of horror through the nerves of civilization and impel the heart of humanity to lofty
deeds. So it might, if men had not found out a fearful
alchemy by which this blood can be transformed into gold.
Instead of listening to the cry of agony, they listen to
the ring of dollars and stoop down to pick up the coin
(applause).

But a few months since a man escaped from bondage
and found a temporary shelter almost beneath the shadow
of Bunker Hill. Had that man stood upon the deck of an
Austrian ship, beneath the shadow of the house of the
Hapsburgs, he would have found protection. Had he been
wrecked upon an island or colony of Great Britain, the
waves of the tempest-lashed ocean would have washed him
deliverance. Had he landed upon the territory of vine-
encircled France and a Frenchman had reduced him to a
thing and brought him here beneath the protection of our
institutions and our laws, for such a nefarious deed that
Frenchman would have lost his citizenship in France.
Beneath the feebler light which glimmers from the Koran,
the Bey of Tunis would have granted him freedom in his
own dominions. Beside the ancient pyramids of Egypt
he would have found liberty, for the soil laved by the
glorious Nile is now consecrated to freedom. But from
Boston harbour, made memorable by the infusion of three-
penny taxed tea, Boston in its proximity to the plains of
Lexington and Concord, Boston almost beneath the shadow
of Bunker Hill and almost in sight of Plymouth Rock, he
is thrust back from liberty and manhood and reconverted
into a chattel. You have heard that, down South, they
keep bloodhounds to hunt slaves. Ye bloodhounds, go
back to your kennels; when you fail to catch the flying
fugitive, when his stealthy tread is heard in the place
where the bones of the revolutionary sires repose, the
ready North is base enough to do your shameful service
(applause).