MINUTES
OF THE
FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF
THE COLORED CITIZENS
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
HELD IN THE CITY OF
SCHENECTADY,
ON THE 18th, 19th, AND 20th OF SEPTEMBER, 1844.

TROY, N. Y.
J. C. KNEELAND & CO., PRINTERS, VI CANNON PLACE.
1844.
CIRCULAR.

FELLOW CITIZENS OF NEW YORK:—

You are invited to attend the Annual Convention of the colored citizens of this state, and our friends, which will convene by leave of Divine Providence in the city of Schenectady, on Wednesday, September 18, at 10, A M.

Your Committee believe that the success which has attended our former Conventions will be sufficient to secure a large attendance to the one anticipated.

In accordance with a resolution which was passed at the Rochester Convention, the delegates to the approaching meeting are requested to bring with them the religious, educational, property and Society Statistics of the districts which they represent.

It is the opinion of the laborious and long suffering among us, that our sphere of action should be enlarged:—that while we continue with unabated zeal to knock at the door of the Capitol until we obtain equal suffrage, at the same time we should consider every department of reform that is interesting to men, and that promises to improve our moral and intellectual being.

Brethren, we expect a great meeting. We know what to expect from New Yorkers. From that auspicious day when our State banner was first flung to the breeze, to our last great gathering at Rochester, we have not failed in a single Convention. We have withstood every opposition with an unflinching perseverance, although we have been assailed by foes from abroad, and enemies in our midst. But now the tide begins to turn, and smiling hope with anchor sure and steadfast, points to certain victory.

We invite our fellow-citizens in every part of the State to make a grand rally. Come from the regions of the lakes and
the broad vallies of the west. Come from your mountain homes of the east—the rocky ramparts of the North, from the sea beaten shores of the South. Come hoary headed sires, we desire your counsel. Come young men and unite your strength; and form a nucleus of Liberty around which the moral strength of the whole State shall gather. We need and earnestly solicit the aid and approbation of our noble hearted women, who have never been backward in any measure of general good.—A brighter day is dawning—success is now certain, for God is with us. He speaks from his throne—"Blow ye the trumpet in the land—cry, gather together, and say assemble yourselves."

Then—

"Prayer strengthened for the trial come together,
Put on the harness for the moral fight,
And with the blessings of our Heavenly Father
MAINTAIN THE RIGHT."

H. H. GARNET,
  Ch'n of Central Com.
WM. RICH,
WM. P. McINTYRE,
C. S. MORTON,
RICH'D THOMPSON, Jr.,
J. WANDELL,
F. THOMPSON.

P. S. The Committee have consulted the people of Schenectady, and it is their desire that the Convention should be held at the time announced in the Call. This desire was urged in consequence of some local circumstances altogether beyond their control, and intimately connected with the usefulness of the Convention.

H. H. G.

TROY, JUNE 16, 1844.
Pursuant to the preceding call issued in the form of a circular letter, and through several of the public papers, distributed over all sections of the state the delegates commenced assembling at an early hour in the First Baptist Church, in the city of Schenectady, on Wednesday morning September 18th, and at 10 o'clock, about 30 delegates were present.

The Convention was called to order by, the Rev. Henry H. Garnet, of Troy, chairman of the State Central committee, who having read the call, moved the appointment of Mr. Ulyssis B. Videl, of New York, as chairman pro tem.

On motion of Mr. Francis Thompson of Schenectady, Mr. Patrick H. Reason, of N. Y. was appointed Secretary.

The chairman having congratulated the delegates, on their assembling together to represent the people in their annual convention on such an important question as the removal of their political disabilities, and hoping that the measures which might be adopted during the session of the present convention, would prove signal in advancing the great object for which we are contending, in a few appropriate remarks, declared the convention open for business.

The following gentlemen, on motion, were elected officers for the convention. The nominations were offered by different members.

RALPH FRANCIS, of Rochester, President.
JAMES HALL, of Lansingburgh,
JOHN WANDELL, of Schenectady, 
PETER HORNBECK, of Syracuse, 
PATRICK H. REASON, of New York, 
GEORGE W. GORDON, of Troy,

On motion of James McCune Smith,
Resolved, That a committee of five be appointed to suggest in a becoming form, business for this convention.—Adopted.

The following members were appointed by the house as the Business Committee.

ULYSSES B. VIDEL, of New York, Chairman.
HENRY H. GARNET, Troy,
On motion of Patrick H. Reason,  
Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to make out the roll of this convention. Adopted.

The following members were appointed as the above committee. Richard Thompson of Albany, Clarence P. Seldon of West Troy, and Francis Simson, of Schenectady.

On motion of Henry H. Garnet,  
Resolved, That all persons favorable to the object of the convention be requested to enroll their names as delegates. —Adopted.

On motion of James McCune Smith,  
Resolved, That the committee on the roll, act also in discharging the duties of a finance committee. Adopted.

On motion of Patrick H. Reason,  
Resolved, That a committee of two be appointed to draft rules for the government of this convention. Adopted.

In accordance with the above resolution, the following persons were appointed:—James McCune Smith of New York, and George B. Moreton, of Troy.

During the absence of the Business Committee opportunity was offered for any gentleman having resolutions to present them for the consideration of the convention.

Dr. James McCune Smith offered the following, which was seconded by Mr. Stephen Myers.

Resolved, That this convention recommend a general convention of the citizens of New York, Pennsylvania and Connecticut for the purpose of obtaining an extension of the Elective Franchise to all citizens, without regard to color, in each State.

This resolution was supported by Messrs. Smith and Myers, and on motion of the mover, was laid on the table for further consideration.

The committee on Rules submitted the following, which on motion were adopted.

RULES.

1. Upon the appearance of a quorum, the President shall take the chair, and the convention be called to order.

2. The minutes of the preceding session shall be read at the commencement of each meeting, at which time mistakes, if any, shall be corrected.
3. The President shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the convention.
4. All motions and addresses shall be made to the President; the member rising from his seat.
5. All motions (except those of reference,) shall be submitted in writing.
6. The previous question shall be always in order, and until decided shall preclude all amendments and debates of the main question, and shall be put in this form, “shall the main question now be put?”
7. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, except when out of order; when he shall be called to order by or through the President.
8. A motion to adjourn shall be always in order, and shall be decided without debate.
9. No member shall speak more than twice on the same question, without leave, or over fifteen minutes at each time.
10. The sessions of the Convention shall commence at 9 o’clock in the morning, and 2 in the afternoon.

James McCune Smith,
George B. Moreton.

The business committee submitted by their Chairman the following resolutions.
1. Resolved, That the impartial bestowment to us of the suffrage right, by an alteration of the 1st section of Art. 2d, of the present constitution of New York, would be an act worthy the people of this truly great state, and a valuable contribution to the cause of freedom worthy the people, because it would be an alliance of just action with patriotic profession.

An accession to the cause of freedom, because, it would be a so much nearer approach of the majority of the state to the recognition of that principle which teaches a regard for man, because of his manhood. Adopted without discussion.
2. Resolved, That we claim the extention to us of the Elective Franchise, because it is but just that we should possess it; inasmuch as we have never forfeited it by an opposition to law, and have always been and are now willing to bear the burdens of the state.

This resolution was opposed by James Hall, of Lansingburgh, on the grounds that it intimated, that we were willing to bear the burdens of the state without participating in any of its privileges, especially the right of suffrage, and
for his part (and he believed there were others who coincided with him) he was unwilling to assume the burdens of the state, without a possession of the rights of citizenship.—The resolution was supported by Mr. U. B. Videl. Dr. Smith offered as an amendment to follow the last word in the resolution, (state) the words—"as an equivalent to enjoying equally its privileges." The amendment was supported by Messrs. Smith, Garnet and Hall; and opposed by Messrs. Videl, Powell, W. P. Johnson, and Moreton; because it implied a bargain—for a right which we should claim, as belonging to us, as native born citizens and which we had never forfeited by any opposition to law. The burdens of the state we have always far as privileged born, and we should not now offer to do, as an equivalent for a right; that which we have always been willing to do, through love for our common country—but should claim the right as one belonging to us,—and should any of the burdens of the state be assigned to us stand prepared as good citizens to discharge them.

While yet the question was pending the convention adjourned to meet at 2 o'clock.

**Wednesday Morning.**—The Convention opened at 2 o'clock. President in the chair. The minutes of the morning session were read and approved.

The committee on the Roll reported the following list, as the names of those who came to participate in the doings of the Convention.

The Roll here given, stands as the one subsequently completed and used by the Convention.

### ROLL.

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<tr>
<th>New York</th>
<th>West Troy</th>
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<tr>
<td>R. P. G. Wright</td>
<td>York La Ture</td>
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<td>William P. Johnson</td>
<td>Clarence P. Selden</td>
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<td>Dr. James McCune Smith</td>
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<td>Patrick H. Reason</td>
<td>George B. Moreton</td>
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<td>Ulysses B. Videl</td>
<td>Ezekiel George</td>
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<td>William P. Powell</td>
<td>Samuel Lawyer</td>
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<td>Lewis Washington</td>
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<td>Albany</td>
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<td>Richard Thompson</td>
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Lewis Jones,
Abram Jackson, Jr.,
Thomas Addison,
Henry March,
William Beggett,
George W. Gordon,
Abram Stanley,
James H. Henderson,
Henry H. Garnet,
James Johnson,
Richard Livingston,
L. D. Beckett,
William Rich,
John Carasaw,
Thomas Jefferson,
J. W. Randolph,
John H. Smothers,
Cato Jackson.

Ballston.
Austin White,
Augustus Howard.

Peterstown.
John Landon.

Edinburgh.
George Mott.

Little Falls.
Thomas Johnson.

Saratoga.
Thomas Thompson.

Schenectady.
R. Murray,
Francis Simson,
Tobias Harklis,
Thomas Jackson,
John Jackson,
Francis Thompson,
James Jackson,
Moses Wilcox,
Peter Johnson,
Henry Thompson,
Henry Jackson,
Thomas Thompson,
Peter Wandell,
Albert Brown,
Peter Ofdyke,
John T. Simpson,
John Dunbar,
Garret Harris,
Henry Harris,
John Wandell,
Richard Sampson,
N. Cæsar,
N. Hardy,
Thomas Gray,
P. Lattin,
Francis Dana,
Henry L. Simpson.

Lansingburgh.
H. M. I. Rogers,
James Hall,
Daniel A. Oliver.

Amsterdam.
Francis Whitbeck,
Francis Cobus,
Alexander Welch,
A. James,
Isaac Hornbeck,
John Tribble.

Brooklyn.
Caroline Jones.

Constantia.
Peter P. Feler.

Rochester, Monroe Co.
Rev. Samuel Serrington,
Ralph Francis,
Robert H. Johnson.

Waterford.
Simon Jackson,
William Jackson.

Charlton Village.
Nicholas Hemous.

Syracuse.
Peter Hornbeck.
Dr. Smith’s amendment, which was under discussion at the close of the morning session, was taken up and adopted. The resolution as amended was then further considered, and finally postponed—indefinitely.

Two Letters were then read, coming from Rev. Theodore S. Wright and Charles B. Ray of New York. The Postscript to Mr. Ray’s letter containing an objectionable “Protest” was referred to the Business Committee.

The Business Committee then presented a Protest from citizens of New York, protesting against some of the doings of last year’s convention, with a request that it be recorded on the minutes of this convention.

Dr. Smith gave a plain history of the protest, and made an appeal in its favor, which was also sustained by Messrs. Videl, Myers, Powell, and R. Thompson of Albany.

The Protest was opposed by Rev. H. H. Garnet, and Messrs. W. P. Johnson and Moreton. An exciting debate on the protest was continued by the gentlemen mentioned above, until the hour of adjournment. On motion, the Convention adjourned to meet at 7 1-2 o’clock, P. M.

_Wednesday Evening._—President in the Chair. Prayer by Mr. Serrington of Rochester. Minutes of the afternoon read and approved. As the gentlemen who had spoken on the protest in the afternoon had occupied their full time allotted by the rules, a resolution was adopted suspending the rules during the discussion on the protest. The protest having been read by the Secretary, Henry H. Garnet resumed his argument against it.

He was followed by Dr. Smith in favor; and the debate on recording the Protest was closed by Wm. P. Johnson, negative, and Ulyssis B. Videl, affirmative.

On taking the vote, the yeas and nays were called for and the following was the result.


James H. Henderson, James Jackson, R. Livingston, L. D.
Beckett, John Carrasol, John H. Smothers, Cato Jackson,
Thomas Whitbeck, Samuel Serringson, York La Ture, C.
F. Selden, John Landon, Thomas Johnir, H. J. M. Rogers,
Peter Hornbeck, R. P. G. Wright, Wm. P. Johnson, H. H.
Garnet.* 39. The protest was not admitted.

Ulyssis B. Videl, then rose and tendered his resignation as
Chairman of the Business Committee. His resignation
was accepted, and Mr. Wm. P. Johnson appointed in his
place.

Wm. P. Powell, offered his resignation as a member of
the Business Committee. Accepted, and Samuel Serringson
appointed to fill the vacancy. Messrs. Videl, Smith, and
Powell then severally gave in their resignations as members
of the convention. The resignations of U. B. Videl and W.
P. Powell, were acted upon and accepted.

The Business Committee offered the following resolutions:

3. Resolved, That as the equal privilege to vote would,
if rightly exercised, ensure to our people an additional mea-
sure of protection and respectability, and would open to us
means and incentives to improvement now wholly lost to us,
therefore, it is both our interest and duty to do our utmost
to secure this privilege. Adopted unanimously. Adjourned.

Thursday Morning.—President in chair. Prayer by
Richard Thompson of Albany. Minutes of the preceding
evening were read and approved. On motion, the Secretary
was permitted to enter on the minutes the reasons for the
resignation of Messrs. Videl, Smith, and Powell as members
of the Convention.

The Business Committee submitted the following resolu-
tions for the consideration of the Convention.

4. Whereas, in a republic its great and distinctive feature
is the "consent of the people," they signifying their approba-
tion for or their dissent from such rules and laws as have
being by the exercise of their voting power,—and whereas
a numerous minority of the people of the state of New York
(viz: the colored portion thereof) are not permitted fairly to
vote, and are as a consequence governed without their con-

Resolved, That for the completion of that feature of Re-
publicanism in our state government hereabove instanced,

*On account of an omission in the roll, H. H. Garnet did not vote on
taking the question; but his name by his request was subsequently added.
we are called upon by every motive of self political Emancipation to adopt all lawful and energetic means to secure an equally free exercise of the suffrage; and the majority of the people of the state are bound, in order to be consistent with their professions, to alter that Anti-Republican clause in our constitution which restricts us in the exercise of the franchise, and thereby render the state just and impartial in this essential feature of Democratic governments.

5. Resolved, That our brethren throughout the state be requested to commence immediately circulating petitions, praying the Legislature to extend to the colored citizens of New York the right of equal suffrage.

6. Resolved, That the delegates from each county be a committee to circulate petitions in their districts, and that they forward them to the Legislature at an early period of their session, or to the Central Committee by the first of January next.

7. Resolved, That we spend the remainder of this morning's session in hearing the reports of delegates in relation to the state and condition of our people in the districts which they represent.

Resolutions 4, 5, and 6 were adopted unanimously.

Resolution 7 was laid on the table, to be taken up as being the first business in order this afternoon.

8. Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to superintend the publication of the minutes of this Convention in Pamphlet form, and that the committee be requested to have the same published within eight days after the adjournment of the Convention.

Resolution 8 was adopted, and the following committee appointed: H. H. Garnet, Stephen Myers, and William Rich.

The Convention then proceeded to vote for the place where the next Convention shall be held. By a majority of votes, Albany was selected; and formally announced by the President as the place where the next convention shall be held. The day and month was left with the Central Committee. A motion was made and adopted to reconsider the vote taken on accepting the resignations of U. B. Videl, and Wm. P. Powell. But no further action was taken on this subject. Adjourned.

Thursday Afternoon.—President in Chair. Prayer by Richard Thompson of Albany. By permission given to the Secretary this morning, to record on the minutes of this
convention the reasons for the resignations of Messrs. Videl, Smith, and Powell as members of this convention, the secretary has received the following:

"At an adjourned meeting of the colored citizens of the city of New York, for the purpose of sending delegates to the Schenectady convention, held Sept. 16, 1844, a protest was presented and, after a full discussion thereon, adopted; protesting against the adoption of two resolutions by the Rochester convention, held August 22d, 1843.

At the same meeting, a resolution was also adopted, requesting the delegates appointed to represent the city and county of New York in said convention to present the protest with a request that it may be recorded on its minutes.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, September 18th, the above mentioned Protest was presented to the Convention, through the Business Committee; the merits of which were discussed during the remainder of that session, and nearly the whole of the time occupied by the evening session, and finally rejected, by a vote of 11 Yeas, to 38 Nays. After that result was announced, Messrs. U. B. Videl, J. McCune Smith, and Wm. P. Powel, resigned their seats as members of the convention, for the following reasons:

1. Because the convention in refusing to record upon its minutes the Protest, denied the right of petition.

2. Because in so doing, they established the rule that one convention has no power to interfere with the doings of a former convention. They claimed that the Protest simply took grounds against the resolution alluded to, as having been adopted at the convention of 1843, because the convention, having met for a specific object—to take measures to obtain an extension of the Elective Franchise—had no right to introduce into its deliberations matter extraneous to that object.

And by the adoption of those resolutions, fully committed the colored citizens of the State of New York in favor of one of three Political parties, which was injudicial as our final appeal, for the franchise must be made to the whole people, necessarily comprising voters attached to each political party.

On motion, the majority who voted against recording the Protest, were allowed the privilege of recording their reasons,

—Dr. Smith, in giving this history of the Protest, stated that the meeting at which it was adopted, although an adjourned meeting, was small in number, and the protest was adopted by a vote of 6 in favor, to 4 against.
which were as follows:

1. They believe that the protest was presented upon narrow grounds, and was calculated to produce no good.
2. The convention was anxious to meet the sentiments of the protest in the shape of a resolution, and the majority intimated their desire. But the minority refused to bring their sentiments fairly before the convention, and chose to hide their time serving and neutral policy behind the sacred right of petition.
3. They believe the sentiments of the Protest to be entirely, and altogether wrong, inasmuch as it teaches the fearless, and patriotic citizens of New-York to stand before the world utterly destitute of any political opinion.
4. They do not crave the enjoyment of the right of suffrage from the hands of any set of men who would deny us the Republican right, of thinking as we please.

The minutes of the last session were then approved. The vote taken on holding the convention next year at Albany was reconsidered—and an almost unanimous vote given in favor of Syracuse.

The resolution of Statistics which was laid on the table this morning was then taken up, and the convention spent one hour very pleasantly in hearing the reports from the several delegations, but as the reports were few and consisted mainly on verbal statements, regarding the moral progress of our people—embodying occasional facts appertaining to our progress in wealth—it was impossible for the Secretary to condense them in a report, which would represent fairly the condition of our people in this State.

The Business Committee then presented the following

REPORT,

On the best Means for the promotion of the Enfranchise-
ment of our people.

The committee have been brief in their report, so that its length might not be an objection to its perusal.

A resort to no one class of means could remove the disabilities which obstruct our improvement, but it requires a happy combination of all laudible pursuits to secure such an end. Yet there are some particular pursuits which would tend more than others to remove the prejudice which a majority of our fellow citizens cherish towards us. We proceed to name some of the most prominent and available.
1. A general diffusion of Literary, Scientific and Religious knowledge among the people. This can be done, as it has already been done in some places, by the establishment of Public Libraries, Lyceums, and Public Lectures.

2. By the careful education of our youth, and holding out to them additional encouragement, in proportion to the extra difficulties which they have to encounter.

3. By giving our children useful trades, and by patronizing those who may have engaged in useful handicraft.

4. The committee would urge as first in importance the removal of our people from the cities, and large towns, and the betaking of themselves to the country. Prejudice is so strong in cities, and custom is so set and determined, that it is impossible for us to emerge from the most laborious and the least profitable occupations.

For instance, in the city of New-York, a colored citizen cannot obtain a license to drive a cart! Many such like inconveniences beset them on every hand. Thus scores of men, whose intelligence (we would say nothing of their enterprise) is sufficient to entitle them to stations of trust, and profit, are compelled to drudge out their lives for a scanty subsistence. It has been seen, that when they have satisfied the demands of the landlord, provided their fuel, and have paid devotion to the shrine of fashion, there is nothing left for “a rainy day,” and they often die in want.

Not so in the country, where every man is known, and even our people who are abused so much in cities are respected almost according to their moral worth. The committee would not say that there are none of those difficulties in the country—but that there are far less than are met with in cities, we do affirm.

In the country, no man is prohibited from driving a cart! Nay, he can raise his own horses and cattle, and drive them over his fruitful fields, or to the Fair, or to the Market, or elsewhere. He can go to the woods and get his fuel, and burn the same in his log cabin, when winter winds are abroad, without fearing lest his solid comfort should be interrupted by a surly landlord, who is as certain to come every three months, as death is, at the end of life.

In the towns of Syracuse and Geneva, among a colored population of some eight hundred, there are more voters according to the odious $250 qualification, than there are in New-York city, which has eighteen or twenty thousand colored inhabitants.
Whoever will take the pains to examine facts on the subject, will find that real influence, and property dwindles away in the hands of our people, as we approach cities and large towns. In New York-City there is but one instance among our High Schools, Theological Seminaries, and Colleges, in which a colored youth can avail himself of its benefits. In many other cities not even one exception is found. Indeed the Committee know of no College or Female Seminary in any city in the Union whose doors are open for our children.

If the talents of our young men, which in the cities are hindered in their growth were transplanted to the country, there is no prejudice so strong as to be able to roll back the tide of our enfranchisement.

In every prosperous country, and among every powerful and influential people, whose territory would admit of the employment, agriculture has contributed its full share of wealth and glory. In our Country, where labor is honorable, and where the fruitful earth invites the husbandman to dress and till it, agriculture is emphatically the surest road to temporal happiness.

In the proudest days of Rome, when she stretched out her sceptre over a subjugated world, she called her favorite from the furrowed field. Her Legislators encouraged her farmers, nor did the sun of her glory begin to set, until her fields were neglected, and her sons exchanged that honorable labor for the luxury and licentiousness, of cities and camps. The committee would venture to say, that if agriculture bore such an important part in promoting the greatness of an entire nation, the same course would secure an influence for the oppressed portion of any people.

But every man that removes to the country, or to some small and growing town, need not necessarily become a Farmer. If he be a Mechanic, he may turn his attention to his trade, with great advantage. Cities are not in themselves unfavorable to our people, but public opinion in them is such as to render it next to impossible for us to rise above dependence. Let our men become the owners of the soil, and they

*Union Theological Seminary.

† A member of the committee was a short time ago informed by the esteemed Governor of Massachusetts, that there is a humble, though upright colored citizen of his town, who is doing more by his example and intelligence to benefit his people, than all other human efforts. He would not have been noticed in a large city.
shall be the founders of towns, and villages; and as they grow up, they may grow with them, and may give tone and character to a just and liberal public sentiment.

Let a few families select a good spot, having favorable water privileges, and other advantages—let them subdue the forests, erect their mills, and build their workshops, and in a few years they will have a thriving village. Or let them go to some youthful towns just springing into existence.

In conclusion, the committee would advise families and individuals to leave the large cities, and repair to the country, and by observing the other recommendations in the report, they will use the best and most certain means to promote our happiness and enfranchisement.

Signed, H. H. GARNET.

The above document was on motion accepted and laid on the table for further action.

Resolutions No. 9, 10 and 11 were then presented by the Business Committee.

No. 9. Resolved, That the political elevation of the free people of color is a subject in which all should be interested.

This resolution, after an eloquent support from Francis Dana, was adopted.

No. 10. Resolved, That this Convention request the delegates to interrogate the members of the legislature from their districts on the subject of the right of suffrage without the property qualification, and solicit their aid in favor of our petitions when presented. Adopted.

No. 11. Resolved, That the delegates to this convention be requested when they return to their constituents, to urge upon them the propriety of forming political associations in the counties in which they live, for the purpose of collecting monies to publish and circulate facts, relative to our position in the political world, (and for such other purposes in keeping with our object as such associations may deem necessary,) that the truth may be known. Supported by Wm. P. Johnson, and adopted.

The document from the Business Committee was then called up for further action thereon. After speaking by H. H. Garnet and Robert Johnson, in favor, and Richard Thompson against, it was adopted. The Convention then proceeded to elect the Central Committee for the ensuing year.
The following gentlemen were appointed.

Henry H. Garnet, of Troy,
William Rich,
Stephen Myers, of Albany,
Richard Thompson,
John Wandell, of Schenectady.

Central Committee.

Adjourned to meet at 7 o'clock, P. M.

Thursday Evening.—President in chair. Prayer by H. H. Garnet; minutes read and approved. The Business Committee offered the following resolutions.

12. Resolved, That immediate emancipation is right and safe, that common justice and Declaration of American Independence sustain and urge the measure; and that the abolition of slavery in our own state in 1827, and in the British West Indies prove that the measure is safe.

13. Resolved, That the prejudice exercised against the colored inhabitants in the nominally free states is unjust in the extreme, and predicated on unjust basis, and cannot be supported in truth to apply to our condition in these United States; and if such be the case we ought to have the right of suffrage given to us.

14. Resolved, That in the opinion of this convention total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors is the only hope of the drunkard and the only safeguard of the temperate.

Resolution 12 was advocated by Messrs. Garnet, Wm. P. Johnson, and Lewis Washington, and adopted.

Resolution 13 was adopted after being urged by Samuel Serginton and Robert Johnson.

Resolution 14 was laid on the table to be first in order tomorrow morning. Adjourned.

Friday Morning.—Vice President, John Wandell, in chair. Prayer by H. H. Garnet. Minutes read and approved.

Resolution 14 was then taken up and adopted after its merits were discussed, and its adoption recommended by Messrs. Myers, Washington, Moreton, Garnet, R. Johnson, and W. P. Johnson.

The resolution which was laid on the table at the first session of the convention recommending a general convention of the citizens of New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut on the suffrage, was then taken up for further action. It was urged by Stephen Myers, and opposed by H. H. Garnet,
and on taking the question it was decided in the negative.

Resolved, That the letters addressed to the convention, (omitting the P. S. to Mr. Ray's letter,) by Theodore S. Wright and Charles B. Ray be published with the minutes. Adopted.

New York, Sep. 18, 1844.

To the President and Members of the Convention of Colored Citizens, assembled in Schenectady.

As a representative elect of the city of New York to your respectable convocation, and it being impossible under existing circumstances for me to be present, I feel called upon to represent myself by letter and as a memento of the importance in which I view the convention, as well as to explain the reasons of my absence. The relation which I sustain to the Union Missionary Society as one of its officers and whose Annual Meeting takes place in this city to-morrow, and before which important matters are to be brought and requiring the presence of those who have the management of the Society for the last two years. Again, but for this consideration such is the present state of my health, that I doubt whether it would be prudent for me to be present to take part in your deliberations, taking the view that I do of the important questions that may and probably should come before that now, more in my view than at any previous time, very important body. Dear Brethren, we are just now upon the eve of an election for President and Vice President of the Nation, as well as for Governor, and Lieut. Governor, and the Legislature of the State, with two of the three parties, at least regarding it as the important contest and between them both, great interests are at stake and both nearly balanced; while the third, probably holds as good, and in some places more, than the balance of power, the two great parties in some places courting the third and in others doing what they can to annihilate it. The two great parties have governed this country from the first period of its existence to this hour, and are responsible for everything that exists in this government by Legislature. They are then to-day responsible for Slavery with all its abominations, and for all the disabilities in every form under which, we the colored people, labor. They are both at present, the supporters of Slavery at the South, and always will be, while they are so nearly balanced; nor will they withdraw their support from slavery until compelled by some other political party.
But the Liberty party came into existence with a view to abolish slavery, restore Liberty and justice to all which the other parties, whatever their differences on other matters, have united in taking away. I repeat it, this act of theirs gave rise, as well as made it absolutely necessary, that it should come into being, and this alone gave it existence.—And as it grows larger it waxeth bolder and bolder, in accomplishing these ends. I need not then ask what position we occupy to these parties, the two particularly against us and so tied up that they cannot, and remain one and identical, if they had the disposition, do any thing for us, the other having its existence in the necessity and extremity of our case. I hope, then dear brethren, that if you cannot see your way clear to do any thing for this one party, that you will for the sake of our character and name before the civilized world, do nothing that can even from inference be construed against it. Should the question come up and were I present, my own line of duty would be plain and what you may infer from the tone and spirit of this hasty letter.

But I do not ask you to do what I might, if matters were left wholly to me. Hoping that God may direct in your deliberations, and give you wisdom from above,

I subscribe myself Respectfully,
Yours, truly, in great haste.

CHARLES B. RAY.

New York, Sep. 17, 1844.

To the President of the State Convention, convened at Schenectady, on the 18th inst.

The subscriber, through you, sir, begs the privilege to state, that having, in connection with others, the responsibility imposed upon him of representing the city of New York, in your honorable and important convocation, deeply regrets that in consequence of severe indisposition, he is denied the anticipated happiness of discharging that responsibility, by participating in your intrinsically important deliberations.

This circumstance, unimportant to others, and to the noble cause for the promotion of which you are convened, causes anxiety to myself, that my brethren of the city of my earliest and some of my most pleasant recollections and associations, may be apprised of the cause of my absence, and further, that the noble, the disinterested band of patriots and
reformers, gathered from every section of our great, though to our people, unjust state, with whom it has been my high privilege, and honor to labor and pray at previous conventions, may rest assured that my love for the great principles which brought into existence this great conventional movement has in no wise abated, nor has my zeal, in their propagations, nor my confidence under God of their final and glorious triumph.

If God be just and true, His immutable and eternal truth, will ultimately annihilate that cruel prejudice, injustice and oppression, which in our state has plundered our franchise or fundamental rights, and with a cruel, bloody and wicked hand now crushes millions in this nation to the dust.

May I not hope for your forbearance whilst I express my great solicitude, that this convention, like those which have preceded it, guided by the spirit from on high in all its decisions may lean on God; planting itself on the great fundamental principles of his eternal and immutable truth, not on worldly expediency or on time serving policy. The present is a period of danger. The political tornado is now sweeping through the land. And it cannot be expected that we in common with the multitude should be effected more or less, by the miserable sophisms wielded by many of both of the two great political parties, to carry the nation. My confidence is in the principles upon which the Liberty party is based,—I believe they are just. But were it my happiness to be a member of the Convention I would not be anxious for its formal identification with this party. I should not advocate it, unless an issue between this and one of the other parties were forced upon me; or some action was proposed to the disparagement of the Liberty party. I would then feel religiously called upon to stand by liberty principles. If I was alone enjoying the sweet consciousness of having the truth with me, and the approbation of the God of the oppressed before whom as I am emphatically reminded I may be summoned to appear, before the return of another annual convention. Having had during the hours of my recent affliction, time for deliberate, solemn reflection on this subject with its bearings upon the nominally free and upon the more forlorn condition of our brethren in bonds. In humility I would say to my brethren of the delegation, if I were pronouncing my last dying words, adhere to these principles, swerve neither to the right or the left, they are in my humble judgment truth indestructible and God given.
Fear not results, leave them with God. He will take care of his own truth.

May the guidance and blessing of the Spirit from on high, the spirit of wisdom be upon the delegation. Amen.

THEODORE SEDGWICK WRIGHT.

The Finance committee reported as follows.

REPORT.

The Finance committee beg leave respectfully to report,

For lights for evening meeting, Quills and Paper, $4.50
For Liberty Songs, 4.00

Total, $8.50

Total amount received during the sessions of the convention by collections, $21.94

Leaving a balance on hand of $13.44

Moved, That Clarence P. Selden pay the above bill, and pass the balance in hand over to the committee appointed to publish the minutes.

The Chairman having announced that there was no more business claiming the attention of the convention,

On motion, the following resolutions were adopted.

Resolved, That this convention return their thanks to the Trustees of the 1st Baptist Church of Schenectady, for their kindness in granting the free use of their house of worship.

Resolved, That we return our thanks to our colored friends of Schenectady for their hospitality during our stay in this city.

Resolved, That we shall remember with gratitude the kindness of the citizens generally, during the sessions of this convention.

Resolutions were also adopted, thanking the sexton of the Church, the Vice Presidents, the Secretaries, and Business Committee of the convention, and one of thanks to the central committee. The Rev. H. H. Garnet then led the convention in devout thanks to Almighty God. After singing a hymn of praise, the convention Adjourned.