Rev. John Peterson
Wm. P. P.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Colored National Labor Convention

HELD IN,

WASHINGTON, D. C.,

ON

December 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th, 1869.

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ERRATUM.—Section 1 of article IX of the Constitution of the National Labor Union page 42, should read "shall pay a tax of ten CENTS annually per member," instea of "ten *dollars*."

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PROCEEDINGS.

The Convention was called to order by Isaac Myers, Esq., of Maryland, who read the call for the Convention; after which he nominated George T. Downing, of Rhode Island, temporary Chairman, who was unanimously chosen. Mr. Downing, on taking the chair, addressed the Convention:

FELLOW DELEGATES.—Accept my acknowledgment of an appreciation of the honor you have conferred on me, in selecting me to fill the responsible and honorable position of temporary chairman of this important gathering; be assured I shall strive to merit the implied confidence, by being strictly impartial in discharging the duties of the office. I shall know no one personally, but you all as equal delegates.

This convention bears the title "National Labor Convention;" I desire that it shall not falsify its name; that it be a "labor convention;" in a word that it shall labor, that it bring forth something. Much is expected of it; the eyes of every intelligent laborer of the land, without regard to color, are fixed on it; its doings will be eagerly caught up and canvassed by the laborers of Europe, now banding together to the end of causing labor to be respected, and of enjoying its just rewards.

That the colored, as well as the white laborers of the United States, are not satisfied as to the estimate that is placed on their labor, as to their opportunities, as to the remuneration for their labor, the call for this convention, and the very general and highly intelligent response which I gaze on in you, my fellow delegates, attest. No other class of men would be satisfied under the circumstances; why should we be?

The Republican party has been made an effective agent under God in liberating us from unrequited toil, from chattel thraldom—all of my class have been slaves by virtue of proscriptive laws, and still worse, the greater portion have been slaves by positive enactment, been deemed, declared, treated and adjudged slaves to all intents and purposes. We owe that party respect and support, in view of its agency in freeing us from that degradation. We think that it should have been more consistent, more positive in its dealings with our and the country's enemies; that it should not have set us free, but that it should have been with us in the wilderness; that it should have fed us during our pilgrimage; that it should have given us quails and manna, homes and the letter, the latter a fitting office of government. We should be secured in the soil, which we have enriched with our toil and blood, to which we have a double entitlement.

When the ratification of the proposed fifteenth amendment to the Constitution shall have been effected, with what has already been accomplished in the same direction, much of the adhesive element which has made the composite Republican party a unit have disappeared; for it to hold together, it must have attractive elements. Let the party have a wise financial policy. Let it be mindful of the fact, that the masses are becoming more and more intelligent; that the laboring man thinks, and is, therefore, restive; the mass are becoming so; they expect and will demand some legislation in their behalf; they realize that by being united, they can be an

influence equal to capital. That which is known as the labor movement is growing in strength. I beseech our friends to be mindful of the same, to take such action in the premises as will draw to their party, away from a corrupt dishonorable influence that is striving to ally itself with the labor movement, the honest and intelligent agitators for reform in the matter of labor; they, with the colored laborers and voters, will be a host for the right.

The colored man's struggle until now has been for naked existence, for the right to life and liberty; with the fifteenth amendment, henceforth his struggle will be in pursuit of happiness; in this instance, it is to turn his labor to the most effective account, to be respected therein; this is a great problem; it is racking the brains of the ablest economists; the most we can hope to effect, at this gathering, is a crude organization; the formation of a labor bureau to send out agents, to organize colored labor throughout the land, to effect a union with laborers without regard to color.

Good has come out of Nazareth. Slavery, when it existed, shut out the light to the end of shutting out the right; it had, however, to have some light for its own purposes. It did not permit the educated white mechanic and laborer from the North and abroad to come within its darkened abode; to have done so would have jeopardised its existence; hence, it had to and did teach its subjects, the slaves, mechanical arts: they now have those arts as freemen. In the North, from selfish motives, from prejudice, to serve their then Southern masters, they would not teach or encourage the colored man in mechanism; so that, whatever mechanical acquirements, with some exceptions, exist among colored men in the country, are to be found in the South. They are crying for organization. We desire Union with the white laborer for a common interest; it is the interest of both parties, that such a union should exist, with a fair, open, and unconcealed intent; with no aim to destroy any organization, political or otherwise; with no thought of fostering dishonor, whether in the nation or in individuals; repudiating all attempts to weaken obligations engaged in openly, seriously, with a full knowledge of the same; with an intent to share honorably all obligations "as nominated in the bond." I think that I may say, in behalf of the delegates here assembled, that they stand ready to extend an earnest hand of welcome to every effort, associated or otherwise, that looks to the dignity of labor, to its enjoyment of full remuneration and protection, and which shall manifest a spirit to be in harmony with capital in every instance, when capital shall be properly mindful of its true interest in harmonizing with labor.

Mr. Sampson, of North Carolina, nominated Mr. H. P. Harmon, of Florida, temporary Secretary; adopted.

On motion of Colonel W. U. Saunders, of Nevada, a committee of one from each State, Territory, and the District of Columbia on credentials were appointed.

On motion, Hon. J. H. Harris, of North Carolina, addressed the Convention.

On motion, Mr. Richard Trevellick, President of the National Labor Congress, was invited to address the Convention and to a seat on the platform.

On motion, Mr. John M. Langston, of Ohio, was invited to address the Convention.

The Committee on Credentials reported the names of two hundred and forty delegates, more than half of whom were not present. Report received and adopted.

On motion, a committee of one from each State, Territory, and the District of Columbia was appointed on permanent organization.

Pending the report of the committee, A. M. Powell, Esq., of New York, addressed the Convention.

The Committee on Permanent Organization reported the following, which was adopted:

PRESIDENT—Hon. James H. Harris, North Carolina.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

William F. Butler, New York;	M. Van Horn, Rhode Island;
William U. Saunders, Nevada;	Milton Holland, Ohio;
T. J. Mackey, South Carolina;	William Perkins, Maryland;
Charles H. Peters, D. C.;	James T. Rapier, Alabama:
William T. Hays, North Carolina;	Jeff. T. Long, Georgia;
Bishop J. P. Campbell, New Jersey;	Caleb Milburn, Delaware;
Rev. J. P. Evans, Virginia;	J. W. Menard, Louisiana;
Charles McGlynn, Connecticut;	Rev. J. Sella Martin, Massachusetts;
E. S. Francis, Florida;	G. B. Stebbins, Michigan;
O. L. C. Hughes, Pennsylvania;	Abram Smith, Tennessee;

SECRETARIES.

William U. Saunders, Nevada;	Lewis H. Douglass, District of Col.

ASSISTANT SECRETARIES.

Hon. H. P. Harmon, Florida;	G. S. Woodson, Pennsylvania.

SERGEANTS-AT-ARMS.

James Hammond, Maryland;	G. M. Mabson, North Carolina.

A committee was appointed to conduct the President to the chair.

After a brief speech from the President, the Convention adjourned till 7½ o'clock P. M.

EVENING SESSION.

DECEMBER 6, 1869.

Convention called to order by the President.

The Committee on Credentials presented the names of W. H. Lewis, of Washington, D. C.; W. U. Derrick, of Virginia, James Copeland, of Virginia; Charles Rolls, of Maryland; Rev. John R. Henry, of Maryland; and S. P. Cummins, of Massachusetts, which were entered on the roll as delegates.

Considerable excitement was created on announcing the name of Mr. McLane, President of the National Plasterer's Union. On obtaining the floor, Mr. Langston made a lengthy speech against his admission to membership, claiming that by his admission the Convention would give a *quasi* endorsement to the views held by the large proscriptive organization which he represented. He claimed that the gentleman alluded to held allegiance to no political party other than the Labor party, and that he intended to use his influence to build up a third party on the ruins of both the Republican and Democratic, that colored men could not in justice to themselves ignore, and, by uniting themselves to the policy of the already existing labor organizations, nullify all the good results of the Republican party; charging the Convention to beware how far they commit themselves, and to adopt a platform so broad that all the laboring men of the world might stand upon it, lending influence to that party only in so far that its members advance the black man side by side with themselves.

Mr. Downing, of Rhode Island, favored the admission of all who presented proper credentials, without regard to the views they had previously expressed in other movements. He proposed to convert those of a different policy to his own, having no fear of the intellect that gentleman might bring to bear against what the world recognized as exact justice to colored men and the interests of the laboring masses.

Mr. Myers, of Maryland, offered a resolution that committees be appointed to take into consideration the following subjects: Business, finance, education, address, platform, constitution and organization, female labor, co-operative labor, homesteads and public lands, railroad travel, national organ, and temperance; each committee to consist of five members.

After a protracted debate and offering of substitutes and amendments, the original resolution was adopted.

His honor the Mayor of the city then came forward and delivered the following address:

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION: In the name of our good people, and as the chief Executive of this city, I offer you our greetings and the heartfelt welcome to this the metropolis of the nation. I have watched with great interest for a long time past the movements of the workingmen and the friends of labor throughout the country in perfecting independent organizations for the protection of the rights and the advancement of the interests of labor and the laborer.

These movements I hail as springing naturally from the mighty and beneficent achievements of the great party of freedom and progress in its terrible battle with slavery; and I also hail with unfeigned satisfaction the assembling here in this our National Capital, so long one of the strongholds of the enemy, of a convention of free colored men—of free colored workingmen—in maintenance of the rights and interests of labor.

The old slogans of the oligarch were: "Slavery is the natural and normal condition of the laborer!" "Slavery is right and necessary, whether white or black!" Against these the great party of freedom arrayed its own noble weapons, "Free Speech, Free Labor, and Free Men;" and, planting itself fearlessly and firmly upon these noble principles—the inherent right of all men, of every race, to a perfect equality before the law—an equal right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"—it met, fought, and conquered the foul demon of slavery, which for so many years had ravaged all parts of our fair land in its conspiracy to debase labor and to degrade the laborer. This wicked spirit was buried forever in a felon's grave by the triumph of the Union armies, composed chiefly of laboring men from the free North.

Gentlemen, the laboring classes have a special history, nobler and grander than the oligarch's! To be sure, a distinguished member of the old pro-slavery chivalry, some years ago, in the House of Representatives, declared that "the existence of laborers and mechanics in organized societies was the result of the partial and progressive emancipation of slavery." Slavery, he contended, was their primordial and only natural condition. But history tells us that, in all ages of the world, the laborer has been the great, the mighty civilizer. Seated, personally free, at the foundation of the earliest societies or civilizations of antiquity, and all the other orders, spurning as degrading all connections with the arts, it was the genius of the laborer, the mechanic, and the cunning of his hand that built up all those magnificent monuments of art which lend a glory and grandeur to the civilization of those early periods.

Long and manfully, too, did the laborer maintain his freedom. But the lust of conquest in the breast of the oligarchy, whose chief occupation was that of war in pursuit of empire, destroyed the industrial classes, and introduced in their stead millions of miserable slaves.

Slavery and the debasement of the industrial classes destroyed in turn every nation of antiquity.

Hence, in modern eras, when the populations of Europe had been debauched by slavery and its accursed influences, they fell an easy prey to the Goth and Vandal—those free and hardy northern nations which established the present States of Europe upon the ruins of Rome. The feudal slavery, the feudal barbarism, which they established, necessarily crushed out what little of industrial art and prosperity

remained. The dark ages ensued, and with them every form of misfortune and misery. Had it not been for Christianity and its influences all Europe would have then relapsed into its primeval barbarism.

From this peril Europe, and the world, were rescued by the inherent manhood of the down-trodden laborer. Rising in his misery—

"With strength in his arm and lightning in his eye,"

the laborer, by his prowess and tenacity, soon taught his oligarchical tyrant to dread—

"The might that slumbers in a peasant's arm!"

Nor did he cease his war for freedom, for the rights of his humanity, until he had banished the worst form of bondage from Christendom, and transformed, by his genius, the degradation and misery, the barbarism of the dark ages, into the prosperity and comforts, the glory and light of our present civilization.

Gentlemen, this is a brief and rapid survey of this noble history of the laborer. It should be to you a history full of encouragement. Its examples should excite your emulation in your present movements for the vindication of your rights and interests as workingmen; for yours is the cause of humanity, the cause of civilization; and nothing is more true than that in proportion as its people are free, in proportion that its industrial classes are free and happy, just in proportion is the nation free, happy, and prosperous.

I therefore hail with the liveliest satisfaction your assembling here in the National Capital for the maintenance of the rights and interests of labor. I have always cherished these rights, and have labored to encourage and advance them, believing that in doing so I was fulfilling but my duties as a citizen, as a Christian, and a friend to humanity. It was so in the great battles with slavery.

The oligarch, revolting against the rapid strides of freedom and its beneficent institutions—revolting against a civilization which threatened the destruction of their own debasing tyranny—attempted to hurl back our country into the utter darkness and barbarism, into the poverty, misery, tyranny, and horrible wickedness of feudal times.

Thank God, they failed. Their failure, and the vindication of freedom and the rights of humanity in the triumph of the Union cause, has forever banished the destructive power of the oligarch from our country, and opened up a new era of freedom and manhood, in which all of every race stand before the laws as men and equals.

Hence I rejoice that you, a convention of colored workingmen, should assemble here for the purpose of asserting and securing the rights of your race in the maintenance of the rights of labor. The great and final battle for freedom having been fought and won, it is but proper that, as soldiers, citizens, and patriots, you should secure and take the necessary steps to properly preserve the fruits of the victory.

Labor gives energy and activity to the intellect. And I would advise every man—

First. To learn some trade, business, or profession.

Second. To follow the trade, business, or profession through life.

Third. To be regular and prompt in all your affairs.

Fourth. To be honest to yourself and you will be so to others.

Fifth. Do not put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day.

To the workingmen I would say, in the language of another, "Put on the armor of strength and intelligence, buckle to your side determination and energy, and demand and preserve your rights in the field, in the councils of the nation, and in all things wherein your happiness lies. Be frugal, hospitable, charitable, kind, and generous, and spurn him who would tax your hard toil without giving a fair equivalent. Disdain empty show, parade, and extravagance in everything, for they are incompatible with the dignity of sensible men, and that simplicity of life which conduces the most to health and happiness; and as surely as the sun that rises in the East to illumine your path shall set in the West to close the day the Great Overseer will be ready to pay the laborers their wages, the reward of their toil."

Again I tender you our heartiest greetings. I congratulate you upon the brilliant prospects of your race—upon the opening of our grand, new era and civilization, before which will pass away all the blighting prejudices and tyranny of despotism forever.

A resolution read in the morning session, relative to the action of the

Hon. A. M. Clapp in employing colored printers at the Government Printing Office in opposition to the ravings of negro haters, was taken up and passed.

After action on the above resolution the Hon. A. M. Clapp, Congressional Printer, was next discovered to be in the crowded audience, who, on motion, was invited to occupy the stand and address the Convention, which he did in eloquent terms, noting the vast changes that politics had produced in the people of the country. Alluding to the time when he commenced active life, men who held the advanced ideas of himself were sometimes socially ostracised, but, having the precepts of the New Testament for his guide, he believed himself to be right, and would continue to do his duty, fearing none but the great God above, who controls the affairs of men. Alluding to the appointment of Mr. Lewis H. Douglass as a compositor in the Government Printing Office, said he (Douglass) asked for employment. He asked him if he was a compositor; receiving an affirmative answer, he again asked for his name. On being told it, Mr. Clapp remarked, "I confess there was magic in that name; and I told him to go to work." He said that, having all the respect in the world for the gentlemen as individuals composing the Printers' Union, he has none whatever for their organization, and that Mr. Douglass shall stay in the office as long as he is Congressional Printer. That he requested the Printers' Union to modify their law regulating the number of apprentices that shall be employed to conform to his wishes, which they very graciously did, and that among the number of apprentices he has appointed two colored boys, one of whom is greatly above the average intelligence of boys of his age of any race.

Mr. Clapp was frequently applauded throughout the delivery of his address.

On motion of A. M. Green, of the District of Columbia, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That in the two gentlemen who have addressed us this evening, the Hon. Sayles J. Bowen and the Hon. A. M. Clapp, this Convention recognizes two of its most able and available champions and friends; men who by their aggressions upon the foul prejudice against the black man's right to an equal chance in the race of life entitle them to claim a place in the front rank of the great progressive party of this Republic.

Mr. Allen Coffin, of the District of Columbia, offered the following resolutions:

Resolved, That the accumulated wealth of the nation, being the result of labor already performed, ought to be taxed on a graduated basis, so as to make the burden of taxation to bear heaviest upon those who have reaped the lion's share of American toil.

Resolved, That the national debt ought to be paid in gold, or its equivalent, in accordance with the spirit and intent of the acts of Congress under which it was contracted.

Mr. Coffin made some very suggestive remarks germane to the great question at issue between capital and labor, which were favorably received and applauded, and asked that the resolutions be referred to the Business Committee.

Adjourned until 10 o'clock A. M. Tuesday, December 7, 1869.

SECOND DAY.

The Convention met this morning at 10 o'clock, and opened with prayer by the Rev. M. B. Derrick.

The Committee on Rules made a report, which, after considerable debate, was adopted.

The Committee on Credentials of Delegates from the States made a report, adding several more to the list as reported yesterday; which was adopted.

Mr. Martin moved that distinguished colored and white gentlemen be admitted to seats as honorary members. Adopted.

Mr. William Perkins, of Maryland, from the Committee on Finance, made a report, recommending that a tax of $2 be levied on each delegate to cover expenses.

Mrs. Colby, delegate of the District of Columbia, inquired if the ladies were to be included in the persons taxed.

Rev. Mr. Martin said that there was no distinction to be made on account of race, sex, or color.

Considerable debate took place on the question of taxing female delegates and as to the amount of tax levied on the members, many taking the ground that two dollars was more than was necessary. This debate was participated in by Prof. A. M. Green, of this District; Isaiah Wear, of Maryland; and B. H. Robinson, of Virginia.

Mr. George T. Downing said he was here at the great expense of his business, and he desired the Convention to come to business. Let us show that we can go down into our pockets, if necessary, to cover the expenses of this Convention. We have no right to tax the delegates two dollars without it is necessary. We have got to publish our proceedings and pay for stationery, and let us bear these expenses cheerfully.

It was finally agreed that one dollar be substituted for two dollars as the tax.

At this point a telegram was read from the Secretary of State elect of Mississippi, (Lynch,) dated Jackson, as follows:

To the President of the Colored Men's Convention:

Seventy thousand triumphant colored Radicals send greeting. [Applause.]

The Chair stated that the Finance Committee had retired to the basement to receive the fees, and he hoped the delegates would send in their amounts.

Mr. Downing, of New Jersey, offered the following, which was adopted:

That the rule usually termed "point of order" has not its usual controlling force; that the presiding officer has discretionary judgment in the matter.

A recess was here taken of thirty minutes to enable the delegates to settle the tax with the Committee on Finance.

The Convention reassembled at one o'clock.

Secretary Douglass offered a petition of the Engineers' Protective Union of Brooklyn, New York, setting forth the low condition of the colored race, and asking the Convention to encourage equal rights; that they be admitted into work-shops on the same terms as white men. Referred to the Business Committee.

Prof. A. M. Green asked the attention of the Convention to a newspaper article, which he read, in relation to the purposes of this organization, in which a hope was expressed that the colored men would avoid the mistake made by the white men's conventions held at Chicago and New York. In view of these suggestions he offered a resolution "that a committee of five be appointed, in connection with the Secretary, to secure the publication of authentic reports of the Convention in one or more of our city journals, and that said committee are hereby instructed to negotiate with the publishers of these proceedings to retain such matter as can be thrown into circular form

for distribution immediately on the rise of the Convention, and that the following gentlemen be designated the committee: J. M. Langston, J. R. W. Leonard, George T. Downing, Cornelius Clark, and F. G. Barbadoes." The resolution was adopted.

Mr. Jones, of the District of Columbia, offered a resolution that it is expedient that we should use our best endeavors to procure four millions of acres of our public domain for our humble poor for agricultural purposes within the States composing this Union. Referred to same Committee.

Mr. Hayes, of North Carolina, offered the following, which was referred:

Whereas the march of civilization, following our American example, indicates reforms, frequently through revolution, in many parts of the civilized world, particularly in this hemisphere; and whereas the struggling patriots of Cuba have shown by their sacrifice, philanthropy, valor, and conduct of a defense upon the principles of civilized warfare, their capacity to sustain themselves against a monarchical government to the end that "all men everywhere shall be free;" and whereas the future of a million and a half of our brethren and that of their posterity depends upon the success of the patriot arms in Cuba: Therefore be it

Resolved, That the Congress of the United States be assured that it is the sense of this Convention that the *immediate recognition* of the patriot army of Cuba as a belligerent power will meet the approval of the colored people of the country; and in the event of war growing out of such recognition this Convention pledges the full strength of colored Americans to sustain the Government.

Mr. Isaac Myers, from the Committee on Platform, reported the following as the platform of the Convention, and it was read; after which the Convention adjourned to 7½ P. M.:

Whereas labor has its privileges no less than its duties, one of which is to organize, and, if need be, to furnish reasons for its organization: Therefore,

Resolved, That labor was instituted by Almighty God as a means of revealing the rich endowments of inanimate creation to be understood and used by man, and that labor is a duty common to, and the natural heritage of, the human family, each person having a natural right to labor in any field of industry for which he or she is capacitated, the right to be governed and restricted only by the laws of political economy.

Resolved, That capital is an agent or means used by labor for its development and support, and labor is an agent or means used by capital for its development and general enhancement, and that, for the well-being and productiveness of capital and labor, the best harmony and fellowship of action should at all times prevail, that "strikes" may be avoided and the workingman convinced that justice is done him, and that he is receiving an equivalent for the labor performed.

Resolved, That there should be a frequent interchange of opinions upon all questions affecting alike the employer and employed, and that co-operation for the purpose of protection and the better remuneration of labor is a sure and safe method, invading no specific rights, but is alike beneficial to the whole community, and tends to lift the working classes to higher achievements and positions in society, presents the necessity of and increases the desire to give their children a more liberal education, induces the practice of economy in the distribution of their earnings, and accelerates the accumulation of wealth, with all the happiness that must necessarily ensue therefrom.

Resolved, That intemperance is the natural foe and curse of the American family, especially the working classes, its terrible effects being to disease, corrupt, and otherwise disfigure and destroy the constitution, producing vice, crime, and poverty where peace and plenty would otherwise exist.

Resolved, That education is one of the strongest safeguards of republican institutions, the bulwark of American citizenship, and a defense against the invasion of the rights of man; its liberal distribution to all, without regard to race, creed, or sex, is necessary for the well being and advancement of society, and that all should enjoy its blessing alike in each of the States and Territories of the United States; that educated labor is more productive, is worth, and commands, higher rates of wages, is less dependent upon capital; therefore it is essentially necessary to the rapid and permanent development of the agricultural, manufacturing, and mechanical growth and interests of the nation that there shall be a liberal free school system enacted by the Legislatures of the several States for the benefit of all the inhabitants thereof.

Resolved, That the Government of the United States, republican in form, is a Government of the people, for the people, and by the people, and that all men are equal in political rights and entitled to the largest political and religious liberty compatible with the good order of society, as, also, the use and enjoyment of the fruits of their labor and talents; and that no laws should be made by any legislative body to the advantage of one class and against the interest and advantage of the other, but that all legislation should be for the benefit of all the people of any particular State and of the United States, to the end that loyalty to and love for the institutions and the Government of the United States should be a permanent consideration with all the citizens thereof.

Resolved, That we return our thanks to Divine Providence for the immense natural resources that are within the geographical limits of the United States of America, whereby the application of diligent and patient labor is capable of producing from our earth all the necessities for human existence and the comfort of man, and. from its vast and unbounded supply, has become the greatest moral agent known to man, in that it affords a refuge for the oppressed of all lands to improve their condition, and, by the influence of our institutions, elevate them to their proper standard of manhood, its rebounding influence is to destroy the tyranny and despotism of the Old World.

Resolved, That we feel it to be a duty that we owe to ourselves, to society, and to our country, to encourage by all the means within our reach industrial habits among our people, the learning of trades and professions by our children without regard to sex; to educate and impress them with the fact that all labor is honorable and a sure road to wealth; that habits of economy and temperance, combined with industry and education, is the great safeguard of free republican institutions, the "elevator of the condition of man, the motive power to increase trade and commerce, and to make the whole people of this land the wealthiest and happiest on the face of the globe."

Resolved, That regarding the labor of the country the common property of the people, that no portion should be excluded therefrom because of a geographical division of the globe in which they or their forefathers were born, or on account of statutes or color, but that every man or woman should receive employment according to his or her ability to perform the labor required, without any other test; that the exclusion of colored men and apprentices from the right to labor in any department of industry or workshops in any of the States and Territories of the United States by what is known as "Trades' Unions" is an insult to God and injury to us, and disgrace to humanity. While we extend a free and welcome hand to the free immigration of labor of all nationalities, we emphatically deem imported contract Coolie labor to be a positive injury to the working people of the United States; is but the system of slavery in a new form, and we appeal to the Congress of the United States to rigidly enforce the act of 1862, prohibiting Coolie importation, and to enact such other laws as will best protect, and free, American labor against this or any similar form of slavery.

Resolved, That we do not regard capital as the natural enemy of labor; that each is dependent on the other for its existence; that the great conflict daily waged between them is for the want of a better understanding between the representatives of capital and labor, and we therefore recommend the study of political economy in all of our labor organizations as a means to understand the relationships of labor to capital, and as a basis for the adjustment of many of the disputes that arise between employer and employee.

Resolved, That we recommend the establishment of co-operative workshops, land, building, and loan associations among our people as a remedy against their exclusion from other workshops on account of color, as a means of furnishing employment as well as a protection against the aggression of capital, and as the easiest and shortest method of enabling every man to procure a homestead for his family; and, to accomplish this end we would particularly impress the greatest importance of the observance of diligence in business, and the practice of rigid economy in our social and domestic arrangements.

Resolved, That we regard the use of intoxicating liquors as the most damaging and damnable habits practiced by the human family; that we denounce the infamous practice planters have in drenching their employees with this poison drug, (with or without cost,) intended to stupefy their brain and incapacitate them to know the condition of their accounts, the value of their labor, and to rob them of their sense and feelings of humanity; that we appeal to our people to discountenance the use of intoxicating liquors because of its effects to shorten life, and because it is the great

cause of so much misery and poverty among the working classes of the country, and we advise the organization of temperance associations as a necessary instrument for the speedy and permanent elevation of our people.

Resolved, That we regard education as one of the greatest blessings that the human family enjoys, and that we earnestly appeal to our fellow-citizens to allow no opportunity, no matter how limited or remote, to pass unimproved; that the thanks of the colored people of this country are due the Congress of the United States for the establishment and maintenance of the Freedmen's Bureau, and to Major General O. O. Howard, Commissioner, Rev. J. W. Alvord and John M. Langston, Esq., General Inspectors, for their co-operative labors in the establishment and good government of hundreds of schools in the Southern States, whereby thousands of men, women, and children have been and are now being taught the rudiments of an English education. The thanks of the whole people are due to these philanthropists and friends to the benevolent institutions of this, and other countries, for the means and efforts in money and teachers furnished whereby our race is being elevated to the proper standard of intelligent American citizens, and we appeal to the friends of progress and to our citizens of the several States to continue their efforts; to the various Legislatures until every State can boast of having a free school system that knows no distinction in dissemination of knowledge to its inhabitants on account of race, color, sex, creed, or previous condition; and

Resolved, That we recommend a faithful obedience to the laws of the United States and of the several States in which we may reside; that the Congress and the courts of the United States have ample power to protect its citizens. All grievances, whether personal or public, should be carried to the proper tribunal, and from the lowest to the highest, until justice is granted; that armed resistance against the laws is treason against the United States and ought to be summarily punished. We further appeal to the colored workingmen to form organizations throughout every State and Territory, that they may be able in those districts far removed from courts of justice to communicate with the Bureau of Labor to be established by the National Labor Union, and that justice may be meted out to them as though they lived in the large cities, where justice is more liberally distributed; that loyalty and love for the Government may be fostered and encouraged, and prosperity and peace may pervade the entire land.

ISAAC MYERS,
HENRY LEE,
HARRY S. HARMON,
REV. JOS. P. EVANS.

The Committee on Business offered a resolution authorizing the Chair to appoint a Committee on Public Meeting, who shall solicit material aid to defray the expenses of this Convention.

The Chair announced the standing committees on the following business of the Convention: On education, address, platform, constitution and organization, female labor, temperance, printing, co-operative labor, public lands, railroads and travel, and banks savings.

J. M. Simms, of Georgia, offered a resolution indorsing the President's message in relation to the State of Georgia and the political condition of that State. Adopted.

Mr. Hays, of North Carolina, introduced a resolution that the colored people sustain the new organ of the colored people to be published in the District of Columbia, to be called the "New Era." Referred to the Business Committee.

The Committee on Addresses was enlarged so as to embrace one from each State and Territory.

The Convention then adjourned at 4 o'clock to meet at 7.30.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention reassembled in the evening, and after prayer by Bishop Loguen, of New York, Mr. L. H. Douglass offered the following:

Resolved, That a special committee of five, composed of genuine laborers or practical mechanics, or artisans, be appointed by the Chair to draft a plan for the organization of a national union of laboring men to the end of securing a recognition of colored laborers and mechanics in the various workshops of the land; that the said national union submit a plan to the colored people of the country for organizing subordinate unions for the furtherance of the object in view.

Mr. McLean, of Boston, was invited to address the Convention, and made an interesting address.

Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, was next introduced. He said the Convention had assembled for a great cause, the elevation and improvement of a race who had long been trodden down—the toiling millions. It was important to act with charity to each other, but he thought the people of the country were making rapid progress in intellectual and mechanical improvement. Ten years ago the condition of the colored race was precarious, and none could speak a word for their rights without peril of life; and now the colored race is as free as any other in the land. Ten years ago the colored man was not permitted to go into the Capitol, nor enter the Capitol grounds; now he was as free as any one, and he hoped in a short time to welcome them as Senators. He did not believe in railway dynasties or any other dynasties, and if he had his way he would make a law making free railways. He wanted the public domain administered so as to be of benefit to the poor man, white and black.

At the conclusion of Mr. Wilson's remarks he was greeted by long-continued applause.

Mr. I. G. Wears, of Philadelphia, then addressed the Convention. He doubted very much if a white man is a natural man, or a black man is a natural man. The middle was the normal color of the human race. Both the white and black man are truants from the natural and original color of the human species. The color was only incident to the climate, and the physical development to the condition man is placed in. We demand our right to vote, not because of our color, but because we are men. If a man comes here from China, what right have we to refuse him the right to vote? This right is a protection. He had no objection to making money out of men's muscle. We were all striving to do what we can for ourselves. Every man will gravitate to the condition he is fitted to perform.

Mr. J. T. Rapier, of Georgia, next addressed the Convention, and said if it could do something to relieve those of the South of their burden it will have accomplished a great deal. There never was a class made such progress as the colored laborers in the South. They have to pay high rents to their former masters for the use of their broad acres. If they can obtain the wild lands of Kansas or other new States, they can live and thrive there without paying tribute. As to the eight-hour law, it will amount to nothing in the South. As to women's rights, he hoped it would be confined north of the Ohio River.

Mrs. Mary Carey, of Canada, made a few remarks, and the Convention adjourned.

THIRD DAY.

The Convention reassembled at 10 o'clock to-day, and opened with prayer by Bishop Campbell, of New Jersey.

A committee of three was appointed to revise the roll of delegates.

The Committee on Finance, through its chairman, B. M. Adgers, reported that $143 had been collected, and the expenses of the Convention had been $271, leaving a deficit of $128.

Mr. G. S. Woodson, of Pennsylvania, offered a resolution requesting the Governors of the States where there are Republican Legislatures not as yet having adopted the Fifteenth Amendment, to call their respective Legislatures together for the ratification of said amendment. Referred.

Mr. Warren, of Virginia, offered a resolution that we include the use of tobacco as among the great wastes of our resources, and recommend to all workingmen to practice economy in this as well as in the use of liquor. Referred.

The resolution offered by L. H. Douglass at last evening's session, relative to the appointment of a special committee to draft a plan for the organization of a national union of laboring men, to the end of securing recognition of colored laborers and mechanics in the various workshops of the land, and to submit a plan to the colored people of the country for organizing subordinate unions for the furtherance of the object in view, was taken up and discussed at length, and adopted.

Mr. Bowen, of the District of Columbia, offered a resolution tendering thanks to President Grant, the Cabinet officers, and General O. O. Howard, for their kind consideration of the colored race, in giving employment to them when found competent to fill places of trust. Referred.

Mr. J. J. Wright, of South Carolina, from the Committee on Railroads and Travel, reported in favor of recommending that a bureau be created, to which this matter, with others relating to the exclusion of colored people from the cars, be referred, and that a fund be created to prosecute any such case of exclusion, under the Civil Rights bill, and to test the virtue of that bill. Referred.

Mr. Myers, of Pennsylvania, offered a resolution that the President and Vice President of this Convention be a delegation to wait on the President of the United States and tender the congratulations of this Convention on behalf of the colored laborers of the United States. Adopted.

The Committee on Printing reported that arrangements had been made to secure a correct report of the proceedings of the Convention in pamphlet form.

Mr. W. J. Wilson, of the District of Columbia, from the Committee on Savings Banks, reported the following:

Gentlemen of the Labor Convention:

In all communities where labor is properly organized the interest of the poor man is held to be of chief importance. It is the man who, in days of health and prosperity, can save but little above a bare living, and who, in days of sickness and forced idleness, must, with his family, suffer or live on charity, whom wise laws seek to protect. And this is right, because the poor are in all places the vast majority. For this great multitude the way to a better condition should be laid open, and the free school, the open Bible, the Savings Bank, and every invitation to intelligence, virtue, and economy meet all who travel it.

After a careful examination of the statistics of Savings Banks, we have found that wherever labor is best paid, and the improvement of the condition of the laboring classes most carefully considered, there Savings Banks abound; there depositors are most numerous, and the aggregate of savings the largest. Thus—

In Massachusetts, at the date of the latest report to the Legislature, there were in the State, 108 Savings Banks; 350,000 depositors, and $80,431,583.

In the little State of Rhode Island, 25 Banks; 59,071 depositors, and $21,413,648.

In the cities of New York and Brooklyn, 41 Banks; 405,591 depositors, and $116,971,953; and in the whole State of New York, in 1868, the aggregate capital in all the Savings Banks reached the enormous aggregate of $151,127,562.

In the State of Rhode Island one person out of every three has a deposit in some Savings Bank.

In Massachusetts and Connecticut, one in every three and one-half.

In the six New England States, one in every 4.89. In New York, one in 7.22.

But the Savings Bank as an *institution*—as a great conservator of the well-being of the poor, as a perpetual invitation in each city, town, and village to youth and health to put safely by something against the day of old age and sickness—is just beginning to find a footing South of the Potomac. Until the close of the late war there was no civilized labor in the South. The *employer* was at the same time the *owner* of the laboring man. What inducement was there for the toiler to put by his money? What money of his own had he to put by?

With the earnest desire to place within reach of the disenthralled race the opportunity and incentive to careful savings and safe keeping of small earnings, at the close of the war, Congress granted a charter to a company called *The Freedman's Savings and Trust Company*, with authority to establish, in any one of our States, Savings Banks for the safe-keeping and investment in the stocks, bonds, and Treasury notes of the United States the savings of the people of color. One of the last acts of the lamented President Lincoln was to affix his signature to the charter giving legal existence to this company. This was in March, 1865. Let us now show, in a few words, what has been done by this company in the space of less than five years:

In that comparatively short time, Banks for savings have been established in Augusta, Macon, and Savannah, Georgia; in Beaufort and Charleston, South Carolina; in Jacksonville and Tallahassee, Florida; in Mobile and Huntsville, Alabama; in New Orleans, Louisiana; in Vicksburg, Mississippi; in Chattanooga, Memphis, and Nashville, Tennessee; in Louisville, Kentucky; in St. Louis, Missouri; in Martinsburg, Richmond, and Norfolk, Virginia; in Raleigh, Wilmington, and Newbern, North Carolina; and in Washington, Baltimore, and New York, with a parent or principal office in this city.

Beginning with nothing, of course, in the midst of a people just escaped from the shackles of slavery, at the end of one year from the date of its charter, to wit, on the 1st day of

March, 1866,	deposits were		$305,167 24
" 1867	"	"	1,624,853 33
" 1868	"	"	3,582,378 36
" 1869	"	"	7,257,798 63

and to-day the aggregate of all the deposits is over *ten millions!*

Of course there have been constant and heavy drafts from these aggregations. Depositors, when they have accumulated a few hundred dollars in the Bank, quite naturally desire to buy a piece of land, or to enter upon some mercantile or mechanical pursuit. So they draw out money which, but for the Bank, would probably never have been saved, and invest as they see opportunity. A population of small landowners, traders, and mechanics—the very element of a true Democratic civilization—is appearing on the once lordly domains of the planter. The former chattel, thrown upon his own resources, is called, by the necessities of his position, to look out for to-morrow. So he needs his earnings from time to time. The drafts, for the period above specified, were as follows:

Year ending March 1,	1867,	$1,225,928 16
"	1868	2,944,079 36
"	1869	6,184,368 71

At the last date, the net deposit remaining in the Bank, invested in United States securities or in cash and office property, was $1,073,429 92. On the 31st of October, the date of the latest published report, this deposit had reached $1,340,133 94. It will probably have reached *two millions* within the next year.

These savings, as fast as accumulated, are loaned to the United States, *i. e.*, invested in their bonds and stocks. The company has paid up to November 1st, 1869, regularly to its depositors interest at the rate of 5 per cent. in tri-ennial instalments, which, on being entered on the depositor's book as a new deposit, gives him really 1⅔ per cent. each four months, compounded three times per annum.

In connection with the other work of the Bank, it issues monthly,—for gratuitous distribution, to stimulate its patrons to habits of temperance, thrift, and frugality—a newspaper, which is sought for eagerly.

We may add that we find this Bank to be established on the mutual principle. Each depositor is a stockholder to the amount of his deposits. After paying, out of its income, the expenses of the business of the institution, the balance of its profits are distributed to its depositors every four months. The larger the amount of its deposits the greater the advantage to the stockholder, *i. e.*, to the depositor.

Every man, woman, or child, who is able to deposit $5 in this Bank is a stockholder to that amount, and receives his or her share of the profits which may accrue from the successful management of its business.

Your committee have to report that the opposition among the white people of the South to the progress of these Banks is disappearing; that the security and safety of the Bank is now thoroughly established; that it has purchased, in the city of Washington, a property directly opposite the United States Treasury, where it will build a convenient Banking-house in the coming year; that the best friends of the colored people are the friends and patrons of this Bank. Major General O. O. Howard calls it the "best educator in the field." Among the names of its trustees are found those of Henry D. Cooke, Esq., of the house of Jay Cooke & Co.; Hon. J. M. Brodhead, of the United States Treasury; Gen. B. W. Brice, Paymaster General U. S. Army; Bishop S. Talbot, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and others well known throughout the land.

But, though the deposits have reached one-and-a-half millions of dollars, your committee think that such amount but poorly represents the savings of the colored people within reach of the influence of this company. There are within easy reach of its 25 Bank 300,000 laboring people of color. If each had only $10 in the Bank the aggregate would be *three millions*—more than double the sum now on deposit in them. Or, if out of the three hundred thousand people referred to above, the same proportion were depositors as are found among the laboring people of Rhode Island, we would have 100,000 depositors and $50,000,000.

In conclusion, your committee would report the following resolutions:

Resolved, That, as an aid to the laboring man, affording a safe and profitable place of investment for his small savings, we commend the National Freedman's Savings Bank.

Resolved, That we are of the opinion that in all the principal cities of the South the colored people should unite in establishing Savings Banks, which we believe to be an incentive to economy, as well as a proper place for keeping its fruits.

WILLIAM J. WILSON,
F. G. BARBADOES,
ABRAM SMITH,
J. M. TURNER,
JAMES HARRIS,
Committee.

The Committee on National Organ reported the following, which was adopted:

Whereas the necessity of a national journal, to be published in Washington, in the labor, educational, and political interests of the colored people of the country, is deeply felt by all classes of our people, and such an organ having been in contemplation, for some months by our leading men; and

Whereas the scheme now bids fair to be a success under the editorial charge and management of colored men and the paper, to be known as "The New Era," to be issued in a few days. Therefore be it

Resolved, That the "New Era" be, and is indorsed, by this Convention as the organ of the laboring men of the country, recommended to our fellow-citizens as the proper exponent of our sentiments.

SELLA MARTIN,
W. U. SAUNDERS,
ISAIAH WEIR,
G. P. ROURK,
F. G. BARBADOES.

J. M. Langston, from the Committee on Address, reported the following

ADDRESS.

The Relations of the Colored People to American Industry.

The laboring class of any community, educated and united, constitute its strength. And in so far forth as the leading men thereof realize and appreciate this consideration, they will be able to raise the masses of those identified with them in condition to rank and influence socially and legally.

Among the colored men of this country there is no small amount of industrial

capacity, native and acquired. All over the South and among the colored people of the North, workmen in gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, brick, mortar and the arts, are found doing skillfully and at usual wages the most difficult tasks in their several departments of labor. Nor are these workmen generally engaged by white men who, superintending their work, can claim, upon any just ground, that the genius and art displayed belong to the employers. As illustrating this statement, it may be appropriately mentioned that perhaps the most accomplished gunsmith among the Americans is a black man, an ex-slave of North Carolina, who not long since received special notice from the Prince of Wales, to whom he presented a pistol of his own make, and received in return, as a token of consideration from the heir apparent of the English throne, a magnificent medal of rare value. It is perhaps true, too, that the most finished cabinet-maker and blacksmith of our country is of the same class. And it is said to be the fact that the most valuable invention given us by the South, the cotton plough, (the patentee of which formerly resided in Mississippi,) was the creature of a slave's genius.

Here, too, it may be mentioned, with no inconsiderable pride, that one of the finest landscape painters of our country, and one of the finest sculptoresses is of African descent; the former distinguished especially as giving life and utterance from canvas to several of Milton's matchless poetical creations in the "Paradise Lost," and the other as making the spirit of the noble Andrew of Massachusetts to breathe and speak through the life-like lips and features of plaster. Individual instances of colored persons engaged in commerce as wholesale and retail dealers in many of the larger cities of the North and South might be mentioned New Orleans, Mobile, Charleston, Savannah, Raleigh, Richmond, Nashville, Austin, Helena, Louisville, St. Louis, Leavenworth, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, New York, Philadelphia, several of the largest cities of New England, and the capital of the United States furnish illustrations in proof of this statement.

But it may be claimed that these are isolated and exceptional cases. Let us, therefore, consider this matter from a broader standpoint. Let us take the case of the freedmen in one of the States as presenting a fair average of their condition in this regard—and we name North Carolina. We offer the words of the general inspector of the schools for freedmen, under the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, as especially significant in their bearing on this point. In one of his reports for 1868, in speaking of the freed people of North Carolina, he says:

"More than one-third of the entire colored population of North Carolina are mechanics. They are nearly six to one as compared with white mechanics. The census gives less than 20,000 of the latter, while there are more than 60,000 of the former. All the mechanical occupations are represented by them; blacksmiths, gunsmiths, wheelwrights, millwrights, machinists, carpenters, cabinet-makers, plasterers, painters, shipbuilders, stonemasons, and bricklayers are found among them in large numbers. There are also among them many pilots and engineers. Nor are they behind any class of workmen in the skill, taste and ability which are usually exhibited in their several trades. Of the pilots and engineers running steamboats on the different rivers of this State, many of the very best are colored men. It is said that the two most trustworthy pilots in North Carolina are freedmen; one of whom is running a steamboat on Cape Fear river, and the other across Albermarle sound, and on the Chowan and Blackwater rivers. The former is paid $15 per month more than any other pilot on the river, because of his superior ability. The engineer on the boat run by this pilot, is also a freedman, and is said to be one of the best in the State.

"The colored mechanics, when employed, command the usual wages paid others of like calling, and are now constantly taking work upon their own responsibility, and doing it to the satisfaction of their employers. One of the most interesting sights which it was my good fortune to witness while in the State, was the building of a steamboat on Cape Fear river by a colored shipbuilder, with his gang of colored workmen."

What is thus said of the freed people of North Carolina is in greater or less degree true of the same class in the various States of the South; for in the general degradation of labor, produced and fostered by slavery as it formerly existed, the slave was made to do all kind of work, mechanical as well as agricultural, and so became the artisan as well as field-hand of that region.

The consideration that the freedman is the field-hand, the agricultural laborer of the South, is one of no small significance, since the two great staples which distinguish

Southern industry cannot be grown successfully without his labor. This is abundantly proved by the fact that attempts which have been made since the war by Northern capitalists to grow cotton and sugar on Southern plantations upon plans suggested by their Northern experience, and contrary to the method of culture adopted by the colored laborers of the South, have proved abortive and disastrous in well nigh every instance, as too many men, shipwrecked in means by their efforts at fortune-making in growing these staples are ready to testify.

It is not to be inferred from this statement that the general ignorance of the ex-slave is forgotten, nor is any one to presume therefrom that slavery is to be regarded as having been a school with special claims to consideration by reason of its peculiar adaptability to impart extraordinary and valuable instruction in the art of cotton and sugar culture. All that is intended is, that an experience of two hundred and forty-five years as the laborer in cotton and sugar fields, has given the negro, though denied school, church and civilizing and elevating influences, such knowledge of the soil and its improvement, the nature and treatment of the cotton seed and plant, the tillage and growth of sugar cane; the seasons and their usual and abnormal effects upon crops; the agricultural implements and their proper regulation for use, as to make him, above all others, for the time being, the successful cultivator of these products.

It will not be denied by any intelligent person that the rough, unlettered farmer of Ohio and Illinois, who has had fifty years experience in the cultivation of corn and wheat in those States, can furnish better and more valuable information with regard to the soil, its productiveness, and the advantageous tillage of these Western staples, than Greeley or Emerson, although the former writes on topics of political economy, while the latter announces and expounds theories of philosophy and morals.

With a voting power under our present and just system of reconstruction of seven hundred and fifty thousand electors, and an actual laboring force of three millions, out of four millions and a quarter of hardy sons and daughters of toil, native to the soil, inured to the climate, acquainted with the habits and customs of the people generally, and knowing by an experience more valuable, perhaps, than the learning of the books, the methods of agriculture, the different systems of mechanical labor, and the common and less complicated affairs of commerce, we are an element in the industry of the country of importance, value, and power.

But for our own good and the welfare of our country in all things pertaining to her material and moral well-being, we seek a better and broader opportunity to gain knowledge in the fields of agricultural, mechanical, commercial, artistic, and professional labor, and this knowledge we would energise, direct, and make more largely effective through the enlightening and sanctifying influence of education. Our mottoes are liberty and labor, enfranchisement and education! The spelling-book and the hoe, the hammer and the vote, the opportunity to work and to rise, a place on which to stand, and to be and to do, we ask for ourselves and children as the means in the use of which, under God, we are to compass these achievements which furnish the measure, the test, and justification of our claim to impartial treatment and fair dealing.

That this end may be reached, we ask, first of all, that trades be opened to our children and that they be given the benefit of a just and equitable system of apprenticeship; in the second place, that for every day's labor given we be paid full and fair remuneration, and that no avenue of honest industry be closed against us; and thirdly, since we believe that the intelligence, the elevation, and happiness of all people depends in no small degree upon the diversity of their industrial pursuits, we ask that we may work in the printing office, whether private or governmental, in the factory, the foundry, the workshop, upon the railroad, the canal, the river, the steamboat, in the warehouse, the store, wherever labor is to be done and an able and faithful workman is wanted we conceive that we may claim a place without distinction as to our color or former condition, since all that can be demanded by the employer is ability, faithful performances of the contract made, and the employee reasonable treatment and the compensation promised. Hence, while we condemn that spirit which in its proscriptive regulations denies us industrial opportunity and the fruits of honest toil, we rejoice in all those evidences of prospective good which we and other laboring classes see in the erection of factories and foundries in Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, promising that our strong and labor-hardened hands, our intellectual powers, quickened by the influences of education, and our purposes made doubly earnest by considerate treatment and the prospect of just compensation, shall all be given to the development of the industrial resources of our several States in the interest of our employers.

Recognizing ourselves as native Americans, and knowing ourselves as members of the great American body politic, while we ask the recognition and protection due any and all of like political condition, as in the past, so in all time to come, with unfettered limb and manly endeavor we shall labor with our white fellow-countrymen, native and naturalized, in mine, on farm, in workshop, in foundry, in factory, everywhere, to develope the material and industrial powers of our land, making wind, water, and earth to aid in the accomplishment of its mission of liberty and law, honor and justice, Christianity and civilization.

And while this is our purpose, and feeling, as all other intelligent and honest citizens must, the value of national honesty and honor, and the responsibility of each citizen and every class of citizens for its sacred maintenance; while we demand that all contracts made in the interest of the Government be liberally and fully met, according to their terms, we promise, to this end, more than a tithe, if need be, of the fruits of our industry, as our influence and votes, that our national obligations receive no detriment. As we tolerate no political party which favors repudiation, so will we co-operate in no movement, industrial or other, which proposes or countenances it. In all laboring men's movements, as in political organizations, we hold as binding and inviolable the sentiment that the national honor and the national faith should be maintained in all its fullness, being as sacred as the sovereignty which we have pledged as its sure guaranty.

Notwithstanding all these things, said with regard to our purposes of loyalty, the elements of our strength, as far as labor of an agricultural, mechanical, commercial, artistic, and other character is concerned; and notwithstanding, in an important sense, the freedmen are the laborers and mechanics of the South, as matters stand, necessarily so, supplying the bone and muscle of the industry of that section, we are not insensible of our weakness in our disorganized condition, and our utter inability to compel a full and just recognition of our claims for larger and more certain compensation for services rendered, and a larger opportunity to follow those diversified pursuits of industry which in New England and our Northern States generally have done so much to enlighten, elevate, and bless the people.

This brings us to a question of vital moment: Is it practicable to so organize our industrial forces and direct our labor as to compel the wealthy classes, the landholders and planters, to recognize and admit our power and respect our claims accordingly?

The importance and difficulty of answering this question every intelligent person friendly to the laboring masses of the world must appreciate. In our case, however, it is indeed doubly difficult and vexing, by two considerations, which make it proper for us to ask and expect legislative action by Congress in our behalf. In the first place, our people are not only poor, but they are the objects in their comparatively new condition of freedom of a hatred which shows itself in demonstrations of outrage and blood-shed in many parts of the South to such an extent as to require, if our interests, industrial and other, are to be protected, immediate and positive action on the part of State and federal officials. In the second place, by reason of our too-long oppressive and degrading life as slaves we are, as far as our masses are concerned, ignorant of the many benefits resulting from co-operative labor.

This latter difficulty will only be overcome as, through education, we more thoroughly comprehend the value of combined effort on the part of the laborer to secure consideration and wealth. Of the good purpose of the Government to protect us, and, as far as need be, put within our reach the opportunity and means of education, our treatment since our emancipation affords reasonable assurance.

We have attempted the solution of this question, in the organization of our National Bureau of Industry, with none other than anxious and earnest solicitude for the welfare of our working millions and their posterity.

We would unite all these masses upon a principle of common interest, whose accomplishment is practicable, and by which their highest earthly good may be compassed.

We would, therefore, have the laborer understand that acres, however vast, in plantations, however immense—uncultivated, are profitless, like principles promulgated through party platforms unaccepted by popular endorsement at the polls; and besides, that these uncultivated acres cannot be made profitable without labor, any more than political principles can be made influential and effective through party agency, without the approval of the popular will.

We would teach that labor is the parent of capital, and that well-directed, intelligent and united industry brings national wealth, as it brings individual competence and independence.

While our organization is one which springs out of justice and self-defence, aiming not at conflict with capital, but seeking rather, so to adjust the relations of labor to capital, as to secure the just and fair treatment of each by the other, we found it in reason and moderation. Speaking comprehensively, while the interest and welfare of labor are cared for fully, no unwarranted and unfair exactions are made of capital whether its power be exercised through corporate or individual method. In other words, still the mutual and dependent relations of labor and wealth we would neither ignore nor rudely disturb. The laborer needs and must have the compensation which service brings. Without it he cannot secure either the necessaries of life or the means of support and educate his children, nor upon the other hand, is the wealth of the employer of such intrinsic worth as to be valuable above and beyond its use, in making effective the muscle and energy of labor.

"The Irishman would starve if not employed by the railroad company," said a brainless and heartless agent thereof. "But," replied the sagacious and philosophical son of the Green Isle, when thus addsessed, "there would have been no railroad had God not made the Irishman to dig and shovel." Whether the Irishman be indispensable to railroad building, the principle here indicated is correct. It is digging and shoveling which make capital valuable; and the wealthy of this and other lands, once poor but now affluent, can testify that this saying is not altogether figurative.

Such are the interests of capital and labor, so mutual and intertwined in the great aims to be reached, the enterprises to be carried forward for the highest good of mankind, that to disturb them by inconsiderate and ill-advised action, on the part of the people or Government, is to violate a command written in the necessities of the race, and which may be fitly interpreted in the words of the injunction with regard to wedlock, "What God has joined together let no man put asunder." Thus married in interest we would have this bride and groom go forward multiplying their blessings in the earth, their happy relations in nowise disturbed by contentions or acts which show the one a tyrannical lord, or the other a menial cringing slave.

In our organization we make no discrimination as to nationality, sex, or color. A labor movement based upon such discrimination, and embracing a small part of the great working masses of the country, while repelling others because of its partial and sectional character, will prove to be of very little value. Indeed, such a movement, narrow and divisional, will be suicidal, for it arrays against the classes represented by it all other laboring classes which ought to be rather allied in the closest union, and avoid these dissensions and divisions which in the past have given wealth the advantage over labor.

We would have "the poor white man" of the South, born to a heritage of poverty and degradation, like his black compeer in social life, feel that labor in our organization seeks the elevation of all its sons and daughters; pledges its united strength not to advance the interests of a special class; but in its spirit of reasonableness and generous catholicity would promote the welfare and happiness of all who "earn their bread in the sweat of their brow."

With us, too, numbers count, and we know the maxim, "in union there is streng h," has its significance in the affairs of labor no less than in politics. Hence our industrial movement, emancipating itself from every national and partial sentiment, broadens and deepens its foundations so as to rear thereon a superstructure capacious enough to accommodate at the altar of common interest the Irish, the negro and the German laborer; to which, so far from being excluded, the "poor white" native of the South, struggling out of moral and pecuniary death into life "real and earnest," the white mechanic and laborer of the North, so long ill-taught and advised that his true interest is gained by hatred and abuse of the laborer of African descent, as well as the Chinaman, whom designing persons, partially enslaving, would make, in the plantation service of the South, the rival and competitor of the former slave class of the country, having with us one and the same interest, are all invited, earnestly urged to join us in our movement, and thus aid in the protection and conservation of their and our interests.

In the cultivation of such spirit of generosity on our part, and the magnanimous conduct which it prompts, we hope, by argument and appeal addressed to the white mechanics, laborers and trades unions of our country, to our legislators and countrymen at large, to overcome the prejudices now existing against us so far as to secure a fair opportunity for the display and remuneration of our industrial capabilities.

We launch our organization, then, in the fullest confidence, knowing that, if wisely and judiciously managed, it must bring to all concerned, strength and advantage

and especially to the colored American, as its earliest fruits, that power which comes from competence and wealth, education and the ballot, made strong through a union whose fundamental principles are just, impartial and catholic.

The resolution before submitted relative to urging upon the Governors of the States to use their endeavors with their Legislature to pass the 15th amendment, was called up, and a lengthly discussion took place on its adoption. Adjourned until 7 o'clock p. m.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention reassembled at 7 o'clock, and was called to order by Sella Martin, Vice President.

The report of the Committee on Savings Banks was received and adopted.

The report of the Committee on the prospective National Organ, to be styled the "New Era," was read, and, after considerable debate, was laid on the table.

Hon. W. D. Kelley, of Pa., was introduced and addressed the Convention. He had no specific advice to give the colored men here assembled, but he had a claim on them, that if they be true to themselves they must be true to the Republican party—that party belonged to them, and they belonged to that party. After speaking at length of the progress made by the colored race since the first inauguration of President Lincoln, Mr. Kelley closed by warning them not to be seduced into allegiance with any other party but the dominant one. During his remarks he was frequently applauded.

Hon. W. J. White, of Georgia, was next introduced, and gave an interesting description of the natural advantages of that State. At the conclusion of his remarks a collection was again taken up to defray the expenses of the Convention, the amount previously collected having been found insufficient, and about $300 were collected.

Mrs. Carey, of Detroit, Michigan, was then introduced, and addressed the Convention at considerable length, her remarks being chiefly confined to the rights of women and the justice of their recognition by the sterner sex. At the conclusion of her remarks, as Chairman of the Committee on Female Suffrage, she offered the following resolution, accompanied with the report:

"*Resolved*, That as unjust discrimination in the departments of labor is made against woman, and as the organization of associations for the protection of said interest among the colored people of the United States is in its incipiency, that profiting by the mistakes heretofore made by our white fellow-citizens in omitting women as co-workers in such societies, that colored women be cordially included in the invitation to further and organize co-operative societies."

REPORT.

The committee, to whom was referred the subject of Woman's Labor, beg leave to report that in their opinion no subject bearing upon the industrial relations of the colored people to community requires more earnest consideration.

The avocations of women hitherto, and particularly colored women, have been lamentably circumscribed, both as to diversity of employment and breadth of operation, seamstresses, laundresses, teachers, clerks, and domestic servants, constituting almost the entire complement of pursuits. In these departments of labor they work without system or organization, there not being, so far as we have been able to learn, but one association among them to promote labor interests, whether by guarding against monopoly or arresting extortion and oppression.

We are pleased, however, to be able to say that a quiet but manifest desire to widen the boundaries of manual and other pursuits, and to invoke aid in protecting the same and other interests, is apparent in examples of noble women of the more favored class who, in the face of a discouraging public opinion, though gradually awakening, now agitate the elective franchise for women, and of colored women who go forth into hitherto forbidden paths of duty or interest with distinguished success.

Miss Edmonia Lewis among sculptors, Mrs. S. M. Douglass and Miss Cole among physicians, Miss Ketchum among clerks, illustrate an aptitude and ability among colored women which, if cordially recognized and encouraged by colored men in their more matured experience in these directions, would be the beginning of an era of thought and effort among colored women creditable to them as a class, and highly promotive of the general well-being.

With women as with the other sex, organized effort, whether in associations with men or in societies of their own, could not fail to be of benefit, as lifting them up from the plane of indifference, frivolity, and dependence, to the nobler sphere of systematized industries and intellectual effort so essential to the growth and prosperity of an enlightened people.

We would recommend to our women, therefore, a steady inculcation of habits of industry, economy, and frugality, to learn trades, to engage in whatever pursuits women of the most highly favored classes now pursue, and in whatever honorable calling besides their inclination or capacities qualify them for, and which will tend to enlarge their sphere and influence of labor.

In addition to present avocations, we would suggest that profitable and health-inspiring employment might be found at market-gardening, small fruit and berry culture, shop and storekeeping, upholstering, telegraphing, and insurance and other agencies, and to connect themselves with co-operative building societies whenever opportunity offers. No women have had a sadder and more varied experience than thousands who have labored in the fields of the South, and to such we would say, engage in agriculture. Bring to the pursuits of freedom the knowledge of husbandry learned when in bondage, and make it magnify and beautify your present improved condition.

An enlarged benevolence is eminently in keeping with the ever-widening sphere of activities into which woman can now enter, as well as with the highest dictates of humanity and religion. The vicissitudes of war, and the accidents inseparable from the great change many have undergone, have thrown to the surface thousands of cases of destitution which appeal to men and women for assistance and remedy. The formation, therefore, of associations, whence practical aid and direction can be extended to the thousands of infirm, aged, and poor, could not fail to impress upon the sterner sex the importance of removing all barriers to the full recognition and success of woman as an important industrial and moral agent in the great field of human activities and responsibilities.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

M. A. S. Cary,
Caroline E. G. Colby,
Joseph P. Evans,
Belva A. Lockwood,
J. S. Griffing.

Adopted.

FOURTH DAY.

The Convention was called to order at 10 o'clock this morning, the President, J. H. Harris, in the chair. Prayer was offered by Bishop Loguen, of New York.

Mr. Lewis H. Douglas from the committee on the subject, reported a constitution of "The National Labor Union."

On motion to adopt, considerable discussion took place between Messrs. Green and Bowen, of District of Columbia, and Sorrell, of Maryland. It was finally decided to take it up section by section.

At this time Gen. O. O. Howard made his appearance in the room, and was invited to address the Convention. He said that co-operation was what the colored men of this country needed. The practical thought that he would throw out above all others for their improvement was a co-operative system. Labor was of greater importance than capital. He was gratified to see so many men from the South come here for the consideration of these important subjects, and he hoped the movement would be a success.

His remarks were received with applause. General Howard then retired, and the Convention proceeded with its business.

Rev. John A. Warren, of Cleveland, Ohio, submitted the following; which was referred:

Whereas every form of dissipation tends to waste the resources of labor, and thus renders the power of resistance to the evils of poverty and ignorance our common enemies more difficult: Therefore

Resolved, That we include the use of tobacco among the great wastes of our resources, and recommend to all workingmen to practice economy in this as well as the use of liquors.

The consideration of the report of the Committee on Constitution was then proceeded with.

An amendment was adopted that the annual meeting be on the second Monday in December.

The constitution was then adopted as a whole.

Mr. Lewis H. Douglass, chairman of the Committee on Permanent Organization, reported officers for the ensuing year; which report was laid on the table.

Mr. Wm. H. Lester, of Virginia, offered the following:

Whereas the Legislature of Virginia is now largely under the control of a rebel majority, a result accomplished largely by intimidation on the part of the rebels towards the loyal voters, and especially the colored electors; and whereas there can be no real liberty for our race in that State, much less any safety for the interests of colored and white labor, unless said Legislature is under the control of loyal men: Therefore

Resolved, That this Convention earnestly invoke the Congress of the United States to enforce its own laws, by causing the test oath to be administered to the rebel Legislature of Virginia, and award the seats of those who cannot take it to their eligible opponents who received the next highest vote, when, from the circumstances, the electors must have known that they were casting their votes for ineligible candidates.

Resolved, That if Congress enforce the law, loyalty and the rights of loyalty will be preserved in Virginia. If not enforced, loyalty will be lost and the colored people, more than 600,000 in that State, will be reduced to a condition as deplorable as when they were fastened in chains of slavery.

Resolved, That these resolutions, properly attested, be forwarded by the Secretary to members of Congress and published in the newspapers of the country.

Adopted.

After our report closed yesterday—

The resolution of Mr. T. J. Hayes, of North Carolina, asking Congress to recognize the independence of Cuba, was passed.

Prof. A. M. Green submitted the following:

Resolved, That a delegation of five, of which the President or one of the Vice Presidents of this Convention shall be the chairman, be appointed to wait on Hon. S. J. Bowen, Mayor of Washington, and tender him the best wishes of this Convention for his able and earnest address of welcome to this body, and for the sympathy with the objects of this Convention expressed in that address.

Mr. Lewis H. Douglass thought that as the Mayor had already been thanked by this Convention this resolution smacked somewhat of toadyism; and the resolution was laid on the table.

Mr. Rapier, of Alabama, from the Homestead Committee, submitted a report which looked towards organization of a permanent bureau for the purpose of securing homesteads to colored people. Adopted.

Mr. Aaron M. Powell, editor of the Anti-Slavery Standard, New York, submitted a paper detailing the condition of the laboring people in his State. He contended that what was needed there most was the power behind the throne—the elective franchise—and recommended the Convention to appeal to Congress to give the poor laboring classes of the South lands belonging

to the Government for their use, as it had failed to enact laws to confiscate the rebel lands for this purpose. We find to-day all their estates again in the possession of these rebels. He held the National Government responsible for this state of affairs. Northern capital will not go South because there was no security there for it. Southern freed labor must be protected by Government.

The resolution offered by Rev. J. A. Warren, of Cleveland, Ohio, "that we include the use of tobacco among the great wastes of our resources, and recommend to all workingmen to practice economy in this as well as in the use of liquors," was adopted.

A committee of one from each State and Territory delegation was selected by the respective delegations for the purpose of reporting officers for the National Labor Union, who subsequently submitted the following list: For President, Isaac Myers, of Maryland; Vice President, George T. Downing, of Rhode Island; Secretaries, William U. Saunders, of Nevada, L. H. Douglass, of District of Columbia; Treasurer, Collins Crusor, of Georgetown, D. C. Executive Committee—Isaiah C. Wears, Pennsylvania; Anthony Bowen, District of Columbia; John H. Butler, Maryland; Mrs. M. A. S. Carey, Michigan; J. Booker Hutchins, North Carolina; Hon. C. H. Hamilton, Sella Florida; Sella Martin, Massachusetts, and George Myers, Maryland.

Considerable debate arose on the announcement of the names read, some expressing themselves dissatisfied.

The report was finally adopted, and the Convention adjourned.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention reassembled at 7 o'clock.

Mr. C. H. Peters, of the District of Columbia, offered the following, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the Hon. S. J. Bowen, Mayor of Washington, has, in acknowledging the rights of labor throughout the country indiscriminately, kindly extended municipal welcome to this Convention in a most eloquent address; therefore

Resolved, That a committee, consisting of the President and Vice President of this Convention, be appointed to wait upon the Mayor and acknowledge their appreciation and esteem of him who has so nobly espoused the cause of humanity and equality throughout this country.

Senator Sumner, who was expected to address the Convention, having sent his excuse for not appearing—

Hon. J. H. Rainey, of S. C., was introduced, and said that he represented a constituency that could not boast of so much intelligence as this Convention. He regretted that the course pursued here is not of that character that his constituency had expected; that he would not be able to return home and tell them then of some system which had been devised by this Convention whereby some of their wants would be satisfied. They are desirous of knowing from the acts of this Convention what can be done to give them justice; they wanted land, so that they would not be obliged to build up another southern aristocracy. He hoped this Convention would not break up until some plan was devised whereby they could obtain justice, and some action taken that would compel Congress to take notice of the subject.

Bishop Campbell, of N. J., was introduced, and said he confessed and plead guilty to the fact that he belonged to that class of men called preachers; had been one about thirty years, even when slavery held sway all over the South, and when even in the North it was dangerous to agitate the subject. The colored preachers in those days had to contrive all sorts of ways to set

the people to thinking on this subject. Occasionally they could slip in a word in their sermons. He was sorry to learn that preachers were unpopular in this Labor Convention. He had been a laborer all his life, and he knew no other society but theirs. All the professions here were ruled out. This was not right; all the men here who had rubbed their backs against a college wall were avoided; he was not one of them, but they could not afford to be separated from the working classes. They should make common cause against a common enemy. Oppression was their enemy. He had just returned from among the old rebels of the South. The poor white families there were even in a worse condition than the black. The power that has crushed the black man had not spared the white. If colored men would work together with more earnestness, Georgia would not now be cutting up the devil. [Applause.] [A voice.—"How about Virginia?"] Bishop Campbell.—"Why, the negroes let the rebels pull the wool over their eyes there." [Laughter.] What if the Republican party should stop where they are; what if our Moses should get into the White House again? Where would our race be? Under our gallant Vicksburg general at the White House, he expected to drive the devil out of them yet, if the colored men will at the same time stand by the party that has done so much for them. He owed the people who had crushed them to the earth no ill will, but he wanted them reconstructed and the devil whipped out of them. A rebel had told him that they were now overcome but not subdued.

Mr. Lowry, of Tennessee, was invited to sing "John Brown's body," which he did, and the entire audience joined in the chorus.

Mr. J. K. Rourk, of North Carolina, was next introduced and addressed the meeting.

Mr. Lowry, of Tennessee, gave an interesting account of the political affairs of that State, saying that what the colored people wanted most was education.

Bishop J. W. Loguen, of New York, was next introduced. He said he could go back to his State rejoicing that he had seen so much intelligence congregated as was here. He was not an eloquent speaker, but an eloquent worker, as thousands of his color could testify who had passed over the underground railroad in the days of slavery. He was a co-worker with old John Brown: had eat, slept, and prayed with him, but was not at Harper's Ferry with him. He gave a very interesting account of his (L.'s) escape from slavery when a youth; of his connection with the underground railroad, with which he had been an active agent, of his knowledge of John Brown years ago, and finally of his return back again to his native State—Tennessee—just after the war was over, and the many incidents of his journey there, of his finding his mistress alive, and the changed condition of things there since he had left.

He kept the attention of the audience for nearly an hour, reciting the remarkable experience of his life, detailing very graphically the manner and language of the colored people of the South in the old times, and the overbearing and proud style of their masters and mistresses.

Mr. John Watson, of Ohio, also spoke, giving a somewhat similiar experience.

Hon. Charles H. Porter, of Virginia, addressed the Convention, and after his remarks the Convention adjourned.

FIFTH DAY.

The Convention was called to order this morning by Sella Martin, Vice President.

On motion of Mr. Harris, the name of J. B. Hutchins was stricken from the Executive Committee, and that of Mr. G. M. Mabson inserted in its stead.

Sella Martin offered the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That, as a labor Convention, it is our bounden duty, and at the same time a great pleasure, to recognize the statesmanlike sentiments contained in the paragraph of the President's message relative to the reconstruction of Georgia. Labor, to be successful, needs protection, opportunity, and just laws. This success can be achieved only through laws made by those who understand the wants and disabilities of the for whom they legislate.

Resolved, That the Convention tender to President Grant its high appreciation of his fairness of mind, fairness of purpose, and fearlessness of utterance in seeking to secure to us, by appropriate legislation, those legal safeguards to our right to labor and to the fruits of our industry, without which the name of freedom is a mockery.

Mr. F. G. Barbadoes offered the following:

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this Convention, the law making eight hours a legal days work in all labor performed for the Government is wise, just, humane and economical in character, and should be interpretated fairly and equitably.

Resolved, That this Convention is unalterably opposed to any repeal or modification of the said law, but that on the contrary they hope the Executive will compel Government contractors, as well as its own officers, to carry out its provisions fully.

After discussion the resolution was adopted.

Mr. J. H. Harris, of N. C., offered the following; which was adopted:

Resolved, That the executive officers and the Bureau of Labor provided by the Convention of the National Labor Union, now being formed, are hereby authorized to appoint one or more suitable persons to represent this organization in the International Labor Congress called to meet in Paris next September, being the fifth annual reunion of the representatives of the industry of the civilized world.

Professor George B. Vashon offered the following report of the Committee on Education:

Mr. President and Members of the Convention:

Your Committee on Education, duly appreciating the extent of the subject consigned to them, and the important relations which it sustains to the question of labor, regret that want of time has prevented them from giving to it as thorough a consideration as it deserves, and they therefore trust that their earnest desire to discharge properly the duty assigned to them, will plead in their behalf for any short-coming in its performance.

The relations which education sustains to labor are, indeed, second in importance only to those which are sustained to it by the attributes of life and freedom. The laborer must be a living man, free in all his acts, thoughts, and volitions; otherwise his efforts, however wearisome to body and mind, or however productive of pecuniary results, cannot, in the estimation of the true political economist, be regarded as a portion of the country's labor; but must be classified as a part of its capital, and with as much propriety, too, as are the workings of a steam-engine or a cotton-gin. Under this view, it follows that the emancipation of slaves was in effect a conversion of capital into labor, to such an extent as to increase the latter by nearly one-tenth its entire amount. But if labor, in order to be really labor, must be free, it can be demonstrated very readily that, in order to be productive of its highest and most desirable results, it must be educated. Who would pretend to affirm that the savage of the earlier days of Greece, toilfully bringing together and piling up log after log in the construction of his rude and comfortless hut, had in so doing accomplished as much as his far-off descendant, who had

"Learned
To hew the shaft and lay the architrave
And spread the roof above them?"

And who would venture to deny that between the one result and the other—between the clumsy attempt of barbarism and the skillful achievement of civilization—lay a chasm which could be bridged over only by the letters which Cadmus had brought from Phœnicia? Without their aid there can be no question that the Greek of the age of Pericles would have shown himself to have been but little, if any, better off than his ancestor centuries removed. The grand difference between the two was that the one was uncultured, and the other educated. It is clear, therefore, that education is the necessary condition of the most efficient labor; and such being the case, it becomes a matter of great moment to colored workingmen to inquire as to their present condition and future prospects in reference to it.

Two and a half centuries are now on the eve of completion since a Dutch vessel landed upon the shores of Virginia the first cargo of human merchandise that had ever been brought from the ill-fated continent of Africa into a British colony. Through the servile agency thus introduced, and extended also to the adjoining provinces, the eminent agricultural resources of the country were largely developed; and shortly after the epoch of the Revolution, such an impulse was given to the culture of cotton by the invention of the cotton-gin as to engender a desire for the perpetuation of slavery. But the curse, thus destined to work so much evil both to Africa and America, did not prove to its immediate victims one of entirely unmitigated severity. Throughout the several colonies the relation of master and slave soon lead to the existence of a class in whose veins the blood of the oppressed was mingled with that of the oppressor; and, in behalf of this class, the voice of nature did not in many cases plead in vain. Besides, the constant and daily intercourse of slaveholding families with that portion of their property known as house-servants was frequently illustrated by such marked instances of devoted fidelity upon the part of the latter as appealed successfully for a grateful recognition from their owners in return. To these fortunate individuals, either the offspring or the favorites of their masters, the rudiments of education, to a greater or less extent, were often imparted.

Through manumission and the privilege granted to slaves to purchase their freedom, quite a large free colored population was added in course of time to American society; and in the principal cities a few schools were tolerated for the benefit of this class. These schools were generally taught by colored persons who had been lucky enough to acquire a sufficiency of education for that purpose; and through their instrumentality a knowledge of reading and writing and the other common branches of learning was quite extensively disseminated. Throughout the free States of the North such schools met with but little opposition; and, indeed, were frequently encouraged; but the case soon became far different in the South. With that distrust which always characterizes tyranny, the instruction of the slaves was first vigilantly guarded against by the imposition of heavy fines and penalties; and afterwards, when the insurrection of Denmark Vesey in South Carolina, and that of Nat Turner in Virginia, had aroused terror and dismay throughout the entire South, public opinion almost universally demanded and secured the prohibition of the schools for free colored people also. Nor was this prohibition a mere *brutum fulmen*, as was made apparent in 1854, when a Mrs. Douglass, a white lady of Southern birth, was imprisoned in the common jail of Norfolk, Virginia, for having acted in contravention of it. In spite of legislative severity, however, there is no doubt that, in a few instances, schools for colored children were still secretly continued. For, among the many secret things brought to light by the opening of the Southern prison-house, there was one at least not challenging the public attention by its atrocity, but rather by the evidence which it afforded of the futility of oppressive enactments in crushing out the South's nobler aspirations. This was a school of the character mentioned, in Savannah, Georgia. For upwards of thirty years it had existed there, unsuspected by the slave power, and successfully eluding the keen-eyed vigilance of its minions. Its teacher, a colored lady by the name of Deveaux, undeterred by any dread of penalties, had throughout that long period of time silently pursued her devoted and assiduous labors in her native city, and in the very same room that she still occupies; and now she has the satisfaction of knowing that numbers, who are indebted to her for their early learning, are, in these more auspicious days, co-workers with her in the elevation of their common race.

It was reserved for the South itself to abrogate, not only all this iniquitous legislation, but also the slave system which had prompted it, by its insane attempt to break up the Federal Union. It was reserved, too, for the shores of Virginia, which had witnessed the inception of the wrong, to behold, also, the first step in its expiation.

In the close neighborhood of the very spot where the first cargo of slaves had been disembarked stands the little brown building that served as the first school-house for the freedmen. Securely it nestled under the guns of Fortress Monroe, with the military power of the nation pledged for its maintenance. Six months had not yet elapsed after the clouds of war had gathered, when this earliest sunbeam of a dawning civilization burst through to relieve their gloom. On the 17th day of September, 1861, this school was opened. The honor of its establishment is due to the American Missionary Association, which had labored, even before the war, for the educational advancement of colored people in Kentucky and elsewhere, and whose keen-eyed philanthropy eagerly caught sight of this "opening of the prison-house to those who were bound." Other schools were soon afterwards opened by this Association at Norfolk, Hampton, and Newport News.

With the advance of the Union fleets and armies, the friends of humanity kept steady pace. In the month of November, 1861, the Port Royal islands were captured, and, in less than three months after, schools were opened at Beaufort and Hilton Head, South Carolina. The destitution, upon which these schools cast the first cheering ray, was, indeed, forlorn. All of the whites had fled from these islands, leaving there about eight thousand negroes steeped in ignorance and want. Their deplorable condition appealed strongly to the officers of the Government for relief, and did not appeal in vain. At the instigation of General W. T. Sherman and Commodore Dupont, public meetings were held at once in Boston, New York and Philadelphia, which resulted in the formation of three Freedmen's Aid Societies, viz: the Boston Educational Commission, the Freedmen's Relief Association, and the Port Royal Relief Commission. All of these societies straightway sent out teachers, whose transportation and boarding were furnished by the Government, and in the month of June, 1862, eighty-six persons were reported in the field.

The year 1863 was ushered in by the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln, which conferred legal freedom upon all the slaves of the nation except those of certain specified localities, and actual freedom upon all such as might come within the lines of the national armies. This consequent enlargement of the area of philanthropic labor was followed by a corresponding increase in the number of earnest and efficient laborers. Other societies similar to those already mentioned, were formed at Chicago and Cincinnati in 1863. Hundreds of ladies, tenderly nurtured and refined by all the accomplishments of modern culture, hastened to this field now whitening for the harvest, and braving privations and the vicissitudes of war, eagerly enrolled themselves among the teachers of the freedmen. Words would fail to depict the noble devotion and self-sacrifice of those ladies as they carried on their philanthropic labors during the remaining years of the war. With a courage worthy of comparison with that of their brothers on the tented field, they remained at their posts, braving all the perils of their unwonted situation.

The year 1865 was marked by the fall of Richmond, and the close of the rebellion. With the opportunities thus extended, schools were opened at every feasible point. The aid of the Government, too, was secured for their maintenance. On the 3d of March of that year, the Freedmen's Bureau was created by act of Congress, and through the kind ordering of an all-wise Providence, Major General O. O. Howard, that gallant Christian soldier, was, in the following month of May, assigned to duty as its Commissioner. To the several benevolent agencies already mentioned, he tendered his earnest co-operation. He gave them efficient aid, by turning over for school purposes, disused government buildings, and those seized from disloyal owners; by affording transportation for teachers, books, and school-furniture, and by assigning quarters and rations to all engaged in the work of instruction, at the same time that protection was given to them through the department commanders. By his direction, too, the "Refugees and Freedmen's Fund" was used to assist in the maintenance of schools supported in part by the freedmen themselves; and in each State superintendents of schools were appointed to see to the faithful execution of his plans and purposes. Thus, under the beneficent administration of General Howard, the Freedmen's Bureau has been, in the matter of education, as in many other respects, of efficient service to the freedmen, and has helped to prepare them for a right exercise of the franchises with which they are now invested as citizens. To bring about this result, too, the various religious denominations of the country have all labored to a greater or less extent with commendable zeal. As a consequence of the several influences at work, the schools at the South have increased in number, and have prospered greatly every year since the close of the rebellion. True, they have had to con-

tend with much prejudice and opposition on the part of a majority of the white population. But there is reason to believe, from present indications, that these hostile sentiments are gradually diminishing, and that many who are bitterly opposed to the political equality of the negro admit the expediency and justice of providing for his education. And it is an indisputable proposition, that the colored people of the South have, by their thirst for knowledge and their surprising aptitude for improvement, shown themselves deserving of the interest manifested in their behalf, and of the aid which has been so generously furnished to them. All classes among them, both old and young, male and female, have shown that they feel this thirst, and have exhibited this aptitude. Indeed, when their present state of advancement is compared with the condition to which slavery had degraded too many of them, there seems to be no exaggeration in Whittier's lyric outpouring:

"Behold the dumb lips speaking!
The blind eyes seeing!
Bones of the prophet's vision
Warmed into being!"

From the report of the General Superintendent of Schools, under the Freedmen's Bureau, for the six months ending July 1, 1869, it appears that there were in operation during the period mentioned, 2,912 day and night schools, with an attendance of 149,244 pupils, of whom 73,896 were males, and 75,348 females. These schools comprise every grade—quite a number of them, perhaps thirty, being high schools, several of them colleges, and two universities. In view of this truly respectable exhibit, and of the fact that all of this surprising progress has been made within the last eight years, surely there is ample assurance that the colored labor of the South, constituting, as it does, at least seven-eighths of the colored labor of the Union, will be, in coming years, not only free, but also rendered effective and honorable through the generous influences of education.

In conclusion, your Committee would respectfully submit the following resolutions for the consideration of the Convention:

Resolved, That, under the providence of an all-loving God, the members of this Convention will always hold in grateful remembrance the several educational associations, and their hundreds of auxiliaries throughout the North and West, that labored in behalf of the Freedmen, together with that noble band of teachers, who, at the cost of many sacrifices and perils, bore to that suffering class the blessings of mental and moral culture.

Resolved, That the system of schools originated by all the agencies referred to in this report is, to the members of this Convention, the subject of such grateful regard as leads them to trust that it will continue to be prospered in its good work until it attains to that perfected state which will witness the entire South dotted over with normal schools, complete in all needful educational facilities, from which normal schools as centers will radiate other schools of inferior grades, to light up every nook and corner of the land with the beams of useful knowledge.

All of which is respectfully submitted,

GEORGE B. VASHON, *Chairman.*
JOHN A. WARREN,
J. MILTON TURNER,
WILLIAM F. BUTLER,
J. P. CAMPBELL.

Mr. T. J. Mackey offered the following Memorial of the laboring men of the United States; which was adopted:

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America:

The memorial of the laboring men of the United States in Convention assembled respectfully showeth, that the condition of the colored laborers of the southern States appeals most forcibly to Congress to intervene in their behalf, by such just and timely measures as properly fall within the scope of the national authority.

Abundant evidence has been laid before this convention showing that the average rate of wages received by the colored agricultural laborer of the South does not exceed sixty dollars ($60) per annum. Out of this small sum he is required to clothe himself and purchase necessary articles for subsistence, for, as a general thing, the

only allowance that he receives from his employer consists of one peck of corn or meal per week.

Recent returns at the National Bureau of Statistics show that this unrequited labor furnished to the exports of the country during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1869, the enormous amonnt of one hundred and sixty-eight millions of dollars ($168,000,000) in gold, in the single article of cotton alone. Reliable testimony exhibits the fact that the net profits to the employer from this cotton product, making due allowance for the market value of the land, and deducting every item that enters into cost of production, and allowing each planter at the rate of two thousand dollars ($2,000) per annum for his personal services in superintending his laborers, amount to about fifty (50) per cent. on the capital invested, while the laborers who produced it have not only been left penniless, but are nearly two millions of dollars ($2,000,000) in debt, despite the utmost thrift and economy on their part.

Your memorialists are aware of the so-called axiom of political economy which declares that "the price of labor, like that of any other commodity, is regulated by the law of supply and demand." But this proposition, while true in its application to a normal condition of society, where the ordinary laws of trade and production alone control prices, it is *not* true as regards the planters and their colored employees in the southern States, for the land-owners there can and *do* absolutely regulate the price of labor by combining against the laborer. These combinations would ordinarily be controlled by prudent considerations of profit and loss, which usually govern the investment of capital, and the fear of counter-organizations on the part of the employees would in some measure restrain the oppressive spirit of the employer. But in this case resistance by organized effort is impossible, for the earnings of the laborer leave him no surplus, and when he ceases to labor he begins to starve.

These combinations are very largely inspired and sustained by political causes, as well as by the certainty of ultimate success in securing from the laborer the largest possible amount of work for the smallest possible amount of pay. The political causes above referred to, as stimulating combinations on the part of the landed proprietors against the colored laborers, spring from the well-attested fact that the one class, with but a few exceptions, exhibits an implacable hostility to our system of free government, while the other sustains it with unwavering devotion and uncompromising loyalty to the principles upon which it rests. Hence the possession of civil rights by the colored laborer, conferred upon him not only as an act of justice, but as a rational safeguard, and for his self-protection, invites aggression which he cannot repeal, and his political privileges become to him the source of personal peril. The freedom of the ballot is thus sought to be subdued by the necessity for bread, and, with the loyal colored laborer of the South, duty to his country involves danger to himself. Your memorialists believe that this great wrong is not without a feasible remedy, and that the true and immediately practicable remedy lies in making a fair proportion of the laborers themselves land-owners. This will place colored agricultural labor beyond the absolute control of artificial or political causes, by lessening the amount of labor *for hire*, and increasing at the same time the demand for that class of laborers. To this end your memorialists pray that the surveyed public lands in the southern States may be subdivided into tracts of forty (40) acres each, and that any freedman who shall settle on one of such subdivisions, and cultivate the same for the space of one year, shall receive a patent for the same, the title to such land to vest in the settler and his heirs, and to be inalienable for the period of ten years from the date of entry.

Your memorialists beg leave to invite the attention of your honorable body to the following exhibit of the public domain now in the southern States, as shown by the records of the General Land Office:

	Acres.
Alabama,	6,496,421
Arkansas,	11,307,278
Florida,	17,328,344
Louisiana	6,493,499
Mississippi	4,718,517
Total	46,344,059

It will thus be seen that there are in the South, in round numbers, forty-six millions three hundred and forty-four thousand acres of public land.

Estimating the number of freedmen who would probably avail themselves of the right of settlement, on the terms proposed, at two hundred thousand, (200,000,) or about one-fourth (¼) of the able-bodied colored males in the southern States, the government could give each colored settler forty (40) acres, and still have a residue of over thirty-eight millions of acres of public land in the South, the value of which residue would be greatly enhanced by the contiguity of numerous settlements to it, the opening of roads, &c.; while the population thus endowed would add proportionately to the sources of national taxation, and would thereby not only swell the aggregate products of American industry, but would add greatly to the list of consumers or purchasers of many of those products which they cannot now enjoy.

Your memorialists are assured and believe that the existing homestead and preemption laws will, with some modifications and extensions, accomplish the result herein desired.

And your memorialists further pray that your honorable body will enact a law authorizing the President to appoint a land commission, to consist of suitable persons, whose duty it shall be to purchase lands in those southern States in which there are no public lands, and have the same divided into tracts of forty (40) acres each, and sold to freedmen at cost price, payment to be made in instalments, and to be completed in five (5) years; the whole sum to be thus used in the purchase of homesteads for freedmen not to exceed two millions ($2,000,000) of dollars.

And your memorialists further pray that the railroad grants of public land made by the Government to several of the railway corporations in the southern States, and by them forfeited by reason of their non-compliance with the conditions annexed to the same, be not revived, but that the lands embraced in such lapsed grants be brought within the operations of the homestead act, as herein prayed for.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.

We hereby certify that the above memorial was unanimously adopted in the National Labor Convention begun to be holden in the city of Washington, D. C., on Monday, the 6th day of December, A. D. 1869.

J. H. HARRIS, North Carolina.
President National Labor Convention.

T. J. MACKEY, South Carolina,
SELLA MARTIN, Massachusetts,
JOHN P. SAMPSON, Ohio,
W. T. J. HAYES, North Carolina,
WILLIAM J. WILSON, New Jersey,
M. VANHORN, Rhode Island,
A. WARD HANDY, Pennsylvania,
J. H. RAINEY, South Carolina,
JAMES T. RAPIER, Alabama.
CHARLES H. PETERS, District Columbia,
WILLIAM PERKINS, Maryland,
J. W. LOGUEN, New York,
CALEB MILBURN, Delaware,
Vice-Presidents National Labor Convention

Attest:
Lewis H. Douglass,
Secretary.

On motion of Mr. Waugh, of Rhode Island, it was

Resolved, That we hereby express our most extreme contempt for, and opposition to, the efforts being made to galvanize into active existence the American Colonization Society, and that we entreat the parties, that if they have a spark of honesty in their natures to be consistent and go to Africa themselves, if they be as earnest and sincere in their professions of love for Africa, as they would have us believe, that it is our intention to remain, and labor here on our native soil.

Aaron M. Powell, of New York, offered a resolution requesting Congress to authorize the appointment by the President of a land commissioner for the purpose of purchasing eligible land for homesteads, the title thereof to be held until by instalment, without interest, it shall have been paid for, when the money so employed, not to exceed $2,000,000, shall be refunded to the National Treasury. Passed.

Allen Coffin, delegate from the Workingmen's Club of the Government Printing Office, introduced the following resolutions, and moved their reference to the Business Committee:

Whereas, The principles announced by the fathers of the Republic, that "all men are created equal" and possess certain "inalienable rights," and that the true purpose of government is to establish and to perpetuate liberty, justice and equality; therefore

Resolved, That all laws, customs, ceremonies, and organizations, either of church or State, which discriminate prejudicially against color, nationality, condition, or laudable avocation, are in direct violation of the fundamental principles of republicanism, and consequently ought not to exist in the United States.

Resolved, That Labor is entitled to its just reward, by whomsoever performed, and the denial of such pay to women because they are women, for equally efficient work, is a grievance which demands redress.

Resolved, That it is the duty of the national government to encourage and sustain the associations which seek the elevation of working men and women, particularly those based upon the principle of co-operative industry, inasmuch as labor is the active agent in developing the vast resources of the country, and the real source of national prosperity.

Resolved, That the employment of children of tender years by corporations, as a means of adding to their greed of profit, is a disgrace to the civilization of the age, and sadly detrimental to the physical and mental development of American citizens.

Resolved, That the public lands belong to the people, and government has no right to deprive them of their legal possession by granting monopolies of the same to corporate wealth.

Resolved, That while there exists neither reason nor necessity for antagonism between capital and labor, each being essential to the other, no fact is more patent than that capital, as now employed, is inimical to the interests of labor, and the working men's remedy is in co-operative industry, in possessing their own capital and employing their own labor.

Resolved, That the benefits of the eight-hour law ought to be extended to all classes of laborers throughout the country, whether in the employ of the Government, or corporations, or private enterprises.

Resolved, That impartial suffrage, and the representation of minorities ought to be secured and maintained throughout the Republic.

Resolved, That the President of the United States ought to be elected by a direct vote of the people in order that the principles of the Republic may be more fully realized.

Hon. C. M. Hamilton, Delegate from Florida offered the following resolution which was referred to the Business Committee:

Whereas, there exists in the Southern States—as one of the consequences of the institution of slavery—an organized "*Land Monopoly*" which is baleful alike to domestic, and national prosperity; and whereas extensive combinations have been entered into by the land owners in the South, for the purpose of maintaining said land monopoly, pledging themselves to sell not a foot of land, an implement of agriculture, or a farm-animal to the freed people, with the willful, malicious design of keeping the freedmen in as dependent a condition as possible, individually, socially and politically; and whereas so long as this land monopoly prevails, the avenues of prosperity, and personal independence are closed against the national freedmen—the laboring millions of the south; therefore.

Resolved, By the National Colored Labor Convention, That every possible legitimate measures be taken, in conjunction with the laboring masses of the country, to overthrow this cruel barrier to our progress—the monstrous "Land monopoly" of the South.

Mr. Hamilton said in support of his resolution, that perhaps it was not generally known to the country that there existed to-day in the South—as one of the direful consequences of the institution of slavery—a land monopoly as wide-spread, and as baneful to the liberty, and pursuit of happiness of the colored people as was that institution itself; that it had its founda-

tion in the barbarous prejudices of the late slave-oligarchy, and was preserved by organizations all over the South for the purpose of keeping the laborers dependent upon the land-owners not only for employment but for very existence, with the object of controlling them *politically* as well as that of the *price of labor*. Here we had the spectacle of labor not simply struggling with capital, but capital sitting in *judgment* upon labor and controling it at will. The Convention assembled for the purpose of putting labor where, in the nature of things, it belongs—upon the level with capital, and to bind them in the bonds of wedlock, their proper relation. Labor is the eternal rock upon which the stately edifice of capital finds its sure foundation—but it is labor and capital *combined* that erects the temple. The day of inequality has gone forever, and the Divine influence of the "Kingdom to Come" is pervading the earth. Let us heed it.

It behooves the Convention to look to the condition of the colored laboring people of the South, where nine hundred and ninety-nine are struggling with prejudice, poverty, opposition and danger, which you of the North know nothing about. You may adopt your Constitution, publish your fine addresses, define theories and policies, for this grand labor movement, but unless this mountainous obstacle, this land monopoly, is removed from the way of the advancement, the prosperity, the liberty of the millions of laborers in the South, this Convention will have proved a failure. I am asked how this is to be done. That's the question this Convention must consider. It might be done by a system of taxation—by the Legislatures of the different States—whereby a certain quantity of land—a homestead—may be taxed at the usual rate, and all lands over the quantity of this homestead—say of one hundred and sixty or more acres, to be taxed at such rates as to make it more *profitable* to sell than to hold surplus land. It could be done in this way, and yet have taxation uniform.

He did not find fault with these men for possessing vast estates, but when it was to their interest to dispose of a part of them—when the men, whose sweat and blood and flesh and labor had purchased these estates, were anxious, and ready to purchase land lying idle, for prejudice and inhumanity to say "*no* you shall not have a foot of land at any price," is monstrous. Coming up on the train through South Carolina and Georgia he overheard men—rebels, discussing this question of land monopoly, and say that it was the only way to keep the freed people in their proper place—to keep them poor, and dependent was the only way possible to get along with the colored people. Because it is thus wilfully and maliciously maintained, I denounce this land monopoly, as monstrous as it is inhuman, barbarous.

Sella Martin offered the following, which was referred:

Whereas the American Missionary Association is the principal National Society working in an educational direction among the colored laborers of the South, expending, at this time, more than $350,000, and employing more than 500 teachers and missionaries among these people, therefore

Resolved, That this Convention tenders its hearty thanks to, and expresses its full confidence in, this Association and other kindred societies, and calls upon the colored working people of the country to support these benevolent labors by sending their children to school, and by contributing to their funds.

Sella Martin offered the following, which was referred:

Resolved, That this Convention regards with great solicitude the efforts which are still being made to transfer the public domain to the hands of private speculators through a continuation of the unfortunate policy of donating the public lands to the railroads and other corporations, and we earnestly call upon Congress to guard the

sacred rights and interests of the people in the public lands from further encroachments in this direction, and we especially and earnestly protest against appropriations of these lands except for the occupation in limited quantities by actual settlers.

Resolved, That we earnestly invite Congress to consider whether some measures cannot be adopted to facilitate the settlement of Southern colored and other laborers upon the unoccupied lands, believing that a more independent, and, therefore, a more intelligent citizenship would be the outgrowth of the nation's liberality.

The following resolution was offered by George T. Downing:

Resolved, That this convention express its most earnest desire that their shall be brought about, at the earliest possible time, a union of such National Labor Unions as do or may exist on the basis of not proscribing persons on account of their sex or color.

Mr. J. A. Warren, of Ohio, offered a resolution recommending the *Christian Recorder*, of Philadelphia, to the support of the colored people.

Abram Smith, of Tennessee, offered the following, which was referred:

Resolved, That this Convention endorse the Tennessee Manual Labor University Industrial School, devoted to the elevation and improvement of youth in industry, art and mental improvement.

Mr. Cumback, of Mississippi, made a short address congratulating the Convention on the great success of the Republican party in his State. They had marched foward with the Star Spangled Banner over them; and had achieved a great triumph—over 30,000 Radical majority—and he had swam lakes and rivers to give this Convention the glad tidings.

R. M. Adger, of Pennsylvania, offered the following:

Resolved, That it is the desire of the mechanics and laborers of Philadelphia that the Convention devise ways and means by which mechanics and laborers, regardless of color, be admitted to workshops on equal terms; and that our children may learn the various branches of trade.

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to the Executive Committee to elect a delegate to represent the interests of the labor movement in the Labor Congress.

L. H. Douglass, Secretary, read a communication from the National Executive Committee of colored men, expressing satisfaction with the National Labor Convention, and offering co-operation with them in the interests of colored labor.

Mr. Wm. U. Saunders, of Nevada, offered a resolution that the members of this Convention cheerfully bear testimony to the untiring zeal of the National Executive Committee of colored men in the performance of its important trust, and therefore tender to it their hearty thanks for the great good which it has already accomplished in various matters touching the welfare of the colored people of the United States.

Adopted.

The Committee on National Labor Union reported the following Vice-Presidents:—Albert Somerville, Tennessee; J. F. Rapier, Alabama: W. H. Lester, Virginia; Wm. Bonner, Louisiana; W. H. Hall, California; Robert H. Small, Nevada; J. B. Hutchins, North Carolina; W. T. Cumback, Mississippi; J. F. Long, Georgia; E. S. Traners, Florida; Charles M. Linn, Connecticut; A. E. Veazey, Delaware; J. A. Warner, Ohio; P. H. Donegan, D. C., J. T. Waugh, Rhode Island; J. W. Jones, West Virginia; W. H. Fletcher, Massachusetts; W. P. Brooks, Wisconsin; R. Adger, Pennsylvania; Wm. Perkins, Maryland; S. C. Watson, Michigan; W. P. Powell, New York; J. H. Rainey, South Carolina; and J. Woodlin, New Jersay.

J. R. W. Leonard, of New York, chairman of Committee on Printing, read a communication from twenty-five colored printers of New York con-

gratulating the craft on Mr. Lewis H. Douglass, a member of the craft, having received his rights in the District of Columbia in holding his position in the Government Printing Office.

Mr. Woodlin, New Jersey, offered the following:

Resolved, That this Convention recommend to our people to abstain from the use of tobacco, and dealing in lotteries and policies, and the money be spent in purchasing homesteads.

Mr. S. Lowry, of Tennessee, offered the following; which was adopted:

"That, as this is a Convention industrial, composed largely of colored people in a national council, for the education and elevation of the masses of our countrymen in the Southern States—

Resolved, That delegates, upon returning home, will call State conventions, and organize educational and literary societies in the counties, as far as possible, to act in conjunction with the Bureau, through State organizations, and ratify the objects of this body, and place them in harmony with the Bureau in its purposes."

Mr. J. Milton Turner, of Missouri, offered the following; which was adopted:

Resolved, That this Convention distinctly disavow all responsibility for the sentiments expressed here to-day by Senator J. W. D. Bland *apologizing* for the negro-hating, unreconstructed rebels of Virginia, in the matter of test oath for office-holders in the State of Virginia.

The Finance Committee reported that $289 84 had been collected in cash; $155 90 expended; $133 44 on hand; and $105 had been pledged; that, in order to carry on the work of this Bureau, more funds were wanted; Therefore—

Resolved, That the Vice Presidents of each of the States be requested to collect and forward to the Treasurer of the Bureau, five dollars from each of the counties in the States as soon as possible.

The report was adopted; and the resolution laid on the table.

Mr. J. P. Evans offered the following; which was adopted.

Resolved, That we recommend to the delegates here assembled to procure of their constituencies, on their return home, statistics, showing the number of societies of various kinds, embracing wealth and strength of said societies, and forward the same to the Bureau at Washington for publication.

Mr. A. Manning, of the District of Columbia, offerred a resolution of thanks to the publishers of the Evening Star, National Republican, and Daily Chronicle, for the favorable reports of the proceedings of this Convention published in their columns. Adopted.

Rev. Anthony Bowen, of this District, offered a resolution, that all the ministers of the Gospel, who were delegates here, on their return home, would, with one universal unity of action, offer up prayer to Almighty God for the amelioration of the condition of their race, and for His blessing on their efforts as shown in this Convention. Adopted.

A resolution of thanks was also passed, to the President of this Convention, Hon. J. H. Harris, for the ability and impartiality with which he has presided over this assembly.

Hon. H. S. Harmon, of Florida, offered the following; which was adopted.

Resolved, That this National Convention, appreciating the noble and untiring service of Mrs. Josephine Griffing during the period of seven years, in aid of the poor people of our race, which has resulted in securing homes and employment for over six

thousand needy men, women, and children, and in securing and disbursing, for the benefit of the helpless and friendless of our people, a large sum of money—twelve thousand dollars of which was raised by private contributions through her personal efforts—hereby publicly tender to her, on behalf of the freed people of the country, our heart, felt gratitude; and may God bless her, who, being a "friend in need, is a friend indeed."

A vote of thanks was tendered Mr. Lewis H. Douglass for his services in the Convention.

Mr. Saunders, of Nevada, made remarks congratulating the Convention on the success of its efforts in behalf of the purposes for which it had met, and thanked the originator of it, Mr. Isaac Myers, of Maryland, through whose suggestions and efforts it had been called together.

The Chair, Hon. J. H. Harris, made a parting and very able address to the assembly, which was listened to attentively throughout. He thanked the delegates for the respect shown him during their deliberations, and enjoined upon them to labor for the attainment of the ends for which they have met, and, by standing upon the broad principles of the Republican party—broad as the universe, deep as the sea, and high as heaven—angels would smile upon their efforts, and they would be crowned with success. He sat down amidst shouts of applause.

The Convention then adjourned *sine die*.

LIST OF DELEGATES.

ALABAMA.

James T. Rapier,
Montgomery, Farmer.

CALIFORNIA.

F. G. Barbadoes,
Washington, D. C., Clerk.

CONNECTICUT.

Charles M. McLinn,
28 Winter street, New Haven.

DELAWARE.

J. W. Layton,
David H. Gustus,
William H. Day,
William H. Colwell,
Stansbury Murray,
Joseph T. Scott,
Benjamin Grovur,
James Chambers,
Benjamin Purnell,
James H. Jones,
Peter Spencer Williams,
John Vining,
Thomas Harden,
Joseph G. Walker,
D. P. Hamilton,
Francis H. Norton,
Caleb Milburn,
Abraham Murray,
A. E. Veazey,
828 French st., Wilm'n, Carpenter.
Levi Anderson,
James Donan,
James Anderson,
James Hardes,
William Doyle,
Moses Wilson,
William P. Sampson,
James Pillman,
William Sharper,
Henry Stewart,
Edward Williams,
William Elias,
Isaac Carty,
Emanuel Dudley,
Charles Lockeman,
Jeremiah Huston,
Ezekial Colwell.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

Joseph Smallwood,
John H. Butler,
D. A. Fish,
Colin Crusor,
John H. Williams,
W. J. Wilson,
Allen Coffin,
William H. Barker,
John Wright,
Charles T. Moseby,
Lewis H. Douglass,
L street, between 13th and 14th,
Robert Hatton,
James N. Furgerson,
William S. Morse,
James Adams,
John H. West,
George T. Corley,
P. H. Donegan,
221 F street, Brick Maker,
Robert Armistead,
John Shankley,
Frederick Douglass, Jr.,
Anacostia,
J. Bell Adams,
4½ and E street south, Plasterer,
John H. Lee,
William Young,
William Edenborough,
Patrick Foley,
James N. Talley,
Albert Manning,
542 8th street, Carpenter,
James H. Jones,
Alonzo Bowen,
85 E street south, Messenger,
Charles A. Douglass,
Cornelius Clark,
S. G. Brown,
Charles H. Peters,
E. S. Atkinson,
C. B. Purvis,

B 5943

Joseph Brooks,
11th street, between Q and R, Asst. Com. 2nd Ward.
William H. Brown,
James H. Searles,
Jerry Grandison,
Michael Crotty,
William Hobbs,
A. M. Green,
505 Mass. av., Asst. Com. 4th Ward,
Charles O. Moor,
William B. Jones,
266 south D street, Barber,
Mrs. B. A. Lockwood,
Mrs. C. T. G. Colby,
Mrs. J. S. Griffing,
Miss L. S. Hall,
Miss M. A. O'Connor,
G. T. Needham,
George B. Vashon,
Bureau Statistics, Wash'n, D. C.,
Francis Taverns,
Treasury Dep't, Wash'n, D. C.,
Andrew Freeman,
Treasury Dep't, Wash'n, D. C.,
Henry J. Cryer,
Treasury Dep't, Wash'n, D. C.,
Lewis Simpson,
Treasury Dep't, Wash'n, D. C.,
J. W. Mattingly.

FLORIDA.

Harry S. Harmon,
Gainesville, Attorney-at-Law,
J. R. Scott,
Jacksonville, Minister,
C. M. Hamilton,
Washington, D. C., M. C.,
Noah Graham,
Tallahassee, Carpenter,
E. S. Francis,
Palatka, Carpenter,
Thomas Harrold,
Pensacola, Stevadore,
W. J. Purman,
Tallahassee, Attorney-at-Law.

GEORGIA.

A. Smith,
Columbus, Merchant,
J. M. Simms,
Savannah, Minister,
William J. White,
Augusta, Assist. Assessor Int. Rev.,
J. F. Long,
Macon, Tailor.

LOUISIANA.

J. Willis Menard,
A. Barber,
P. M. Williams,
R. P. Cromwell,
A. L. Borie,
Henry Clay.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Sella Martin,
Washington, D. C.,
F. G. Barbadoes,
Washington, D. C., Clerk,
Archibald McLane,
Boston, Plasterer,
Francis H. Fletcher,
Salem, Glazier,
S. P. Cummings,
37½ Cornhill street, Boston, Printer.

MARYLAND.

William Perkins,
Chestertown,
Henry Jones,
John H. Butler,
2 South Howard street, Baltimore,
R. H. Butler,
22 Orchard st., Baltimore, Engineer,
Philip Kennedy,
J. R. Henry,
Ellicott City, Minister,
R. B. Sorrel,
Baltimore, M. D.,
Charles Roles,
James Hammond,
East street, Baltimore, Caulker,
Daniel Davis,
William W. Hare,
Daniel Finley,
William Gaunt,
William Griffin,
Joseph Thomas,
South Howard street, Baltimore,
Isidore D. Oliver,
Custom House, Baltimore,
H. C. Pinders,
George Dennis,
Isaac Myers,
Box 522, Baltimore, Caulker,
George Myers,
122 Dallas st., Baltimore, Caulker,
A. Ward Handy,
North Frederick street, Baltimore,
Mrs. Marcella Thompson,
Frederick City, Dressmaker,
George H. Hughes,
P. O., Baltimore, Merchant.

MISSISSIPPI.

William T. Combash,
McNutt, Sunflower Co., Att'y-at-Law.

MICHIGAN.

G. B. Stebbins,
Mrs. M. A. S. Cary,
Howard University, Washington, D. C.

MISSOURI.

J. Milton Turner,
Jefferson City.

NORTH CAROLINA.

James H. Harris,
Raleigh, Supt. Mute Ass'n, Col'd.
John A. Hyman,
Warrenton, Merchant,
W. T. J. Hayes,
Halifax, Merchant and Farmer,
John A. White,
Halifax, Teacher,
Benjamin Franklin,
Weldon, Teacher,
James Williams,
Enfield, Constable,
James H. Harris, Jr.,
Palmyra, Halifax County, Farmer,
Stewart Ellison,
Raleigh, Builder,
Rev. L. B. Clark,
Brinckleysville, Halifax Co., Minister,
Albert Turner,
Jackson, Northampton Co., Farmer,
Charles Smith,
Palmyra, Halifax County, Farmer,
John P. Sampson,
Wilmington, Barber,
J. R. Rouk,
Wilmington, Inspector Rosin,
George W. Mabson,
Washington, D. C., Policeman,
A. J. Denton,
Henry Taylor,
Jackson, Northampton Co., Farmer,
Solomon Vincent,
Jackson, Northampton Co., Farmer,
J. B. Hutchings,
Washington, D. C., Fireman.
Ivey Richards,
W. H. Bishop,
Brinckleysville, Halifax Co., Minister,
James H. Jones,
Raleigh, Showman,
William H. Lynch,
Brinckleysville, Halifax Co., Farmer,
Reddick Burnett,
Eufalia, Merchant.

NEVADA.

William U. Saunders,
58 St. Mary street, Baltimore, Md.,
P. O. Department.

NEW JERSEY.

J. P. Campbell,
Bishop A. M. E. Church,
1810 Addison street, Phila.,
Joshua Woodlin,
Preacher, 113 Montgomery st., N. J.

NEW YORK.

William F. Butler,
President New York Labor Council,
66 Grove street, N. Y.,
T. Gould,
4 Fleet street, Brooklyn, N. Y.,
A. M. Powell,
Editor Anti-Slavery Standard,
39 Nassau street,
James R. W. Leonard,
Printer, 136 Green street, N. Y.,
N. H. Turpin,
Preacher, 216 Sullivan street, N. Y.,
Charles W. Robinson,
Engineer, 35 William street,
William P. Powell,
Shipsmith, 2 Dover street,
A. A. Bradley,
66 Grove street,
Mrs. Susan Owens,
216 Sullivan street,
J. W. Loguen,
Bishop A. M. E. Zion Church,
Syracuse, N. Y.

OHIO.

D. Jenkins,
Columbus, Painter and Paperhanger,
J. M. Langston,
Washington, D. C., Lawyer,
James Poindexter,
Columbus, Preacher,
John Watson,
Oberlin, Merchant,
Milton M. Holland,
Washington, D. C., Clerk,
Henry Lee,
Oberlin,
George Harris,
Cleaveland, Plasterer,
John A. Warren,
Cleaveland, Preacher.

PENNSYLVANIA.

Isaiah Weir,
Randolph and Poplar streets, Phila.,
O. L. C. Hughes,
Granville S. Woodson,
George Hooper,
Thomas W. Allmond,
1027 Rodman street, Philadelphia,
House Carpenter,
Samuel Molson,
Lewistown, Mifflin County, Plumber,
Peter Christianson,
602 Pine street, Philadelphia, Tailor,
Robert M. Adger,
716 Lombard street, Phila., Dealer,
James W. Brown,
W. A. Lavalett.

RHODE ISLAND.

George T. Downing,
Washington, D. C., Hotel Keeper,
J. T. Waugh,
Providence,
M. Van Horn,
Newport, Minister.

SOUTH CAROLINA.

J. J. Wright,
Beaufort, Attorney-at-Law,
Simon Corley,
Lexington, Tailor,
T. J. Mackey,
Charleston, Attorney-at-Law,
L. Wimbush,
Chester, Farmer,
James H. Rainey,
Georgetown, Merchant.

TENNESSEE.

Albert Somerville,
Nashville, Cabinet Maker,
Abram Smith,
Nashville, Jailor,
James H. Sumner,
Nashville, Merchant,
C. W. Robinson,
Rogersville, Minister,
S. A. Lowrie,
Murfreesboro', Proff.

VIRGINIA.

Peter K. Jones.
Joseph P. Evins,
Fredericksburg, Laborer.

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

NATIONAL LABOR UNION.

ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. This organization shall be known as the National Labor Union, and its jurisdiction shall be confined to the United States.

ARTICLE II.

SEC. 1. The National Labor Union shall be composed of such organizations as may now or hereafter exist, having for their object the *amelioration* and *advancement* of the condition of those who labor for a living.

SEC. 2. Each organization shall be entitled to one representative, and each State Labor Union to three for the State at large in the National Labor Union, provided that representatives derive their election direct from the organization they claim to represent.

ARTICLE III.

SEC. 1. The officers of the National Labor Union shall be elected annually on the third day of the session, and shall hold their office until their successors are duly elected. They shall consist of a President, Vice President, Recording and Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Committee of nine members.

SEC. 2. The above-named officers shall constitute a Bureau of Labor.

SEC. 3. There shall be one Vice President for each State, Territory, and the District of Columbia, to be chosen by the State Labor Unions where they exist. Where there are no State Labor Unions, by the State Labor Conventions at their next meeting preceding the annual meeting of the National Labor Union. If neither elect a Vice President, then the National Labor Union shall have power to appoint at their regular annual meeting.

SEC. 4. The Bureau of Labor shall be located in the city of Washington, D. C.

ARTICLE IV.

SEC. 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the National Labor Union and the "Bureau of Labor," and preserve order and enforce the laws. He shall sign all orders for money drawn on the Treasurer by the Secretary, and be the custodian of the seal, which shall be affixed to all documents emanating from his office, and perform such other duties as may be required of him by the Bureau of Labor, and the interest of the various organizations in the several States demand.

SEC. 2. The Vice President shall, in the absence or disabilities of the President, perform the duties of his office.

ARTICLE V.

SEC. 1. The Recording Secretary shall keep a correct account of the proceedings of the National Labor Union and of the Bureau of Labor. He shall fill all blanks, and write all orders for money on the Treasurer. He shall keep a debit and credit account, and shall report the condition of the finances at each meeting of the Bureau of Labor, and perform such other service as may be required by the National Labor

Union and Bureau of Labor. In his absence the Assistant Secretary shall perform the duties of his office.

ARTICLE VI.

SEC. 1. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys, pay all bills and orders that may be drawn on him, and properly attested. He shall keep a debit and credit account, and report at each meeting of the Bureau of Labor. He may be required to give such bonds with such security as the Bureau may require.

ARTICLE VII.

SEC. 1. The Bureau of Labor shall meet at least once in each month, at such time and places as the interest of the Union may require. They shall fill all vacancies in said Bureau. They shall have power to grant charters to the various organizations in the different States. In connection with the President they shall advise and superintend the organization of Labor Unions, land, loan, building and co-operative associations generally, in the different States. They shall inquire into and inform the various organizations as to when, where, and how money can be obtained, in what sums, and at what rate of interest, and what security will be required. They shall give especial attention to protecting the rights of the workingmen of the various organizations, chartered by the National Labor Unions, in bringing to justice those who may rob them of their wages, the bringing about such legislation in the several States as may be necessary for the interest and advancement of the condition of the laboring c'a-ses.

SEC. 2. They shall regulate the salary of the President, Secretary, and such other officers as may be necessary to accomplish the objects of the National Labor Union.

SEC. 3. They shall report annually to the National Labor Union the condition of the various organizations, also the general condition of colored labor in the United States, with such recommendations as they may think necessary.

SEC. 4. They shall, in connection with the President, act as agents for the securing of employment, to labor of all kinds, and its transfer from one State to another.

SEC. 5. All communications in relation to business pertaining to the Labor Union or Bureau of Labor, must be marked on the envelope "official," and addressed to the President, Post Office Box ——, Washington, D. C.

ARTICLE VIII.

SEC. 1. Seven members, in any organization, shall be sufficient to apply for a charter, which shall be granted on the payment of five dollars.

SEC. 2. It shall be the duty of each organization to prepare an annual statement of the condition of said organization, with such other information as may be to the interest of workingmen, and forward it to the Bureau at least one month before the meeting of the National Labor Union, that the reports may be printed for the use and benefit of the National Labor Union at its annual meetings.

ARTICLE IX.

SEC. 1. Each local organization or representative shall pay a tax of ten dollars annually per member. The tax of an organization shall be paid on the presentation of the credentials of the delegate; and no delegate shall be allowed to take part in the deliberations of the Union until the tax is paid.

ARTICLE X.

SEC. 1. The meeting of the National Labor Union shall be held on the second Monday of December in each year; and shall commence its session at 12, M.

SEC. 2. Special meetings of the National Labor Unions may be called by the President, upon the request of the Bureau of Labor.

ARTICLE XI.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

1. Report of Committee on Credentials.
2. Roll of members.
3. Reading of minutes.
4. Report of Bureau of Labor.
5. Report of standing and special committees.
6. Report of local organizations.
7. Unfinished business.
8. New business.
9. Adjournment.

ARTICLE XII.

Sec. 1. This Constitution shall only be altered or amended at the Regular annual meetings of the National Labor Union by a two-third vote of all members present.

RULES

FOR THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE BUREAU OF LABOR.

1st. The regular meetings of the Bureau shall be held on the first Monday in each and every month.

2nd. Any member failing to attend two regular meetings, his seat shall be declared vacant, unless a reasonable excuse is presented at the next subsequent meeting.

3rd. Any member of the Bureau not living in the City of Washington, shall be paid his expenses incured in attending the meetings of the Bureau.

4th. At the hour appointed, the members present shall proceed with the business of the Bureau.

Order of Business.

1st. Reading of the Minutes.
2d. Unfinished business—Resolutions laid over.
3rd. Report of Committees.
4th. Report of Officers.
5th. New business.

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

National Labor Union and Bureau of Labor

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

FELLOW CITIZENS AND WORKINGMEN OF THE UNITED STATES:

The question of the hour is: How can the workingman best improve his condition? This question is not only being agitated in the United States, but throughout the civilized world. The universal law of our existence is: "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread." We desire to impress you with this fact, that it is a Divine Law, that we must labor, and that the comforts of life can only be attained by honest, patient toil.

It should be the aim of every man to become a capitalist; that is, every man should try and receive *an exchange* for his labor, which by proper economy and investment, will, in the future, place him in the position of those on whom he is now dependent for a living. At least it should be your aspiration to become the owner of your own homestead, and place that homestead beyond the reach of want and poverty. As workingmen we can only possess these blessings by being industrious with our brains and hands, temperate in our habits, and economical with our means.

It is the duty of our National Labor Union, and more particularly the Bureau of Labor created by your delegates assembled from nearly every State in the Union, to advise with you upon the best and most speedy means to better your condition in the United States.

We look with painful emotions upon the present condition of colored labor in the several States. Disorganized, poorly paid, assaulted, and, in many cases, totally indifferent to its own welfare. After a careful survey and consideration of this vital question, in which we have consulted the wisdom and experience of the most profound economists and labor reformers of our times—

We advise you, first, to immediately organize, because labor can only protect itself when organized; that is, by being organized thoroughly, you have the command of capital. You receive better pay for your labor. You learn where and how to invest your labor to better advantage. You learn the value of the capital invested with your labor—how to respect that capital, and make that capital respect your labor. You learn how and where to create employment, to give yourselves work when you are debarred by opposite combinations. You learn the wants of of your fellow workmen and how to provide for them.

In a word, without organization, you stand in danger of being exterminated. You cannot expect to be profitably employed, and the trades will soon die out in the race. With organization you will find employment, you will force opposite combinations to recognize your claims to work without restriction because of our color, and open the way for your children to learn trades and move forward in the enjoyment of all the rights of American citizenship. How shall you organize? We answer, call a general meeting of the workingmen in every city and town, and after discussing the importance of organization, appoint a committee of one from each branch of trade or labor represented, to prepare a plan for organization. When they have reported a plan, then appoint your committee on constitution and permanent organization. When they report, proceed immediately to form yourselves into an association, send a copy of your constitution and list of officers to the Bureau of Labor, and get your charter. We would advise, where there is a sufficient number of any particular branch, that they organize seperate associations. As each man desires to follow that business for which he has been educated.

As a constitution for the government of a carpenters' association will not suit for the government of a laborers' association, it is important that you organize each branch seperately. Five men of any one branch organized, can accomplish more in the interest of that particular branch, than being associated with five hundred men of several branches. Mixed organizations have always proven disastrous to the labor reform movement, except in delegated bodies. The above organzations referred to, are simple organizations for the protection of labor and wages.

We would call your attention to, and advise, second, that you form yourselves into co-operative Trades Unions. While these are the most beneficial associations of modern times, they require much judgment, and intellectual ability to make them a success. They seem to be a necessity at this time in order to furnish employment to colored men in many States in the Union. We could not furnish a general plan of organization. Each particular association must be governed by special rules. We can only advise you how to organize, when you inform the Bureau what you propose to organize. We can but say the general principle is, for each man to take a given amount of stock, and pay that in weekly or monthly installments until they have enough to commence business with, so that, by a combination of their money and labor, they will form a capital and business that will give them an independent living. In organizations of this kind no restrictions should be placed upon parties investing, because of their other relations. Let any man who will, take an interest with you.

3. We should advise you to organize building and land associations. These can easily be established in connection with your "Trades and Labor Unions," and will have a tendency to strengthen and perpetuate them. Experience has proved that all men can, by the agency of a well regulated building association, buy a house for what he would pay rent for one. We shall be pleased to advise you upon the most improved plans of organization.

4. In order to effect a more thorough organization of the colored workingmen of the United States, and advise and enlighten them upon all questions affecting their interest, and battle with the prejudices manifested because of our peculiar position, the Bureau has decided to issue a weekly paper, to be known as the organ of the Colored Workingmen of the United States. It shall be our object to keep you informed as to the condition of the trades in each State, rates of wages, demand for labor, value of real estate, forms of organization, and to meet all questions, national and local, affecting the interest of the workingmen.

The necessity for such a paper is admitted by all who are the least acquainted with our present disorganized condition, and as it is barely possible to disconnect our labor and social interest from our political, we shall at all times, when the necessity demands, take a decided stand in advising you upon all questions that will be to your interest as a race, and to the good of our common country.

As we shall have one or more agents, who shall travel in and through all the States to assist you in organizing all the departments of labor, we hope that every man will make himself an agent to take the paper, and see that his neighbor has one also, until it may be found in every house in the country.

We shall make it, if possible, the cheapest weekly paper in the country, and secure the best writers that can be found. Our course is onward! Let every man put his shoulders to the wheel, and victory and success will perch upon our banners. All communications must be marked "official," and addressed to the President, Box 191, Washington, D. C.

P. S.—Your attention is particularly invited to the Constitution of the National Labor Union, published in the proceedings of the Convention.

ISAAC MYERS, *President.*
GEORGE T. DOWNING, *Vice President.*
W. U. SAUNDERS, *Secretary.*
LEWIS H. DOUGLASS, *Assistant Secretary.*
COLIN CRUSOR, *Treasurer.*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

SELLA MARTIN, JOHN H. BUTLER,
ISAIAH C. WEIRS, GEORGE MYERS,

G. M. MABSON.