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PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE

# State Convention

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OF

## COLORED MEN OF TEXAS,

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HELD AT

The City of Austin, July 10--12, 1883.

"All men, when they form a social compact, have equal rights."—CONSTITUTION OF TEXAS.

HOUSTON:  
SMALLWOOD & GRAY, STEAM PRINTERS.  
1883. .

## NOTICE.

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Some of the State papers have said one or two of the reports herein contained were prepared by a "certain white man of Austin." In answer I wish to state: We, as colored men, are sure to be censured for all that is distasteful, hence we hope to receive credit for all that is commendable—for it is all our work.

To the members of the Convention I will say: It has taken considerable time and labor to rewrite and otherwise prepare these proceedings, and they had to be somewhat abridged. However, we trust nothing of importance has been omitted, and that you will pardon all errors.

I wish, also, to acknowledge the valuable assistance rendered me by Miss IDA B. EVANS, my sister-in-law.

I. B. SCOTT,

*Secretary.*



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# PROCEEDINGS OF THE STATE CONVENTION OF COLORED MEN OF TEXAS,

Held at Austin, July 10th to 12th, 1883.

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## *First Day's Proceedings—Tuesday.*

AUSTIN, Texas, July 10th, 1883.

The Convention was called to order by Rev. A. Grant, Chairman of the Executive Committee, at 12 M. The Chairman read the call, and invited Rev. M. Henson to conduct the devotional exercises. Rev. A. Grant was elected temporary Chairman, and I. B. Scott temporary Secretary.

J. H. Jones moved that a Committee on Credentials be appointed, and after some discussion, he moved the previous question, which was voted down. The original motion was adopted with the amendment that the committee consist of one from each congressional district. The chair announced that he found it difficult to select a member from each congressional district, on account of not having a roll of the Convention. By common consent it was agreed that a committee of eleven be appointed regardless of districts. The following were appointed: E. H. Anderson, J. H. Jones, L. M. Sublett, A. F. Jackson, W. W. Grimes, W. R. Lewis, David Abner, Jr., L. G. Jordan, J. S. Tibbett, Richard Mackey.

The reporters of the city and State papers were invited to attend the sessions of the Convention.

The Committee on Credentials retired, and during their absence, Rev. M. Henson was invited to address the Convention. The speaker was listened to with marked atten-

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tion. He set forth in a very strong light the grievances of the colored people in the State of Texas.

The Committee on Credentials came in and reported as follows:

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:*

We, your Committee on Credentials, respectfully submit the following report of properly accredited delegates to this State Convention of colored men:

Atascosa county, John Howard; Bastrop county, Thos. Hodges, P. M. Morton, Reuben Carr, Jacob Wright, Peter Oliver, Jack Smith; Bexar county, W. W. Grimes, F. A. Denison, D. W. Smith, James Martin, Jr., G. W. Smith; Brazos county, L. A. Nash, S. Talley, Reese Banner, W. E. Reed; Caldwell county, Q. B. Neal, E. H. Talley, J. W. M. Abernathy; DeWitt county, A. H. Huff, C. L. Madison; Fannin county, Hy. Wilhite, K. W. Williams; Freestone county, J. D. Davis; Galveston county, J. H. Armstrong, R. Nelson, S. A. Solomon, T. G. Nichols, G. H. Nevils, J. Q. A. Potts; Grimes county, L. G. Jordan, James Johnson; Harris county, I. B. Scott, J. S. Tibbett, R. Allen; Harrison county, P. F. Dennis, David Abner, Jr.; Hayes county, J. C. Johns, L. P. White; Lee county, R. M. Johnson, John A. Hickey; McLennan county, A. R. Norris, H. T. Keeling; Nueces county, S. M. Cole; Robertson county, J. H. Jones, J. N. Gillett, George Stearns, G. B. Lynch, E. I. Saddler; Travis county, Mack Henson, J. N. Johnson, W. H. Holland, H. Swan, W. R. Davis, W. E. Risher, Henry Dickerson, Green Burton, H. G. Madison, J. M. Holland, J. J. Hamilton, A. Grant; alternates—R. Johnson, E. H. Carrington, H. Russell, W. S. Buckner, L. M. Mitchell, W. G. Wilson, Horace Holdham, Wm. Wright, Wm. Walker, J. Purrrson; Waller county, E. H. Anderson; Washington county, R. J. Moore, A. Scott, James Johnson, George Talley, W. C. Blount, O. Wells, J. Brooks, A. H. Crawford, J. C. Cain, A. W. Wilder, J. G. Knoxson, A. W. Knoxson, A. F. Jackson, Geo. W. Alexander, R. M. Mackey, H. McAdoo, John Land, M. Johnson, L. M. Sublett, J. Scott, Green Hill, S. Love, Wm. Brown, W. Hubert, C. C. Perry, Thos. Hewlett, M. Gaines, Alex. Thomas, Jas. C. Hewitt, A. H. Ratliff, B. G. Guy, G. A. Mayo, J. K. Colbert, W. G. Smith, M. A. Whiting, E. Ramdon, J. Crenshaw, E. Colbert, T. L. Dawson, J. E. Little, Thos. Cooper, J. G. Dixon; Williamson county, W. D. F. Pyle.

The report was adopted.

The following were enrolled after the Committee on Credentials had reported: R. W. Tarvis, Henry Hunt, A. N. Hunt, Lem Black, L. K. Jones, Nelson Alberson, A. L. Over-



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ton, P. A. Alexander, Henry Stewart, W. R. Patterson, J. M. McMeans, W. J. Swanson.

E. H. Anderson moved that the chair appoint a committee on permanent organization. A. F. Jackson moved as a substitute, that the temporary officers be elected permanently by acclamation. A motion to table the substitute was lost; whereupon the substitute was adopted, and the temporary officers were declared elected permanent officers of the Convention.

A. Grant, on taking the chair as President, delivered an address, which was well received.

J. H. Jones and Hy. Wilhite were elected first and second Vice Presidents, respectively. J. N. Gillett was elected Assistant Secretary.

M. Henson offered the following:

*Resolved*, That no member of this Convention be allowed to speak on any subject more than five minutes at one time.

On motion of J. J. Hamilton, it was amended to read thus:

*Resolved*, That no member be allowed to speak more than ten minutes on the same subject without permission from the house. Adopted.

A resolution by F. A. Denison was adopted, inviting Gov. John Ireland to address the Convention to-morrow at 10 o'clock. The following committee were appointed to wait on and inform the Governor: E. H. Anderson, F. A. Denison, R. Nelson.

The following committees were appointed on the subjects named:

*Lands and Homesteads*—J. H. Armstrong, J. S. Tibbett, Hy. Dickerson, P. F. Dennis.

*Education*—J. W. M. Abernathy, R. Nelson, E. H. Anderson.

*The Moral Advancement of the Race*—J. H. Jones, H. Swan, J. S. Tibbett.

*Grievances*—Mack Henson, A. R. Norris, J. N. Johnson, J. Q. A. Potts.

*Address to the People*—E. H. Anderson, R. Nelson, R. J. Moore, Hy. Wilhite, H. Swan, J. H. Jones, J. N. Johnson.

*Publishing the Minutes*—I. B. Scott, J. N. Gillett.

*Agriculture and Wealth*—A. F. Jackson, W. R. Lewis, H. G. Madison, T. Hodges.

*Colored National Convention*—J. S. Tibbett, R. M. Johnson, H. Wilhite, L. M. Sublett, J. N. Gillett.

*Newspapers and Printing*—J. J. Hamilton, R. Nelson, L. M. Mitchell.

*Temperance*—L. M. Sublett, J. M. Holland, D. Abner, Jr., C. L. Madison.

*Widows' and Orphans' Home*—S. A. Solomon, J. J. Hamilton, T. G. Nichols, K. W. Williams, J. W. M. Abernathy.

*Mechanical Association*—T. G. Nichols, W. E. Risher, Q. B. Neal.

*Colored Trade and Union*—R. M. Johnson, W. H. Holland, S. A. Solomon, G. H. Nevils, J. A. Hickey.

The committee appointed to wait on the Governor reported that he accepted the invitation, and would address the Convention between the hours of 10 and 11 o'clock A.M., to-morrow.

The Secretary was authorized to employ a janitor to clean the hall before the next session of the Convention.

On motion, it was agreed that every member be taxed twenty-five cents to raise funds to buy stationery, pay the janitor, buy ice, etc.

On motion, the Convention adjourned to meet 9 A.M., Wednesday.

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### *Second Day's Proceedings.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING, July 11, 1883.

Convention assembled at the appointed hour, President A. Grant in the chair. Devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. A. R. Norris. Minutes of the previous session read and adopted.

J. H. Armstrong asked for a leave of absence on account of sickness. He was excused.

R. Nelson, by permission, addressed the Convention on the subject of education. In his remarks he favored national aid for public schools, and gave some educational statistics.

The Committee on Lands and Homesteads reported. Their report was adopted. See Report A.

The following telegram was received from Hon. R. Allen, of Houston, which was ordered spread upon the minutes.



HOUSTON, Texas, July 11th, 1883.

*I. B. Scott, Secretary of Colored Men's Convention :*

Please express my regrets to the Convention at not being able to attend. Sickness in my family prevents my doing so. I wish you much success in your deliberations.

R. ALLEN.

The President stated that he had received a communication from A. J. Moore, of Texas, now in Detroit, Mich., in which he expressed his disappointment in failing to reach the State in time to meet the Convention.

On motion of J. H. Jones, the chair appointed a committee to fix a basis for representation of the Colored Men's Convention in future. The following were appointed: J. H. Jones, R. Nelson, W. E. Reed.

The following were appointed to escort Gov. Ireland to the hall: H. T. Keeling, H. Swan, J. H. Jones.

The committee presented the Governor to the chair, who in turn introduced him to the Convention, hearty applause following.

The Governor delivered a plain and direct address. He neither abused nor flattered. He advised the Convention to do nothing to widen the breach between the white and colored races. He spoke in very complimentary terms of the work being done at the Prairie View State Normal School. He also advised that the Convention avoid the discussion of politics and hotel and railroad grievances. The Convention approved of at least a portion of the Governor's remarks. The hearty manner in which the reply of the President was applauded, showed him to have uttered the sentiments of the Convention. He assured the Governor that nothing would be done with the intention of severing the races, as their interests are one; also, that the Convention had no desire whatever to discuss politics. "But as long as the railroads sell us and our wives and daughters first-class tickets, and defraud us by compelling us to ride in second-class cars, where there is smoking, chewing, drinking and swearing, so long will colored men continue to agitate the question of railroad grievances."

On motion of W. W. Grimes, the Convention tendered a

vote of thanks to the Governor, and also to the Chairman of the Convention, for their addresses.

Committee on Moral Advancement of the People reported. On motion of I. B. Scott, the consideration of the report was postponed till after the report of the Committee on Grievances. This report was not called up again.

The following resolution was offered by I. B. Scott :

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this Convention, that any attempt to merge the proposed Colored Branch of the University into any of the institutions now established, or which may be established in future, will prove detrimental to the best interests of the colored people of Texas.

The resolution was referred to the Committee on Education. See Report D.

The following resolution, offered by E. H. Tally, was tabled :

*Resolved*, That the members of this Convention use their influence to destroy the credit system so generally practiced among our people.

On motion, the Convention adjourned till 3 o'clock P. M.

### *Afternoon Session.*

The Convention was called to order at 3 P. M., Rev. A. Grant presiding. The reading of the minutes of the previous meeting was postponed.

Reports of committees called for. Committee on Temperance reported. Report adopted. See Report B.

Committee on National Convention reported, and in their report recommended the election of sixteen delegates and their alternates to the National Convention to be held at Louisville, Ky., in September of the present year. Also, that a committee of five be appointed to select these delegates. The report was adopted. The following were appointed: L. A. Nash, W. E. Risher, W. S. Buckner, G. W. Smith, D. Abner, Jr.

Committee on Newspapers and Printing reported, stating that there are four colored papers published and circulated



in the State of Texas, as follows: The *Austin Citizen*, (weekly) Austin; the *People's Informer*, (weekly) Paris; the *Christian Star*, (monthly) Dallas; the *Baptist Journal*, (monthly) Marshall. Report adopted.

Committee on Grievances reported. After the reading of the report, I. B. Scott moved to strike out the clause referring to inns and taverns, stating that while he favored being accommodated decently at these places, he did not think that agitating the question would accomplish any good, considering the feeling manifested on that subject by the dominant race. In other words, he thought it too early to make a move in that direction in the South. After a sharp discussion on both sides, the motion was voted down, and the report was adopted as a whole. See Report C.

Committee on Education reported. Report adopted. See Report D.

Resolution by J. H. Martin on Protective Union, was referred to the Committee on that subject.

Resolution by R. J. Moore on apportionment of representation to Texas Colored Men's Convention, was referred to the committee on that subject.

Committee appointed to select delegates to the National Convention reported. There were several changes made in the delegation as reported; as finally adopted, see Report E.

Committee on Agriculture reported. Report adopted. See Report F.

Committee on Orphans' Home reported. Report adopted, See Report G.

Prof. W. E. Brooks, President of the Tillotson Institute, was introduced to the Convention. On invitation, he made a few remarks, which were well received.

Committee on Mechanical Association reported. Report adopted. See Report H.

Committee on Trade and Union reported. Report adopted. See Report I.

The following resolution by J. N. Johnson was adopted:

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to wait upon the Board

of Regents of the State University, and ascertain how soon the Branch University for Colored Youths will be put in operation. Said committee to report information received to this body.

On motion, A. R. Norris, J. W. M. Abernathy and G. W. Smith, were appointed a committee to arrange for the permanent organization of the Protective Union, and to nominate officers for the same.

Committee on Apportionments reported, but the work of apportionment of representation was finally referred to the Executive Committee of the Convention; such committee to be appointed before adjournment.

On motion of J. S. Tibbett, a committee was appointed to nominate members of the Executive Committee. The committee reported, and report adopted. See Report J.

Several motions were made to adjourn the Convention *sine die*, as a number of the delegates wished to return home, but a motion finally prevailed to adjourn till to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock.

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### *Third Day's Proceedings.*

THURSDAY, July 12, 1883.

Convention was called to order by I. B. Scott. The President being absent, J. H. Jones was called to the chair. The minutes of the two previous sessions were read and adopted.

Resolution by E. H. Tally, on the credit system, was taken from the table and adopted.

A. R. Norris moved to hear the report of the Committee on the Permanent Organization of the Protective Union, and proceed at once to the election of officers. Carried. The committee reported, but their report was set aside.

J. Q. A. Potts moved that the officers of the Protective Union be appointed by the Chair. Carried. They are as follows: A. R. Norris, President; A. J. Moore, Secretary; H. T. Keeling, Financial Secretary.

On motion of H. T. Keeling, each member was taxed 25 cents to buy stationery for the use of the Union. \$5.25 was collected.



Resolution by J. J. Hamilton, on the moral advancement of the people, was referred to the Committee on Address.

A resolution by E. H. Anderson, that the Secretary extend the thanks of this Convention to Mr. John F. Slater, for his munificent donation for the education of colored teachers, was unanimously adopted.

L. M. Sublett offered the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed by the Chair, to wait on the next Legislature, and ask an appropriation of \$100,000, to be used in erecting buildings at the Prairie View Normal School, for the establishment of a mechanical and an industrial department, and otherwise improve the efficiency of said school.

Carried, and the following committee was appointed : L. M. Sublett, E. H. Anderson, J. N. Johnson.

A resolution by S. A. Solomon, regarding the immorality of colored women, was referred to the Committee on Address.

A resolution by T. G. Nichols, on the establishment of a Mechanical Institution, was referred to the committee to wait on the Legislature.

Committee on Address reported. Report adopted. See Report K.

A resolution by J. N. Johnson, endorsing the Austin Citizen and other colored papers of the State, was adopted.

A resolution by H. Wilhite, recommending the organization of county executive committees, for the purpose of arranging for future State Conventions, was adopted. See Resolution No. 1.

A resolution by W. E. Reed, endorsing J. N. Johnson, Esq., of Austin, as a lawyer, was carried.

The committee appointed to wait on the Board of Regents, reported that the Secretary of the Board informed them that the colored branch of the University would most likely be put in operation one year from this coming fall.

A resolution by J. Harvey Jones, thanking Commissioner H. P. Brewster for the use of the Hall of Representatives, in which the convention met; also the reporters of the Galves-

ton News, Houston Post, Dallas Herald, San Antonio Express, Austin Statesman, and the Associated Press, for their fair and impartial reports of the proceedings of the Convention, was adopted.

A resolution by J. S. Tibbett, tendering a vote of thanks to the officers of the Convention, was carried.

L. M. Sublett moved that the Secretary be authorized to have one thousand copies of the proceedings of the Convention printed, and each member subscribe what he is willing to pay on the same.

Judge Garland, of Austin, was introduced to the Convention, and made a few remarks regarding the fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man.

Judge Terrell, of Austin, was introduced to the Convention, and among other things, made a statement showing that he had favored and labored for the colored man's having equal advantages in the race for education.

A resolution by J. H. Johnson, endorsing the management and work of the Prairie View State Normal School, was adopted.

J. D. Davis moved that each member send his subscription on the minutes to the Secretary as soon as possible.

A resolution by J. N. Johnson, recommending delegates to the favorable consideration of their constituents, as men laboring for the best interests of their respective communities, was adopted. Also, one by J. W. M. Abernathy, thanking citizens of Austin for their hospitality to the Convention; and another, on compensation for Secretaries.

The selection of time and place for holding the next Convention was left to the Executive Committee.

On motion, the Convention adjourned *sine die*.

I. B. SCOTT,  
Secretary.

A. GRANT,  
President.



## REPORT A.

## LANDS AND HOMESTEADS.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Colored Men's State Convention :*

GENTLEMEN—We, your Committee on Lands and Homesteads, beg leave to report as follows : After having given the matter careful consideration, we are of opinion that the material interests of the colored population of this State would be greatly advanced if they owned more real estate. Land is rapidly advancing in value, and those who fail to purchase now, when they can do so on such reasonable terms from both State and private parties, will make a great mistake. Such being the case, and in view of the fact that a great number of foreign immigrants are pouring into the State and possessing themselves of her best lands, we would recommend that every member of this Convention urge upon our people the necessity of acquiring lands in tracts suitable for colonization and farming.

We further recommend that this Convention give its most hearty approval to the works and aims of the Texas Homestead and Colonization Association, which is one of the outgrowths of our Waco Convention. This Association is gotten up for the purpose of aiding its members and others in securing homes at a reasonable cost.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

J. H. ARMSTRONG, Chairman.  
J. S. TIBBETT,  
H. DICKERSON,  
P. F. DENNIS.

## REPORT B.

## TEMPERANCE.

Since we are all aware that intoxicating liquors are a great abomination to our race ; that they ruin the souls of men, and present them to God in that dark and polluted state, to ever depart from his presence ; that they deprive men of the blessings of this life and of that to come ; that they affect the brain of the youth, thus checking the activity of his thinking faculties—

*Resolved*, That the members of this Convention lend their combined effort to the work of putting down this master evil, that our race may be developed into one of intellectual strength and power.

*Resolved*, That this Convention do all in its power to aid and encourage the Independent Order of Good Templars, of which, we learn from Rev. L. M. Sublett, there are seventeen different Orders laboring to unite this State with others struggling against the powers of intemperance.

*Resolved*, That we notice with pleasure the good work done by the ladies of Massachusetts and other States in putting forth their combined strength to master this great evil ; also, in caring for the destitute orphans and wid-

ows made so by their husbands and fathers having fallen victims to the evils of intemperance.

Honorable members, you see the great hindrance ; now let the strength of your combined souls go forth to move it.

DAVID ABNER, JR., Chairman.  
L. M. SUBLETT,  
J. M. HOLLAND,  
C. L. MADISON.

## REPORT C.

### GRIEVANCES.

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen :*

We, your Committee on Grievances, beg leave to make the following report :

We find that the denial to the colored people of the free exercise of many of the rights of citizenship, is due to the fact of there being such great prejudice against them as a race. This prejudice was engendered from the belief which underlay the institution of slavery, and which kept that institution alive, and built it to the enormous proportions which it has attained ; that is, the belief that the Negro was intended by the Divine Creator as servants and menials for the more favored races ; hence, was not to be accorded the rights and privileges exercised by other races. Very naturally, then, was it thought fitting and proper, and in keeping with Divine intention, to keep the Negro bowed down in slavery. The sudden change from a status wherein we were slaves to one in which we were made freemen ; and then, further, to that in which we became citizens equal before the law, was so unexpected and contrary, both to the training and teaching of our former owners, that they have never fully accepted said changes, though they have affected to accept them, because their acceptance was made the only condition upon which they could regain their former position in the Union. We submit, that it is contrary to the natural order of things for them to have surrendered their belief in the matter simply because they were physically overpowered. And, not only is the belief in the Negro's inferiority and creation for servants, deeply rooted in the minds of its advocates, but it has culminated in what seems to be a bitter hatred and fixed prejudice. This culmination was brought about by the Negro being taken from the position of a slave and forcibly placed equal to his former master ; also, by his being subsequently utilized in carrying on the war against the unfortunates of the lost cause after the battle had been transferred from the field to the ballot box ; and in doing this he adhered to a political party which he kept up by his support, and which was nearly identical with the triumphant party which had caused their former owners' defeat on the bloody field of battle. This is the outcome of a train of circumstances naturally liable to produce just



such a result. The reason given by our debasers, when attempting to justify themselves in regarding us socially so grossly inferior is, that it always has been their policy to do so, and hence it will always be. This remark refers to the fact that they regarded us thus during slavery as a ground upon which they justified slavery, and as they have experienced no change of mind they will continue thus to regard us. Your committee arrived at this conclusion : that if our former owners deny our social equality, they cannot be expected to be swift in respecting our legal equality or equality before the law ; for it is the social regard one has for another as a member of society, which impels him to protect and accord unto such a one his legal rights. Hence, if there be a class who socially regard us less favorably than they do other races, to an extent that they are prejudiced, such a class certainly are indifferent as to whether we obtain our legal rights or not. Accordingly, social disregard may well imply absolute indifference as to another's legal rights, but never that *mutual* regard which is supposed to possess citizens of a common country. It is a true rule that the degree to which any right is enjoyed as a citizen, is measured by the willingness of the whole body of citizens to protect such a right ; if there is lack of regard there is, therefore, lack of the will to protect. We find, therefore, that this social disregard is the sole cause of all the infringements upon our rights as a race, as we shall specify :

#### MISCEGENATION LAW.

Prominent among the enactments in furtherance of this social disregard, is a law of this State punishing as felons all persons who intermarry when one is a descendant of the Negro race and the other is not. The same series of laws impose an insignificant fine only for the same persons to live together in unlawful wedlock, or have carnal intercourse with each other without being married. In most cases, say ninety-nine cases in one hundred, parties of the two races thus unlawfully cohabiting are not even reported, or if reported not punished. And, sad to remark, in many cases officers of the law are disqualified to try such cases ; in many others, those who would in good faith testify against offenders of this class, would do so at the risk of their lives. The result of this series of crimes, tolerated and encouraged by our Criminal Code, which makes pretensions to preserving public morals, common decency and chastity, is to increase immorality in the lower classes of both races to an alarming extent. The law should never imply that a thing otherwise lawful is a felony, and that a thing of the same nature unlawful in itself is less than a felony. Colored females, victims of this well-laid plan, called a law to protect public morals, and common decency and chastity, are severely censured, and our whole race indiscriminately described as a race without morals. A careful consideration of the operation of the law convinces all fair-minded persons, that the law was intended to gratify the basest passions of certain classes of men who do not seek such gratification by means of lawful wedlock. We are pained to an-

nounce that the law bears its evil fruits. The committee dismiss the consideration of this dark subject with the recommendation that the Convention urge upon our next Legislature the necessity of an amendment to this law that will punish as rigidly for all carnal intercourse between the two races, unlawfully carried on, as it punishes them for intermarrying. If the Legislature do this, they will show a willingness to stop the tide of immorality that now makes such inroads upon the morals of some of our most promising females.

#### FREE SCHOOLS.

The Constitution, and laws made in pursuance thereof, make provision for the education of the youth of the State, without regard to race or previous condition. Further, they make provision that cities may assume the control of school affairs within their limits, on condition that they make a special taxation upon their property in order to lengthen the school term to ten months. What we complain of is, that notwithstanding the Constitution, laws, courts, and the Board of Education have decided that provision for each race must be equal and impartial, many cities make shameful discrimination because the colored people do not own as much property on which to pay taxes as the white people do, in proportion to the number of children in each race. They utterly refuse to give colored schools the same provision as to character of buildings, furniture, number and grade of teachers as required by law. The result of this discrimination is, that the white schools of such cities show good fruit, while the colored show poor fruit or none at all. We here say that this charge of discrimination is not made against all cities, but against only such as really discriminate. And again, there are many colored teachers appointed mainly on account of their personal relation with the individuals composing the Boards, and not with reference to the peculiar needs of the pupils to be benefitted, neither the fitness of the teacher nor the wishes of patrons.

We are glad to say, however, that many school boards, exclusively white, do their full duty towards colored schools. Still we deem it proper and just, in recognition of our rights, to assist in supervising and controlling, to have some colored man or men appointed on school boards in cities where there is a large number of colored pupils and patrons—especially where suitable men can be found. We make no complaint against the provision made by the Legislature of our State for the education of our children, but against the partial manner in which those provisions are executed by some of the local authorities.

#### TREATMENT OF CONVICTS.

Another sore grievance that calls for the consideration of this Convention is the treatment of convicts, a large proportion of whom are colored. It is inhuman and cruel in the extreme. We do not refer to those that are kept within the walls. They are under the immediate care and supervision of the management, and we believe considerably treated. But most of the



convicts are scattered over the State on farms, having no one to administer to their physical, moral or spiritual needs but a host of inhuman, brutal convict guards. When a fresh convict is carried to the farms, he is taken down by the other convicts and beaten, at the command of the guard, and that, too, with a large piece of cowhide. The guard takes this method of taming the newcomer. Of course this lays him up, but in a few days he is hauled out of his sick quarters and put to work, whether he is physically able to do it or not. The law provides that a convict physically unable to work shall not be required to do so, such inability to be ascertained by the examination of the penitentiary physician. But, convicts on farms, who are mostly colored, have no physician to determine such inability, and even when sick and dying have none, unless the hiring planter, who has no particular interest in saving his life, sees fit to employ one. In many cases sick convicts are made to toil until they drop dead in their tracks. Many again, driven to desperation by inhuman treatment, seek to relieve themselves by attempting to escape when the chances are against them, thus inducing the guards to shoot them, which they are ready to do on the slightest pretext. Others are maltreated by being placed in the pillory or stocks until they are dead or nearly so. When convicts are brutally murdered, nothing is done with their slayers unless the indignant citizens are prompt in insisting upon their punishment. In nine cases out of ten, parties sent to investigate these occurrences report the killing justifiable, because guards and their friends find it convenient to make it appear so. When legislative committees visit one of these convict camps, they always find the convicts ready to report that they are well treated, because all of them, both white and black, are previously warned by their guards to report thus or accept the consequences which will surely follow. Again we will state, although the law justifies the killing of a convict escaping from the penitentiary, when his escape can be prevented in no other way, still we fail to see wherein it can be justified when the convict is carried on a farm, away from the penitentiary, and given a chance to escape only to be deliberately shot down in attempting to do so. We believe such to be deliberate murder, and should be punished as such. Believing that most of the evils can be remedied by the appointment of a colored inspector who is a humane man, having power to investigate the affairs of convict camps and the management of convict labor on private farms, therefore, we recommend to the Governor and Board such an appointment at the earliest possible moment. We recommend also, that as most of the State convicts are colored, that there be appointed at least one colored commissioner of penitentiaries. Though our men and youths are sent to the penitentiary to be reformed, in most cases they are made worse by the inhumanities and immoral habits of their guards, who, in many cases, are worse morally than the convicts themselves. We think that this Convention should pass a resolution condemning, in strongest terms, the practice of yoking or chaining male and female convicts together. This is an act of officials,

done only for the purpose of further demoralizing those persons, especially so where they are only county convicts.

#### RAILWAYS, INNS AND TAVERNS.

The criticisms and censures of many, that colored persons in demanding admission to first class cars are forcing social intercourse, are unjust and unwarranted. For those who censure know that if the companies were to furnish accommodations for colored passengers holding first class tickets, equal to the accommodations furnished white passengers holding the same, though such accommodations be in separate cars, no complaint will be made. But selling two classes of passengers the same kind of tickets, at the same time and price, certainly sells to them the same accommodations and privileges. The colored people, like any other class of citizens, will contend for the right in this matter as long as our Constitution reads, "all men when they form a social compact have equal rights," and even longer.

We would also state that we do not contend for the privilege of riding in the car with whites, but for the right of riding in cars equally as good, and for the mutual right of riding in their car if they have a separate one, whenever they are permitted to ride in ours if we have a separate one. We believe the State laws to be adequate to protect us in every right, and that there is no necessity of appealing to a law of Congress unless the laws and government of our own State refuse to recognize and protect these rights.

As for accommodations at public inns, taverns and hotels, we have the same right as other races to be accommodated on equal terms and conditions, though we cannot compel them to accommodate us in the same room, at the same table or even in the same building, but the proprietor can be compelled to make provision as good. We recognize the fact that our State law is as adequate to protect a colored man in the exercise of his rights as it is to protect a white man. While not encouraging the contention for our rights at hotels when we can make other provision, we recommend our people to invoke the aid of the courts when their rights with reference to railroads are violated, and ask that they assert our rights thereon by such damages as are sufficient to assert them.

#### JURIES.

The prevailing practice among sheriffs and jury commissioners of summoning jurors exclusively white or nearly so, is in direct violation of the laws of this State, for no person is disqualified as a juror on account of his color. If the sheriff and commissioners exclude any one by practice on account of color, it is such an exclusion as is not contemplated by law, for the parties summoning cannot excuse themselves by saying they knew of none who could read and write, for that is a qualification they are to assume and let the court test jurors' qualifications after they are summoned. A juror who sits in judgment on a case involving the rights of a man whom he regards with less consideration than he does members of his own class, is in



law an incompetent juror, and should by law be excluded on evidence of such lack of regard. We deem it to be the duty of all judges to, at all times, specially instruct sheriffs and commissioners with reference to correcting these abuses, so as to secure to every individual, white or black, a fair and impartial trial by a jury composed of men acknowledging themselves to be his peers.

In furtherance of a desire to effectually and legitimately prescribe a remedy for the evils and wrongs complained of, we recommend the formation of an organization to be known and called "The Colored People's Progressive Union." It shall have for its object the protection of the rights of the colored people of Texas, by giving aid and direction in the prosecution of suits in the support of every right guaranteed to colored people as citizens. We recommend that our delegates to the National Convention be instructed to urge upon said Convention the necessity of organizing a national convention of the same name and for the same object, under which, if organized, this State Association shall act as a branch.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

MACK HENSON, Chairman.  
A. R. NORRIS,  
J. N. JOHNSON,  
J. Q. A. POTTS.

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## REPORT D.

### EDUCATION.

#### *Mr. Chairman and Convention:*

Your Committee on Education beg leave to submit the following report:

Previous to 1870 there was no systematic educational work done among our people. From the close of the war to that time a few self-sacrificing friends from the North taught colored schools in our principal towns and cities. These schools were largely attended, notwithstanding our extreme poverty, and the want of that knowledge which enables one to properly appreciate the advantages of a liberal education.

The work took shape in 1870, but was greatly hampered and retarded by the want of teachers, and the unsettled condition of affairs arising from the evils which always follow in the wake of civil war. From the close of the war to the beginning of 1873, we had few or no colored persons in the State competent to teach.

On the withdrawal of teachers then in the field, for causes not necessary to mention, many ill-prepared colored young men and women entered the school room. These young pioneer teachers certainly deserve our highest praise for the good (not unmixed with evil) they did. Their success is due, not so much to inherent qualities for teaching, as to their thorough knowledge of the wants of our people.

In 1877 and 1878 better prepared teachers from our own and other States entered the field. Since then they have increased both in number and ability, until there is no State in the Union where the colored schools, taken as a whole, are better conducted.

That this work of uplifting the people might go on with increased momentum, high schools and colleges have been established in various parts of the State. Charges for board and tuition at these institutions have been placed so low that our young people have no excuse for failing to educate themselves. In the midst of our desire to build up colleges, there is one danger which we are likely to fall into, viz: that of commencing at the top, instead of at the bottom of the educational ladder. No solid or permanent work can be done by such procedure. Common schools must precede colleges and universities. Many of our young men and women have been crippled for life by the foolish desire of college presidents to confer unmeaning degrees. Persons from so-called colleges, professing to have studied the higher branches, are constantly applying for admission to our Normal School. Upon examination, they have been found, without a single exception, deficient in the elementary branches. A reform is called for. Let us remember that a thorough knowledge of the three "R's" is of more real value than all the Greek and Latin that has ever been written or spoken. College presidents must be made to understand that they will no longer be allowed to impose upon ignorance by such dishonest means.

The donation of \$1,000,000, by John F. Slater, of Connecticut, the interest of which is to be devoted to the preparation of colored teachers, is but another index to our happy future. It is to be hoped that this Convention will, in some way, show its appreciation of this munificent gift.

We heartily indorse what is known as the Logan bill, extending national aid toward the education of the illiterate of the country, and earnestly request our Representatives in Congress to use their influence for the passage of said bill.

It is the opinion of your committee that, in the employment of teachers for colored schools, preference should be given to colored teachers, other things being equal.

It is also the sense of your committee, that any attempt to merge the proposed colored branch of the University into any of the institutions now established, or which may be established in the future, will prove detrimental to the best interests of the colored people of Texas.

The liberality of the last Legislature to our Normal Schools is deserving of our thanks. The amendment to the school law of the State, passed by the 18th Legislature, while not what we desired in all respects, is quite an improvement upon the law as it now stands. In the opinion of your committee it should receive our support.

The Summer Institutes now in session in the different parts of the State



are an earnest of the determination, on the part of the people of Texas, to make our State second to none in point of education.

Respectfully submitted,

E. H. ANDERSON, *Chairman*.  
R. NELSON,  
J. W. M. ABERNATHY.

## REPORT E.

### Delegates to the National Convention.

#### *Delegates.*

A. Grant, Chairman,  
J. H. Jones,  
R. J. Moore,  
J. W. M. Abernathy,  
D. Abner, Jr.,  
E. H. Anderson,  
I. B. Scott,  
P. F. Dennis,  
F. A. Dennison,  
Henry Wilhite,  
A. F. Jackson,  
J. H. Armstrong,  
Mack Henson,  
J. J. Hamilton,  
L. M. Sublett,  
R. Nelson,

#### *Alternates.*

A. J. Moore,  
J. S. Tibbett,  
J. Lands,  
Q. B. Neale,  
S. H. Roberts,  
C. M. Furguson,  
E. I. Saddler,  
C. C. Montgomery,  
J. R. Davis,  
J. D. Davis,  
G. W. Alexander,  
T. G. Nichols,  
R. Dukes,  
H. G. Madison,  
R. M. Mackey,  
S. A. Solomon.

Respectfully submitted,

L. A. NASH, *Chairman*,  
W. E. RISHER,  
W. S. BUCKNER,  
G. W. SMITH,  
D. ABNER, JR.

## REPORT F.

### AGRICULTURE.

*Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention:*

We, your Committee on Agriculture, do most respectfully report that, in all portions of this great State, our people are purchasing land and converting the same into neat farms, thereby giving evidence of thrift and prosperity. We would, therefore, recommend that this Convention set forth and discuss such measures as will encourage every colored man to own a home, so that he need be no longer "a hewer of wood and a drawer of water." The possession of land properly cultivated indicates wealth and honor.

Respectfully submitted,

A. F. JACKSON,  
W. R. LEWIS,  
H. G. MADISON,  
T. HODGES.

## REPORT G.

## WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' HOMES.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Convention :*

Your Committee on Widows' and Orphans' Homes, ask leave to make the following report :

We find that some friends at Galveston have succeeded in obtaining a charter for such an institution, but as yet nothing of importance has been done. However, the enterprise is worthy of our most hearty endorsement.

Thousands of children drift to ruin or go to the penitentiary annually, for the want of proper care and protection while they are young.

Your committee do not deem it necessary to make a lengthy report, but trust this body will in some way bring the subject before the people of this State, so that at an early day something may be done for the unfortunate children of our race.

S. A. SOLOMON, Chairman.

J. J. HAMILTON, T. G. NICHOLS,  
J. W. M. ABERNATHY, K. W. WILLIAMS.

## REPORT H.

## MECHANICAL ASSOCIATION.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention :*

Your Committee on Mechanical Association beg leave to report, that in casting around to determine in what branch of pursuit we are most deficient, find that to be the mechanical branch, the main lever by means of which all greatness is derived. Here we are most deficient, and we cannot prosper as a race until this main arm of our body has been strengthened.

We cannot expect to cope successfully with other races until we can have an association in which our youth can become graduates, as those of other races. We find that even at the North the prejudice is so great against the colored people, that they cannot get their boys into a machine shop or mechanical institution. We can never consider ourselves on the road to greatness till we can turn out first class mechanics. There is a great tendency among our people to misrepresent themselves. There are too many botches among us. We find that as the people advance in science and education, greater is the demand for skilled mechanics.

We would respectfully recommend that a Mechanical Institution be established somewhere in the State of Texas, in which our young men and boys can learn trades to some degree of perfection. This we regard as one of the most important matters to be taken into consideration by this Convention, as hand in hand go education and skill in the mechanical arts—both building up a race. Should every member of this Convention look at this matter properly, and give it due consideration, something will be accom-



plished on this line. Good and skilled mechanics are the leading men of the country. We have the material and only lack the means of development. We hope every member of this Convention that can aid in accomplishing this object, will do so.

Respectfully,

T. G. NICHOLS, Chairman.  
W. E. RISHER,  
Q. B. NEALE.

## REPORT I.

### TRADE AND UNION.

The committee on this subject failed to hand their report to the Secretary.  
I. B. SCOTT.

## REPORT J.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

J. J. Hamilton, Chairman, Austin,	D. Abner, Jr., Marshall,
J. H. Jones, Secretary, Calvert,	G. A. Mayo, Brenham,
R. Mackey, Brenham,	F. A. Dennison, San Antonio,
J. Q. A. Potts, Galveston,	P. F. Dennis, "
G. H. Nevils, "	J. Lands, Brenham,
T. G. Nichols, "	G. W. Alexander, Brenham,
I. B. Scott, Houston,	L. A. Nash, Bryan.
J. S. Tibbett, Houston.	

Respectfully submitted,

J. S. TIBBETT, Chairman.

## REPORT K.

### ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS.

Humbly invoking the blessings of Almighty God and the sanction of the whole body of the people, in behalf of the continued growth of the friendliest relations between the races, as well as for the continued general improvement of our people in all essential elements of civilization, the colored people of the State of Texas, in Convention assembled at the City of Austin, present the following :

While acknowledging that the feeling of white people has been continually increased in friendliness toward us, even to a surprising degree, as is evidenced by the fairness of the laws *made* for the government and protection alike of all the people, colored as well as white ; and as is evidenced by the pleasant relations and continued growing neighborly intercourse between the two races in the more intelligent communities, still we crave of all good citizens their just condemnation of outrages practiced upon us by individuals in various localities. We desire to live in peace and harmony with our white

brethren here in the South—our home. There are some of us, owing to our misinformed state of mind, who construe their mistreatment by a few white individuals into an act on the part of the whole body of the white race; but we are proud to say, that it shall never be our purpose to so unjustly charge these people, for common sense teaches us that if the whole body of the white people were our real enemies, our annihilation would be sure; however, we know it to be the duty of the whole people to condemn wrong wherever it exists, and lend their support in behalf of every vested right. We also ask the strong arm of the people in suppressing the brutal practice on the part of so-called law abiding citizens, of lynching persons who may be accused of crimes. While we say that the crimes, if committed, in some cases merit death, the danger is in murdering a man who is not guilty, for in these cases the accused is never tried but prejudged. We condemn this whether the victim be colored or white.

Now, as so very much is said about our status as colored passengers on railroads, we in all fairness admit that we do not object to social separation, but since colored people were regarded citizens, it never has been questioned that colored passengers had equal rights to various accommodations on highways.

We know if separation is desirable, the corporation should do as the State does towards these two classes of citizens, that is, provide separate, exclusive cars for each, equal in the various respects, and the colored people will manifest no more a desire to ride in the famous "first class or ladies car," than they do to send their children to a white school. Some of the railroads were built by money loaned by counties, and we have been taxed to pay the interest on the bonds upon which said money was raised, and we think we have a right to have what is paid for the same as other citizens. In recognition of the correctness of our position, the management of the Missouri Pacific R. R., and Leased Lines, informs the colored people of the State, that it is not their policy to discriminate against them, and the managers are living up to their declaration. Though the matter here involved may appear of small moment, all fair-minded men will acknowledge that if we are citizens we should make our claim to every vested right when not against the policy of the country or State, and we say it is not against the policy of this State for all classes of citizens to have equal rights to public benefits.

Hence, we submit, that those railroad companies that wish to separate passengers, should make equal provision in separate cars for each class of passengers. Having said so much on these matters, we know that at present the most substantial avenues to peace and happiness are through education, morality and wealth. We congratulate ourselves on the fact that much progress is being made in education, which, all things being considered, is highly satisfactory. The moral status in some of our people needs much improvement. We hereby demand of our people, in the name of God, Virtue and Morality, to set aside entirely all teachers and preachers who are



not true to their trusts, and are not strictly moral by practice. We further say, that one of our greatest needs is money and property. To facilitate the obtaining of this we cannot do better than conclude that our people should avoid emigrating even from county to county, (except from those where their living is intolerable) and purchase lands and homes, organize associations—not any more beneficial societies having for their object the burial of the dead—but business associations for the wants of the living, and where an individual has the means, let him go into a business enterprise alone. Let the farmer who owns his farm stay on it and develop it, raise everything he possibly can for home use, and then raise all he can for sale. Let those who have no farm buy one. Every colored man in the State of Texas should have a farm, not a town lot alone. Nothing is better than a nice country home. Buy a farm in the immediate neighborhood of the place in which you are living (if you are in a good one). Again, we should encourage the mechanical trades; encourage our boys to be shoemakers, blacksmiths, carpenters, painters, brick and stone masons. In furtherance of all these schemes for permanent improvement, we should immediately come together in each county throughout the State and consider these matters. We should have these county meetings as often as may be, for they can be attended by every substantial citizen of the county without any outlay or expense. At these meetings, everything necessary for the improvement of our people in these counties can not only be considered, but plans for improvement can immediately be put in operation. The subject of county schools can be considered and acted upon; the care of colored lunatics, paupers and prisoners should have our attention; the question of buying land and farms, of organizing mercantile enterprises, and of the means of making farming more remunerative; also, to instill in the minds of our people in the various occupations, a better knowledge of properly conducting their business in the various callings, so as to secure the benefits of the fruit thereof.

In conclusion, we deprecate in some of our people a disposition to continually harass the petty courts with trifling law-suits, and express our approval of suits only when real wrong can be remedied in no other way. And further, we suggest that it is the duty of all our school teachers to not only teach the children for a stated salary, but to take a real interest in the advancement of the people in their respective communities; to assist in cultivating the friendliest feeling between the two races, but not at the expense of absolute rights. These teachers should arm themselves with a knowledge of business, so as to assist our people in their business in the various communities. We affirm our disapproval of the too frequent changing of teachers. On the other hand, we deem it wise to induce worthy teachers to become residents in the communities in which they teach. We now request the teachers and other leading persons in each county, to call a mass meeting at an early day and consider their affairs in the matters referred to from

a local stand-point, and after having met to report proceedings through the press of the country, and especially through the *Austin Citizen*.

In regard to our political preferences, circumstances surrounding our birth as citizens having naturally created an affection and determined adherence to the Republican party of the country, we are satisfied the colored people of the country as a mass will continually adhere to that party for a long time in the remote future, or at least until some other party presents itself in all things better than this, especially with reference to the rights of the colored man ; and we submit that our views on this point should meet with the respect of all considerate men.

RICHARD NELSON, Chairman.	
E. H. ANDERSON,	R. J. MOORE,
H. WILHITE,	H. SWAN,
J. H. JONES,	J. N. JOHNSON.

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## RESOLUTIONS.

1. *Resolved*, That this Convention recommend that an Executive Committee be organized in each county of the State of Texas, said committees to be known as the Executive Committee of the Colored Men's Convention of the State of Texas. They are to work under the State Executive Committee.

2. *Resolved*, That the State Executive Committee appoint a chairman in each county of the State of Texas, at least three months prior to the time of the assembling of the State Convention. Said chairmen to organize an executive committee in their respective counties consisting of from nine to fifteen members. In each case the organizing chairman shall be a member of the committee so organized, but the committee shall have power to elect its own chairman. The executive committee shall call a county convention, to meet at county seat, at least one month prior to the assembling of the State Convention. The county convention shall proceed to elect the number of delegates to the State Convention, that shall be fixed by the State Executive Committee prior to such election. The county chairman shall forward the names of persons so elected to the chairman of the State Executive Committee, who shall have them published.