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REPUBLICAN MASS MEETING

THE SITUATION DISCUSSED

PEACE, JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION

Speeches of Messrs. Burch, Ingraham and Chester.

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE

Pursuant to a call which had appeared for some days in the REPUBLICAN, inviting the Republican masses to assemble to take measures for submitting to the country the condition of the colored people of Louisiana and to express confidence in and determination to support the State and national administrations, the hall of the House of Representatives, at Mechanics' Institute, was thronged on Monday evening last.

The meeting was called to order by Hon. William G. Brown, State Superintendent of Education, who called Lieutenant Governor C. C. Antoine to the chair.

Colonel James Lewis and Hon. T. T. Allain were chosen vice presidents, and Messrs. William Weeks, W. W. Johnson, and J. W. Quinn, secretaries.

Hon. J. Henri Burch was introduced and read the following resolutions:

WHEREAS, The present alarming condition of political affairs in Louisiana, having attracted the attention of the American press and the American people, who, either from prejudice or being imposed upon, wholly fail to understand the actual state of affairs or the causes which have had the effect of bringing this State to its present condition of disorder and confusion; and,

Whereas, Our political opponents in this State have, by and through their traveling committees, misrepresentations, lavish expenditure of money, partisan journals and orators and other questionable methods, succeeded in making in the North an unfavorable opinion of the Republican party of this State, especially the colored men, and at home by special and specious appeals to their followers, succeeded in rousing the passions of bad men, culminating eventually in the wholesale murder of colored Republicans, intimidation, violence and fraud; and,

Whereas, These same men have constantly represented the colored men of this State, holding elective or appointive positions, as being corrupt, depraved, ignorant, vicious and unworthy, and have industriously circulated the same at home and abroad, and have sought to prove the same before the American Congress, for no other purpose than to carry out their purposes; and,

Whereas, We have been led to believe that our case was not as ably represented in Washington, before the committee on Louisiana affairs, as the merits of the case demanded, and as it will be once more presented to the American Congress for final consideration; and,

Whereas, Believing firmly that the State of Louisiana is honestly Republican, and as such elected the Republican candidates, with but few exceptions, at the general election of 1872, in spite of the outrageous obstacles placed in the way of colored Republicans, such as a denial of registration, hindrance in voting, ballot-box stuffing, a refusal to return the votes of parishes overwhelmingly Republican, etc., all of which can be easily proven; therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of this meeting that decisive and immediate steps be taken by the colored men of this State to place before the American people immediately, and the American Congress at its next session, such facts and testimony as will easily demonstrate the truth of our assertions.

Resolved, That it is also the sense of this meeting that the representative colored men of this State owe it to their party, their constituents, themselves and their race to use immediate measures, by every effort within their power, to reverse the false and outrageous reports so industriously circulated by their life-long enemies—believed by them naturally, and credited by our friends because they are not publicly contradicted—and to put forth their best efforts to prove the falsity of the accusations, and to vindicate their fitness "to vote and to be voted for."

Resolved, That in order to place our party and race in Louisiana properly before the American people, and also to be in readiness to meet our villifiers and persecutors at the bar of public opinion at the North, and the American Congress, a committee of nine persons be appointed by the chairman of this meeting, which committee shall have full powers to collect testimony, hold correspondence with the prominent white and colored Republicans of the North, collect funds to defray all necessary expenses, send prominent and earnest colored orators from this State to the North, for the purpose of interesting our Northern Republicans in our affairs, and to procure an honest, impartial verdict as to our fitness to hold office, or assist in the government of State affairs; to provide for a committee to attend the next session of Congress, and assist our friends there to fight our battles, to procure competent and worthy witnesses for that purpose, and to do whatever may be necessary in their judgment to defend and vindicate our party and our race.

Resolved, That as an auxiliary to this committee there shall be appointed by it two from each parish of this State, whose duty it shall be to assist the committee of nine in procuring competent, worthy witnesses, and to forward to it such facts and sworn statements relative to the last and previous elections as may be deemed necessary for the purposes of the committee.

Resolved, That now as in the past, our protoundest gratitude is due and is heartily tendered to President Grant for his ever ready appreciation of our needs, and his steady application of those remedies through which alone our people have been rescued from cruel despotism and maintained in the enjoyment of our present political privileges.

Resolved, That regarding the present State government as the rightful, equitable and just representative of the majority of the voters in the State of Louisiana, we cordially yield it our respect and confidence, and pledge ourselves to its support.

Resolved, That we recognize in Hon. E. H. Durell one who, by the firm, unflinching performance of an onerous duty, possessed the high moral courage to meet undaunted the task set before him, and whose decision, in our humble opinions, was founded on an enlightened sense of justice and a desire to righteously interpret the law in the case. To him are extended the sincere thanks of a persecuted race, who, by his action, has been protected thus far in their rights. He has stood between them and their oppressors as a strong wall between a rushing river which threatened their overthrow, and we are profoundly grateful to him for his impartial judgment. Though misrepresented now by those who would deprive us of our rights, we look confidently to the future for the vindication of his act, and believe that it will eventually be approved by the nation and applauded by all true lovers of humanity.

Resolved, That all we ask of our white fellow-citizens is justice and equality before the law, and the independent exercise of our rights, and when these great blessings are practically conceded and enjoyed by us, there will be peace, happiness and prosperity throughout the State.

Mr. Burch continued as follows:

Mr. President and fellow-citizens—It devolves upon me to make the first speech of the evening. I shall confine my remarks to the resolutions just read. Much speculation has been indulged in by our political opponents as to the cause of this meeting. "Roundabout"—or "Turnabout" as he ought to be called, as he has a remarkable faculty of getting on both sides of every question—devotes quite a space in the *Times* of to-day concerning this meeting, and profers to us some of his advice. Since the massacre in Grant parish, I notice these papers have been giving the colored people much sound advice, especially when it was found out that Senator Matt Carpenter and a congressional delegation were about to visit Louisiana. But this sound advice was all on one side. For instance, "Roundabout" in this evening's *Times* says that he has received a letter from some one signed "Colored Republican." "Roundabout" pronounces it full of sound philosophy and intelligence, and coolly tells the "Colored Republican," in so many words, not to presume to give advice to white men, nor through the columns of the *Times*, but to go and get up meetings of his own, and there ventilate his peculiar opinions. Mr. President, the necessity of this meeting is apparent from the fact that we have too long sat quietly down, and waited for our white Republican friends to do our political fighting. Senator Matt Carpenter told us that he decided in our case, according to the testimony given at Washington. In the strife for office, colored men demand a respectable share and get it. In the race for the rights of citizenship, with its privileges and immunities, they clamor loudly for and demand the same impartial showing that is accorded to any other man. The colored men of Louisiana claim—and fairly—that nineteen-twentieths of the Republican party are colored men, consequently, the remaining one-twentieth must be white men. Is it fair then that this one-twentieth shall do the whole of the political fighting for the nineteen-twentieths? Is it not criminal in this large majority of colored men to sit down quietly and await the action of this minority of white men? Again, colored men to-day holding high responsible and lucrative positions, through and by the suffrages of the Republican party, when that party is attacked, and sought to be overthrown by its enemies, it becomes the duty of the colored men holding these positions to come to the front and defend the party that has thus honored them.

It is due in a great measure to the Republican party of this State, especially the colored portion of it, that it has been traduced and villified with impunity, and these charges were not contradicted. They have sat supinely at home while their enemies have gone up and down the land sowing misrepresentations and creating false impressions. In these efforts to overthrow us, they have been assisted by some of the very men who have fattened upon and risen to power by the Republican party and then deserted it to receive the social embraces of the Democratic party. These men came among us unknown and unsought. In their own peculiar ways, and for office, they ingratiated themselves into the political feelings of the blacks and arose to position and prosperity. Having attained more than they ever expected, these men turned around, stung the breast that nourished them into life, and became renegades to their party, for the sole purpose of gaining a social recognition among the white people of this State. The treachery and apostacy of these men upon whom was conferred place and power, in my opinion is an additional reason why the colored people should endeavor to speak and be heard in their own behalf. Besides this treachery in our own ranks, our political opponents have circulated all over the country false representations of the attitude and conduct of the colored people, charging that they were trying to subjugate the whites, Africanize the State, and that the colored office-holders were ignorant, depraved, corrupt and vicious, and for the sake of holding these offices, were trying to inaugurate a war of races. [At this point Governor Kellogg entered the hall, and was enthusiastically received, the audience rising and cheering for some minutes, which the Governor gracefully acknowledged].

Mr. Burch resumed: Considering this ungenerous misrepresentation of our political views, the time has come, in my judgment, when colored men themselves must come to the front, and stand in their own defense, and endeavor to present their cause to the country in its true light. I would say to the colored men of Louisiana, office holders and non-office holders, as does Milton in "Paradise Lost," "Arise, arise, or be forever fallen."

Speaking of the war of races, I desire to read an extract from the speech delivered by Senator Matt H. Carpenter, at Exposition Hall, the other night, on this particular point. He said:

"There is no 'war of races' in this suggestion. It is an innocent man defending himself against a wrong-doer, and whether the innocent man be black or white or the wrong-doer be black or white, the case is the same. And let me say to you frankly this evening, gentlemen, that the quicker this great fact is taken into complete consideration, fully understood and universally acted upon, the sooner you will relieve yourselves of the condition of things now existing in this city. Talk to me about a war of races in the South by the aggression of the colored man! You might have convinced me of that in Wisconsin, but you never can after what I have seen of the colored men themselves in Louisiana. I will believe that such a danger is to be apprehended when, and not until you satisfy me that the lambs on the farms of Wisconsin are banded together to devour the wolves in the forest."

It is perfectly clear to me that this absurd charge can be easily and successfully refuted if we but do our duty. This is the favorite cry of Democracy, and colored Republicans must rise up in the might and majesty of their manhood, go forth to the world, and prove the falsity of these calumnious charges. Democrats pretend to wonder why colored men can not affiliate politically with them. Colored men can not be Democrats nor assist in upholding modern Democracy, for they remember it only by the insults, outrages and indignities which it has heaped upon them. We have waited for the strong arm of the government, and sought the protecting ægis of the courts, but we are not yet altogether relieved. We are taunted by our opponents with being upheld by United States bayonets. It is not the first time in the history of the United States that the army and navy have been used to uphold the doctrines of a political party. I would call your attention to the fact that by the passage of the fugitive slave law every white man north of the Ohio was virtually made a slave. He dared not give meat, drink nor shelter to the seeker after liberty who had followed the north star from any one of these Southern States in search of freedom. They took the glistening bayonets and the star spangled banner of the army; they trailed them in the dust of shame and disgrace as they followed Anthony Burns through the streets of old Boston, that cradle of liberty, to the ship that was to convey him back to the master from whom he had escaped; and the massacre of Fort Blunt, in which hundreds of black men, women and children had found shelter from their cruel taskmasters, evidences the fact that the navy of the United States was used by the dominant party in upholding their peculiar legislation. Democrats have forgotten this, but we have not. Surely, then, it the United States army and navy were used to uphold a wrong and might make might right in those days, they can be safely used now to uphold and perpetuate the right.

I again assert we can never become Democrats, and when they ask us to become such let them see in these things our answer. Throughout the entire North that party in this State has industriously represented us as being depraved, etc., and has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to give currency to these slanders and misrepresentations. Our duty in these premises is plain. I exhort you to be equally active in rebutting and disproving the charge, and in taking immediate steps to lay before the country the story of our wrongs. It is absolutely necessary that we should adopt this course. It is wicked and criminal in us to sit down and leave the white Republicans to fight our political battles for us. More than all this, our task is fully set before us in a plain, comprehensive and unmistakable manner by the language of Senator Carpenter in his Exposition Hall speech, to which I call your particular attention:

"Now, then, what is your remedy, assuming all the time that the case presented to the committe is the truthful one. The committee did not terminate its investigation until near the close of the last session. You know what a whirl always attends the closing hours of Congress. Several of the important appropriation bills had not been determined; many most important measures were unfinished, and everything was rushing when the Louisiana case was presented to the consideration of the Senate.

"Congress will meet again on December next; your case will be fully heard before that Congress; and now let me say to all of you, let me say first to the Kellogg men who are in, and whom I shall be very glad to see kept in, if they can be rightfully, and who tell me that their case was not presented fairly, indeed not presented at all to the committee, 'come again to Congress with memorials and proofs; show if you can that Kellogg was elected.' To McEnery and his friends let me say the same thing. 'Come to Congress in the earliest days of its next session, present your side of the case, give us all the facts,' and if it appears upon the full and final examination, as it did appear to the committee on the examination which was made of the case as it was presented, that Kellogg and his associates were not elected, and it can be made to appear that McEnery was honestly elected; or if the case shall show that Kellogg was not elected and McEnery was elected by fraud, in my judgment it will be the clear duty of Congress to interfere, and I have no doubt Congress will interfere and order a re-election."

This is plain language, and the colored men must be up and doing. They must work for the future; they must form their committees, collect their testimony, spend their money, and send representatives North who can and will speak for them; and by these means show that they are on the war path as well as the McEneryites. We believe that Governor Kellogg was elected, and that we can prove it. There is evidence to be had which has never yet been brought forth, and that proof will sustain this administration. In spite of the obstacles placed in the way of Republicans, we honestly believe we overcame our opponents. They deride our proofs and our people because many of them signed their names with a mark, but it is not half as disgraceful as it was for them to make marks on the backs of their slaves. It is the duty of the colored people to send their own men to Washington to defend their cause and assist our friends in substantiating our election. If a visit to the South has opened the eyes of Senator Carpenter, and made him believe things that he did not credit before coming here, it would certainly do a great amount of good to send colored men to the North to state the real grievances of the colored people of Louisiana and controvert the vile slanders heaped on us. It is not difficult to convince the Northern people that we have been wronged, and that a most desperate attempt has been made to overthrow our State government, which we honestly believe to have been elected, and to turn it over to our political opponents. It is comparatively an easy task. It costs less effort to maintain the truth than to bolster up fraud and wrong. We have been criminal in our inertness. We have got work to do. When Warmoth saw his fortunes failing in Washington, he telegraphed here to his friends, "Action, action, action!" I repeat his words, but not with his peculiar meaning, and say to the colored men of Louisiana, "Action, action, action!" Let us say to our friends who gave gone abroad on pleasure excursions, "Return and render us your assistance, for we need you." The time has come when every prominent or representative colored man in this State must put forth his best efforts and energies and act for his State, his party and his people. Many of our friends may rest upon the proclamation of the President upon Louisiana affairs, which has just been issued; but this proclamation is not what they should rely upon, for the effort will be made to overthrow the Republican party in this State and the election of Governor Kellogg by action in Congress. This effort must be met by us, and, in conclusion, I earnestly appeal to your patriotism, love of civil and political rights, and your willingness to perform your bounden duty in this matter, to arouse, shake off your lethargy and do good battle in so noble a cause.

Hon. James H. Ingraham was next announced, and spoke as follows:

Once again duty calls, and in response thereto we have assembled this night to again acknowledge our determination to support, maintain and defend our rights and the national and State administrations.

That God rules in the affairs of men is as certain as any truth of science. Every student and every thinking man recognizes this truth, for it is from the beginning, and the world of thought and action hangs upon it.

Eternal wisdom marshals the countless millions of earth beneath its banner, on which is inscribed the legend, "The world exists by the will of God, and man rules it by thought and action." Kings and princes are raised up or thrown down; nations are born and die; republics flourish and wither; dynasties perish as leaves; families are scattered over the earth, but nothing is by accident, though men may, through their ignorance of causes, believe so. The deeds of time are governed, as well as judged, by the decrees of eternity.

"God rules the universe and all therein," and in the fullness of His mercy, and at His appointed time, he caused the negroes in America to become freemen, soldiers and citizens. It is vain, it is sacrilegious in man to attempt to set at naught his work.

We assert here to-night, and the assertion cannot be disproved, that the colored people of Louisiana are not inimical to the white people of the State. We desire to live in peace with them, and we are ready and willing to do all in our power, all that is absolutely necessary, consistent with honor, to prove as a living reality this assertion. Our very conduct under grave and adverse circumstances attests the truth of our desire to live in peace with our white fellow citizens. We claim, and are prepared to prove, that we have not attempted to dispossess our white fellow citizens of either their rights or property. We claim, and are prepared to prove, that while we have ever done all in our power to maintain amicable relations of friendship with our white fellow citizens, that some of the latter have spurned us and trampled under foot our honest efforts, and undone the work of years in a moment of time by the inhuman butchery of our people.

The fact that the best element of our white fellow-citizens have no word of condemnation for these inhuman slaughters is indeed painful. It is, however, claimed that they do condemn privately these bloody acts. It is of this private condemnation that we have most cause to complain; for, in the absence of public condemnation, the actors in these bloody massacres construe that public opinion approves their deeds by its failure to denounce them. There must be no more Grant massacres.

We believe we have agencies at work for our elevation and protection; unseen by our fellow citizens of Democratic faith, sometimes like a messenger through the darkness of night we feel its approach; and, despite the prejudices of our enemies, we feel that the hour has come for our people—for mankind—to enter upon a new form of being; "unseen hands have drawn the bolts from the gates of futurity!" and we and others are striving for mastery in this State and country not as white or colored people, but on account of our development, morally, intellectually and socially.

We meet to-night in response to a call of those colored men men who, viewing with alarm the efforts of our opponents—friends and supporters of John McEnery—to misrepresent the condition of affairs in our State, by creating here at home a public opinion favorable to violence, pillage and assassination, "of which negroes alone are the victims," and who control public journals as apologists of and for the wrongs inflicted upon a peaceful and law-abiding people, and who are preparing in secret documents setting forth pretended facts, and colecting and collating evidence of doubtful truthfulness, and attempting to prove the Grant parish massacre a lawful and necessary act, to lay before Congress at its ensuing session erroneous and false assertions, invoking its intervention in our State affairs by asserting and attempting to prove that the present State government is a usurpation, conceived in iniquity, erected by fraud, and supported by federal bayonets.

Forewarned as we are of the intentions of our opponents a failure to be prepared at the very opening of the next Congress to have our side heard, would be a grave error on our part, that would be inexcusable forever hereafter and justly merit the unqualified condemnation of our friends in this State, our race throughout the Union, and humanity the world over.

Senator Carpenter while here informed the colored men who consulted with him, at Lieutenant Governor] Antoine's residence, if matters here in the State were *true*, as represented by the colored men, our case had not been correctly presented to the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the United States Senate. Accepting the Senator's statement as true, we must present our case properly before that committee of the Senate at the next session, supported by documentary evidence, statistical facts, oral testimony, and by a committee of colored men, who, being on the groundat Washington, will be prepared to offset, dispute, and neutralize the misrepresentations of those, who, as evinced last winter, would not hesitate at doing anything that would make the McEnery government a success in Louisiana.

We know that the sponser of the McEnery government conceived that monstrosity in iniquity; and strenuously attempted, by fraud and these fingers, to place it in power in this State. Action! action! action! he telegraphed from Washington, meaning thereby that the exertion of McEnery's friends alone would give *him* and their conspiracy a ghost of chance to succeed.

So I to-night, catching up the same words, say to you, action! action! action!—concentrated, determined, but lawful and peaceful—must be resolved and acted on by our people, if they want, as I know they do, a republican State government in Louisiana.

There is every guarantee of the State government maintaining every right, as well as protecting the material interests of the colored people. We have a colored Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Superintendent of Education, fourteen colored Senators, and over forty colored men in the House of Representatives, and numerous other colored men in office all over Louisiana. A civil rights bill, and a Governor who will enforce it. We have all that a people can wish for. It will be our fault if we are foolish enough to throw away the best chance we have had since we became citizens of this State. In the number of colored men who are in positions throughout the State we have talent, honesty and devotion to the interests of our people, to which may be added many honest and upright white Republicans who are true to the colored people.

Now as to those men who are distasteful to Republicans, who have been appointed to office, I say to you that is no cause for opposition—I admit there is just ground for complaint—to the State government. All just cause of complaint can and will be removed by the Senate when it meets. Patience, then, and time are all that is necessary to remove even this cause of ill-feeling. To perpetuate a "Republican State government"—the work of our hands and votes—is the work of the hour. Let us work one and all to that end.

To the Democrats of Louisiana we say that we have a history of which we are proud. Our race furnished soldiers to drive the British invader from our shores, and again to restore the "Union one and inseparable." We paid taxes on twelve millions of property before the war, and on over thrice that amount now. We have produced a Cailloux, a Crowder and a Dunn, and though they sleep with their fathers they have left behind them men of their blood and race to carry on the good work and live up to the examples set before the. We recall to mind:

First—That our enemies shut their eyes to these visible facts, close their ears to these deep sounding truths, and are dumb when asked to acknowledge these facts, and their hands are closed by prejudice when asked to applaud the efforts of a patient, hard working, honest, but much abused people.

Second—That the press, as represented by the *Picayune*, *Herald*, *Bee* and other kindred sheets throughout the State, advises our white fellow-citizens to crush us, and hounds on depraved white men to insult, oppress and outrage us, and have no word of condemnation of any outrage, murder or willful misrepresentation of our people. With an eagerness befitting a nobler cause they assiduously and collectively do all they can to create and foster an odious public sentiment of poisonous and malignant hatred between the negroes and whites.

Third—The Grant parish massacre is willfully misrepresented, and efforts and arguments are constantly made to prove that it was an act committed in defense of the lives of the murderers, their wives, mothers, children and property, and every excuse that fertile minds can invent is adduced to excuse the whites, while at the same time invention accuses the colored men of crimes and excesses that the race religiously condemn and are never individually or collectively guilty of. No excuse of any kind has or can be made that will cause humanity to cease to condemn "that massacre" in any other light than that of horror and condemnation. All the perfume of Arabia can not cleanse the bloody hands of the perpetrators of that fiendish slaughter.

Until there is a better feeling on the part of the white toward the colored people, I tremble for the prosperity of the State. The colored people recognize and respect the white people's rights.

They demand and expect recognition of their rights in return. Prosperity, peace and its attending blessings will come to the State only when there shall be an era of friendship between the races, of her citizens. Macaulay says, in one of his "essays," that the removal of the civil disabilities of the Jews did not make them Christians, but gave them a chance for their lives. So with the negroes of America—their emancipation and enfranchisement has not made them "white people," but it has given them a chance for their lives.

White men of Louisiana, let us live.

Mr. President, I am almost done, but can not close until I have recalled the fact that recently Mr. Carpenter, a Senator of the United States, visited our city, heralded by the Fusionists, the Two Hundred and the renegade Republicans. All paid obsequious attention to him, but when, after consultation with the representative colored men, he opened his mouth and told them some home truths, they cursed, abused and denounced him, thus adding one more to the many instances we can name of the utter contempt for a Northern man, who, however honest, is a rascal if he is a Republican and dares tell them the truth and is disposed to do right. We must remember that this Senator has told us that our case was not presented to the committee as we presented it to him when here, and that if, at the opening of Congress, we would be prepared to prove what we alleged, he had no doubt but what we would save our State government.

Thus we have been admonished as to our duty. Let us one and all realize our past fears, our present condition and our future prospect. You will perceive that I am not now, nor have I to-night failed to appeal to your judgment and your better natures. In a conversation with a distinguished member of Congress, a faithful friend of our race in the days "when the clouds were dark," and hardly a silver ray of hope was to be discovered, he said to me: "Senator, God helps those who help themselves." Let us all take this home to us—each individual in this assembly—and work daily and hourly until success will crown our effort in saving the government of our choice. Powerful agencies, strong influences are at work to destroy us. Let us not sleep while we can work, and all will be well.

It is reported, and that upon reliable authority, that our congressional delegation are at work trying to secure a new election—but not of Congressmen. Well, if this is true let us be heard in favor of electing Congressmen. A change in that direction at this time and hereafter would be quite a source of pleasure and gratification to the colored voters, who are thoroughly aware of the fact that they were guilty of a grave error in electing men who wanted and accepted two payments for one and the same duty.

There is no necessity, no want, no need of a new election. We have a State government, complete in all its parts—legislative, judicial and executive; it is every day growing stronger, and is recognized and supported by the general government, and will stand as the government, if we stand by it, whether attacked by foes without, or agitators within its limits. Those who are opposed to it must not be allowed to destroy it, nor by ungrateful men, who would ruin it if they cannot rule it.

We are better off under what we have today than we are sure we will be under something that is a contingency of the future. Let us, then, resolve to prepare our case from our standpoint, and properly present it at Washington in December next. And when and wherever we meet enemies to our cause and government, let us win him from the errors of his ways. When we part to-night let us go home quietly, peacefully, but determined to maintain by honest means the present Republican State government of Louisiana, knowing and realizing that it is to-day protecting our lives and that of wives, mothers, our property, and all that we love and hold dear.

Good night. Good night.
To-morrow and to-morrow will be fair
If we are true; stand by the right.

Hope on, hope ever, we will, we shall rise in the progress and development characteristic of American freemen, and finally reach the highest place of civilization as developed by the genius of free and Christian America.

General T. Morris Chester was next in order, and delivered the following effective address:

Fellow-citizens—The continued fermentation of the Fusionists necessitates upon our part, a dignified action in behalf of truth and justice. The majority of the people of Louisiana, who controlled the succession of Governor, declared last November, as their solemn purpose, that William Pitt Kellogg should have four years lease of that office, with all of its honors and emoluments, under the constitution of the State; and while in the act of executing this will to raise Senator Kellogg to the executive office, a portion of lawless adherents to one John McEnery, whom they desired to succeed to the Governorship, violently seized the document, caused erasures, and made fraudulent additions which were never contemplated by the testators, in the interest of the said McEnery. Senator Kellogg commenced proceedings in the federal court, and established two notorious facts, which were irresistible—first, that the will produced by McEnery was a fraud; and, second, that it was the will of the majority of the legal voters in the State that he should come into the succession. Here was a state of affairs which required a remedy swift and radical; and recourse was had to the United States court presided over by Judge Durell, under the enforcement act. This court sitting in chancery, in which a higher standard of justice is administered than can be accomplished under the rigid formalities of law, set aside the fraudulent will in favor of McEnery and admitted to probate the nuncupative will in favor of Kellogg, the genuineness of which was substantiated by overwhelming testimony.

The whole problem with reference to the State government is, shall fraud or justice triumph? Judge Durell, under the constitution, the laws, the facts and his oath of office, could not do less than interpose the federal power between the conspirators and their fraudulent purpose. If our freedom is real, our citizenship is positive, and our suffrage is absolute, then any attempt to deprive us of these great blessings should be restrained by the authority which conferred them. It was fortunate for Louisiana, fortunate for the colored people, who are in the majority in this State, that a just and inflexible judge was on the bench during the trial of the celebrated case of William Pitt Kellogg vs. Warmoth et al., or the influences brought to bear might have secured the triumph of fraud and injustice. At the proper time I propose to enter into an elaborate defense of Judge Durell and his action, which, I have no doubt, will be sustained by the enlightened judgment of the American people. We, who have seen the streets of New Orleans reddened with the blood of our brethren—whose houses have been fired while we were asleep—who have been hunted and massacred all over the State, and who feel that we are now standing over a volcano which might burst open at any moment and engulf us in living fire, can appreciate the action of Judge Durell, which protected us in our liberty and lives, and saved the State from anarchy. The Kellogg government does not only hold its tenure through the decision of Judge Durell, but the Supreme Court of the State, which is composed of Southern gentlemen whose impartiality and integrity are unquestioned, has confirmed the legality of its existence. We believe that Judge Durell was right, and knowing that he was just and equitable, we propose to sustain him with all of the moral and political power in the control of the majority of the people of this commonwealth. We hail in him a patriot whose love of country is founded upon the principles of virtue; a judge whose decisions are moulded by an enlightened sense of justice; a statesman whose views are sound upon all public questions; a scholar whose cultivation is the admiration of his fellow-citizens; a gentlemen whose character is beyond reproach and whose motives are above suspicion, and in whose enlightened interpretation of the several constitutional amendments and the laws made to enforce their spirit, changing the theory of the government with reference to the status of Afro-Americans, we recognize that true standard of impartial justice which the nation will approve and humanity applaud.

As much has already been said upon general affairs, I think I could not do better than avail myself of this opportunity to address myself directly to our white fellow-citizens who are designated "the oldest and the best." That class of persons and their representatives are always lecturing the colored people as to our duty. Now, I have some good advice which I propose to give to those who are present, and, through the reporters, to those who are absent.

Much was said last year in the Fusion press and other kindred journals, about the Africanization of this State, and the prospect of the administration of its affairs being under the control of organized ignorance and corruption, in which language they were pleased to speak of that portion of American citizens of African descent, who cast 70,000 votes in this commonwealth at the November election, being in excess of all others combined. In full view of this state of affairs and the overwhelming logic of past events, these journals and persons of similar obtuseness are endeavoring by most disreputable means to precipitate a conflict of races, which they hypocritically pretend to deplore. Strong in our faith of the inate sense of American justice, we will not shrink from the issue, come when it will, and the sooner it is over the better it will be for us; for the result will be a complete annihilation of any and all depraved white men who sought to engage humanity in a bloody strife of extermination upon the causeless issue of complexion. In such an insane attempt all the colored people would necessarily be driven into opposition, and all the upright white men, all law-abiding citizens, all genuine Christians, all supporters of the constitution of the federal government, which makes no distinction, and all friends of human progress of every clime, would be associated with us to strangle and crush out any overt act of the infamous spirit of caste.

When we were oppressed by the unparalleled wrongs and injustice of two centuries; when we saw, in smothered indignation, our fathers dragged from us in chains, our old mothers brutally beaten with stripes, our lovely sisters unblushingly prostituted, our endeared babes snatched from their cradles and publicly hawked upon the auction block; when we suffered all these, and a thousand other humiliating oppressions, which were predicated upon our color, without rising up in rebellion against our enemies, we are not likely now, in the realization of nearly all of our civil rights, to depart from the progressive and Christian course which has so materially aided us in the enjoyment of our citizenship. But, if a few demagogues are unwilling to abide by the great American principle constitutionally expressed, that the will of the majority shall be the law of the land, then let them try to reverse it, if they dare, by a renewed indiscriminate attack upon colored people in this State, where we happen to be in the majority. It should not be surprising that there is but little confidence on our part in the expressions of interest and political friendship from our white fellow-citizens, as long as the Fusion organs continue in their uncharitable and inhuman purpose of inciting a war of races, in the gratification of their rancorous propensities, and in the hopeless belief that all white persons are as infamous in their desire as themselves, to massacre colored men, women and children, as was done in New Orleans only a few years ago, under the inspiration of such journals. With such pestiferous exponents, there is no wonder that public sentiment in this State is debauched; that there is a mutual distrust between the two races; that there is a general misunderstanding with reference to respective purposes and intentions, and with no prospect of any better growth of good feeling between all classes until the false teachings of these disguised Democratic journals shall be indignantly frowned down by the people whose sense of propriety they have attempted to outrage, and hooted into obscurity by both races, whom they are so unblushingly endeavoring to precipitate in an unholy strife.

There are some persons who are foolish enough to believe that in all contests which demagogues and a few questionable journalists desire to base upon color, that all the whites would array themselves against our race. This is one of those popular errors, in contracted minds, which even the progressive justice of the American people has not yet dispelled in certain obfuscated localities. When the whole South arose in rebellion to perpetuate our enslavement, it had been flattered into the delusion that it would receive sufficient sympathy and support, upon complexional considerations, from the Northern whites in the accomplishment of its unholy purpose; but, to its surprise, the great dividing line was not drawn according to color, but upon principles of loyalty and justice, which associated the entire colored population and millions of white men under the old flag, which resulted in a transformation scene of political grandeur, far outrivalling our most extravagant anticipations. In order to intimidate us in the enjoyment of our new born rights and privileges, and with the view to coerce us into the support of the repulsive principles of our enemies, Ku-Klux organizations were instituted in many parts of the South to execute their cowardly and base purpose of flogging and massacreing our unprotected and inoffensive people, regardless of age or sex; and in this unparalleled odiousness they expect an entire immunity by virtue of their white skins. In evidence of the unpopularity of oppressions on account of color, a white President asked a white Congress for additional powers to punish and suppress these lawless and ignominious spirits who warred upon us because we are colored darker than themselves—and they were granted, to the great joy of our persecuted people, and in response to a corresponding sentiment from the good and the just throughout the land. White ministers of retribution were sent into those parts of the country which were infested by these disturbers of the public peace, who arrested them, brought them to trial and conviction, and many of them are now incarcerated in Northern penitentiaries for protracted terms under the severe discipline of white wardens.

In 1860 it was popular to draw lines of distinction according to color; to debase us in the slave States and humiliate us in the free States; to deaden our manhood and paralyze our self-respect; to force us into smoking cars, and reduce us to the treatment of servants on board of steamboats and in hotels; to degrade our women to concubines, and to inflict upon us all the evils which the horrible system of slavery entailed. But I am truly grateful that a new era has dawned; a new light has broken in upon the American mind; a new revelation has been made in signs of blood; a new gospel is preached; a new God is worshiped, and new prophets are now disseminating the teachings which exalt a nation and quicken obedience to the golden rule. Since the awful curse of slavery has been removed, with nearly all of its attending evils; since the sunlight of liberty has radiated its blessings all over the land—since the songs of emancipation have been heard upon every mountain top and rolled along each valley, which have been swelled by the approving chorus of christendom into a universal exultation, and since the nation, after wrestling for a long time with the spirits of darkness, has triumphed, under the inspiration of justice, religion and virtue, consecrating this vast continent to God and universal liberty, I am somewhat startled and amazed at the croaking ebullitions which emanate from the Fusion journals against the commendable spirit of American progress which is hailed with joy by just men all over creation.

If there is a people which deserves well of the whites of this country, and especially of the South, it is our unfortunate and long suffering race. We have faithfully served you for over two hundred years without any just recompense. We endured all the proscriptions and barbarities which you, in your interests and fears, imposed upon us to perpetuate our unholy bondage. We cultivated the soil and enriched it with our sweat and blood. We gave to the South all the commerce which she ever had and to you planters the wealth which enabled you to live like Nabobs at home and abroad. You and your children have been carried in colored arms and nourished at colored breasts. We have cradled you in infancy and cared for you with as much affection as if you had been our own. We have anxiously attended you in sickness and cheered you back to health and happiness. We have sorrowed over the death of your dear ones and watered their graves with our tears, and throughout all of our adversity we were true and faithful to your interests and persons, which ought to elicit a little more friendship and consideration from you who owe us so much, and from whom we have received so little. We would willingly forget the past, our years of unrequited toil, our innumerable wrongs and unparalleled injustice, if you would only accept the situation, recognize our new-born rights in practice as well as in theory, and protect us in the enjoyment of citizenship. We have no disposition to Africanize this State, but we fear the Fusion press would whitewash all of its officers if it only had the power. We have never attempted to organize a party upon color, but we do sometimes feel that we can not intrust, with the highest degree of confidence, our liberties and civil rights to the administration of men who are always sighing for the good old times; who are massacreing our people, and who are ever aiming to bring upon us ridicule and contempt for no other reason than our color.

We would long since have been associated with you in the great work of reconstruction in this and other Southern States, had not the Democratic press created a feeling of distrust between us which they have endeavored to intensify and aggravate. It is to be regretted that you, in your impoverished condition, have listened so long to the dangerous allurements of these journals, rather than unite with us, who are your best friends, who nourished you in infancy, played with you in youth, and all through life exhibited for you and yours an interest and an affection which these professional journalists have vainly essayed to assimulate. Unfortunately for you, in your contumacy, their pretended disregard of acknowledged facts has pleased your embittered feelings, and in fraudulently encouraging the blighted hopes of returning to "the good old times" of skin supremacy, you have refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of our freedom and the justice of our enfranchisement. While you are sulking over the past and following the leadership of these false beacons, the carpet baggers from the North came among us with professions of good will and sentiments of progression, adapting themselves entirely to the situation, and there was nothing left for us to do but to give to them the championship of our cause, and the important positions of trust, where we had the political power, which you, barring some honorable and individual exceptions, so persistently refused. In pointing out this error of the Southern people, I do not know whether to rejoice over it or to regret it, since we have progressed much more rapidly through your contumacy than we could possibly have done had you been governed by ordinary common sense and the logic of accomplished facts.

Never has a people shown so much patience and good will in all their various and unfortunate relations as we have manifested to you. In Mississippi, where we are largely in excess of the white population, we elected to the governorship a wealthy planter, whose administration of reconstruction was so apparently successful and satisfactory that he was exalted to the United States Senate upon our suffrage, where he exhibited his ingratitude in failing to support the supplementary civil rights bill, which guaranteed to his constituents ordinary and decent privileges in all places and conveyances of a public character. Should the colored people of Mississippi send a colored man to the United States Senate as the successor of Governor Alcorn, it could not be charged that they wished to found their political action upon color, since they gave their confidence and the highest honor in their gift to one of the ablest of her citizens and the most cultivated of her gentlemen, who had been an extensive slave holder and a rebel general, and who deceived them upon the first opportunity which presented of doing them an act of justice. There have been other cases of similar political treachery, which have tended to weaken our faith in our white fellow-citizens; but in the goodness of our hearts, rather than in the exercise of our judgment, we are still willing to trust you; to confide our destiny to your keeping; to place the administration of affairs under your control, and to acknowledge the superiority of your training and your adaptation for official responsibilities—if you will only stand upon the Republican platform, without hesitation or mental reservation, pledged to protect us in our new-born rights, and guarantee to us the full enjoyment of all of our civil privileges.

We do not wish to live on unfriendly terms with you, political or otherwise, but rather would we be united in the great work of reconstruction, upon the basis of an honest and dignified administration of public affairs, in lightening the heavy burdens of the people, in resisting the encroachments of corruption and peculation, and in welcoming from the North, the West, or any part of God's creation, a thrifty and promising immigration, to build up the towns and cities; to introduce those sanitary improvements so essential to health; to cut down and utilize the unproductive wilderness, and to transform the marshy districts into cultivated fields and habitable plains. Such a happy and prosperous result could only be consummated by a union of both races for the public good, upon the broad platform of impartial justice, in which our civil rights would be fully respected and sustained, and your peculiar merits duly appreciated and properly acknowledged. Our interests are