the platform and was greeted with a liberal round of applause. When the applause subsided Mr. Douglass began talking in his clear and pleasant voice, and was frequently interrupted during the delivery of his oration by loud applause. He said:

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CITIZENS: I appear before you again, and for the third time since my residence among you, to assist in the celebration of the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. And while I highly appreciate the honor the and confidence implied in your call upon me to do so, when I consider the importance of the task it has imposed. I can say in all sincerity, as I have said before, that I wish that your choice of speaker had fallen upon one of our young men, quite as well qualified to serve you as myself. I want to see them coming to the front as I am retiring to the rear. Then the fact that I have several times addressed you upon subjects naturally suggested by the recurrence of this interesting anniversary is, of itself, somewhat embarrassing. It is not an easy task to speak many times on the same subject, before the same audience, without repeating the same views and sentiments. If, therefore, you find me committing this offense to-day, you will consider the difficulty of avoiding it, and also that the same views and sentiments are as pertinent and necessary to-day as years ago. You need not fear, however, that I shall inflict upon you any one of my former orations. I am not bound by any such necessity. The field is broad, and the material is abundant. The phases of public affairs touching the colored people of the United States are never stationary. They change with every season, and often many times in the course of a single year. There is no standing still for anybody in this world. We are either rising or falling, advancing or retreating.

Last year, at this time, we were confronted with an unusual and somewhat alarming state of facts. We stood at the gateway of a new and strange administration. After wandering about during twenty-four years, seeking rest and finding none, often hungry and sometimes thirsty, and, though not feeding swine or eating husks, yet not unfrequently found in very low places and wasting the substance of the national family—our prodigal Democratic son, with one tremendous effort of will, returned to the white house, and was received with every demonstration of parental joy and gladness. Of course this did not take place without a murmur of complaint and disapproval. There was an elder brother here as elsewhere; one who had remained at home, worked the old farm, kept the fences in repair; one who had done his duty and made things in the old house comfortable and pleasant generally. Indeed, but for his elder brother, the Republican party, the house would have been broken up, the whole family turned out of doors and scattered in poverty and destitution. It was natural, therefore, that this elder brother saw the great doings at the white house one year ago, when he heard the music and saw the dancing, and learned what it was all about, he was not over-well pleased, and thought his father not only soft-hearted, but a little soft-headed, and a trifle ungrateful, if not crazy withal. But elder brothers, you know, are usually reasonable and patient, and are generally quite submissive to parental authority, and though he knew the bad character of the young truant who had now come home, he thought he had reformed. Hoped he had cheerful and patient hope has been justified by one year of this administration I will not now stop to say; I may, however, remark, as a prelude to what I shall hereafter say, that as far as the colored people of the country are concerned, their condition seems no better and not much worse than under previous administrations. Lynch law, violence, and murder have gone on about the same as formerly, and without the least show of federal interference or popular rebuke. The constitution has been openly violated with the usual impunity, and the colored vote has been as completely nullified, suppressed, and ignored as if the fifteenth amendment formed no part of the constitution, and as if every colored citizen of the south had been struck dead by lightning or blown to atoms by dynamite. There have also been the usual number of outrages committed against the civil rights of colored citizens on highways and byways, by land and by water, and the courts of the country, under the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, have shown the same disposition to punish the innocent and shield the guilty, as during the Presidency of Mr. Arthur. Perhaps colored men have fared a little worse, so far as office-holding is concerned. In some of the departments, I am sorry to say, there have been many dismissals, but, even in this respect, colored men have not suffered much more than one-armed soldiers, and other loyal white men, whose places were wanted by deserving Democrats. Upon the whole, candor compels me to admit that this twenty-fourth year of our freedom finds us thoughtful, somewhat mystified by what is passing around us, but hopeful, strong, and after, and yet strong to strive, with a moderate degree of faith that, under the constitution and its amendments, we shall yet be clothed with dignity of freedom and American citizenship. But more of this in the right place.

I take it that no apology is needed for these annual celebrations, for, notwithstanding the unfriendly outlook of affairs, we have yet much over which to rejoice. Besides, such demonstrations of popular feeling in regard to large benefits received, and progress made, are consistent with and creditable to human nature. They have been observed all along the line of by-gone ages, and are peculiar to no class, clime, race, or color. From the day that Moses is said to have smote the Red sea and the Hebrews passed safely over from Egyptian bondage, leaving Pharaoh overwhelmed and struggling with his chariots, down to the 4th of July, 1776, when the fathers of this republic threw off the British yoke, declared their independence, and appealed to the god of battles, similar events to that which we now celebrate have been gratefully and joyfully commemorated.

If, for any reason I feel like apologizing to-day, it is not for this celebration, but for an incident connected with it, and by which it is greatly marred. For the first time since the emancipation of the slaves of the District of Columbia we have two celebrations in progress at the same time. This should not be so. By this fact we have said to the world that we are not sufficiently united as a people to celebrate our freedom together. This spectacle of division among men working for a common cause is not pleasing in any case, and is especially displeasing and shocking in this instance. Without attempting to show which party is to blame in this controversy, I have no hesitation in saying that this division itself is most unfortunate, disgraceful, and mortifying. It cannot fail, I fear, to make an unfavorable impression for us upon thoughtful observers. But, standing here as your mouth-piece to-day, I beg the disgusted public to remember that colored men are but men, and that the best men will sometimes differ, and will often differ more widely and violently about trifles than about things of substance, where a difference of opinion would be at least dignified. Something must, however, be conceded to the spirit of liberty, especially in those who have but recently acquired liberty. There is always some some awkwardness in the gait of men who, for the first time, have on their Sunday clothes. When we have worn the clothes of liberty longer we shall put away such childish things and shall act more wisely. We shall think more of a common cause and its requirements and less of obligation to support the claims of rival individual leaders. Beyond upon it, a repetition of this spectacle will bring our celebrations into disgrace and make them despicable.

The thought is already gaining ground, that we have not heretofore received the best influence, which this anniversary is capable of exerting; that tinsel show, gaudy display, and straggling processions, which empty the alleys and dark places of our city into the broad daylight of our thronged streets and avenues, this thrusting upon the public view a vastly undue proportion of the most unfortunate, unimproved, and unprogressive class of the colored people, and thereby inviting public disgust and contempt, and repelling the more thrifty and self-respecting among us, is a positive hurt to the whole colored population of this city. These annual celebrations of ours should be so arranged as to make a favorable impression for us upon ourselves and our fellow-citizens. They should bring into notice the very best elements of our colored population, and in what is said and done on these occasions, we should find a deeper and broader comprehension of our relations and duties. They should kindle in us higher hopes, nobler aspirations, and stimulate us to more earnest endeavors; they should help us to shorten the distance between ourselves and the more highly advanced and highly favored people among whom we are. If they fail to produce, in some measure, such results, they had better be discontinued. I am sure that such a lecture as I have now given on this point may be distasteful to a part of this assembly. But I can say, in all truth, that nothing short of a profound desire to promote the best interests of all concerned, has emboldened me to run the risk of such displeasure, and I hope the motive will excuse my offence.

And now, fellow citizens, I turn away from this and other merely race considerations, to those common to all our fellow citizens, yet happily those in which we too are included. I call attention to the proposed celebration of the centennial anniversary of our present form of government. The year 1789 will never cease to be memorable in the history and progress of the American people. It was in that year of grace that the founders of the American republic, having tested the strength and discovered the weakness of the old articles of colonial confederation, bravely decided to lay those articles aside as no longer adequate to successful and permanent national existence, and resolved to form a new compact and adopt a new constitution, better suited, in their judgment, to their national character and to their governmental wants. In this instrument they set forth six definite and cardinal objects to be attained by this new departure. These were: First, "To form a more perfect union." Second, "To establish justice." Third, "To provide for the common defense." Fourth, "To insure domestic tranquility." Fifth, "To promote the general welfare." And sixth, "Secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." Perhaps there never was an instrument framed by men at the beginning of any national career designed to accomplish nobler objects than those set forth in the preamble of this constitution. They are objects worthy of a great nation, worthy of those who gave to the world the immortal declaration of independence, in which they asserted the equal rights of man, and boldly declared in the face of all the divine right governments of Europe the doctrine that governments derive their right to govern from the consent of the governed.

How far these fundamental objects, solemnly set forth in the constitution, have been realized by the practical operation of the government created under it, I will not stop just now to state or explain. Whether the Union has been perfectly formed, whether under the influence of the constitution the sacred principle of justice has been established, whether the general welfare has been promoted, or whether the blessings of liberty have been secured, are questions to which reference may be made in a subsequent part of this address. For the present I refer to this grand starting point in the nation's history for another purpose. I wish simply to remind you of the flight of time, that we are now drawing near the close of the first century of our national existence, and the notice that should be taken of that fact. Without going into the general questions raised a moment ago, as to the fulfillment of what was promised in the constitution, we may, in passing, affirm what must be admitted by all, that under this form of government so happily described, and so faithfully upheld by the great and lamented Abraham Lincoln, as "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," this nation has become rich, great, progressive and strong. This fact is cheerfully acknowledged by the whole sisterhood of contemporaneous nations. From thirteen comparatively weak and sparsely populated states, skirting and hovering along the line of our Atlantic coast, constituting a mere string of isolated communities, we now have thirty-eight states covering our broad continent, extending from east to west, and from sea to sea. Under our constitution the desert and solitary places have been reclaimed and made to blossom as the rose. From a population of seven millions, we have reached the enormous number of fifty millions; and in less than half a century we shall have double that number. Such accumulation of wealth, power, and population has no example in the experience of any nation in ancient or modern times. The mind grows dizzy in contemplation of the future of a country so great and so increasing in every element of greatness. There seems to be no limit. The question naturally arises, what is to be the effect of such accumulated wealth, such vast increase of population, such expanded domain, and such augmentation of national power. Painfully enough either one of two very opposite conditions may arise. It may either blast or bless, it may lift us to Heaven, or sink us to perdition.

If we shall become proud, selfish, imperious, oppressive, and rapacious; if we shall persist in trampling on the weak and exalting the strong, worshiping the rich and despising the poor, our doom as a nation is already foreshadowed.

That Almighty Power recognized in one form or another by all thoughtful men; that Almighty Power which controls every atom of the earth, and governs the universe; that Almighty Power which stood and measured the globe, which beheld and drove asunder the nations, will surely deal with us in the future, as that power has dealt in the past with other civilized nations—it will bring us to dust and ashes. The rule of life for individuals and for nations is the same. Neither can escape the consequences of transgression. As they sow, so shall they reap. There is no escaping from the verdict of a life of truth and justice. Contradiction to this in theory, for either individuals or nations, is a damning heresy; and contradiction to this in practice is certain destruction.

Large and imposing plans are just now proposed, and are maturing, for the appropriate celebration of this first centennial year of our national life. If these plans should be perfected and executed, as they probably will be, and as they certainly should be, Washington will witness a demonstration in this line far transcending in grandeur and splendor the centennial exposition in the city of Philadelphia ten years ago.

These celebrations, like our own, have large aims. They serve as lofty pedestals or platforms from which the national patriotism and intelligence may survey the past, and, in some sense, penetrate and divine the national future.

It is also fit and proper that our young and beautiful city of Washington should be the theater of such a grand national centennial demonstration. It is the capital of the nation, and is, in some sense, the shining sun of our national system, around which our thirty-eight states, linked and interlinked in one unbroken national interest, revolve in union. Upon this spot no one citizen has more rights than another. The right to be here is vested in all alike. Distance does not diminish or alienate, contiguity does not increase any man's right in this soil. In this capital of the nation California is equal to Virginia, and, as Webster said of Bunker Hill, "Wherever else we may be strangers, we are all at home here."

As a part of the people of this great country, we may feel ourselves included. We represent the class which has enriched our soil with its blood, watered it with its tears, and defended it with its labor, while it has hitherto been excluded from all part in our national glory. Now, however, all is changed. We may look forward with pleasure to the promised National Centennial Exposition, and take some credit to ourselves for helping to make the District of Columbia a suitable place for such a display. We have at least done a large proportion of the most laborious and needed work to this end.

The wisdom of the framers of the constitution of the United States in granting to the nation, through its Congress, exclusive legislative jurisdiction over the District of Columbia, has in nothing been more abundantly and happily vindicated than in the abolition of slavery, and in what has followed in the great city of this country. The benefits of this act are, however, not confined to the colored people. They are shared by all the people of this District; not more by the colored than by the white people. Washington owes nothing to Maryland or Virginia (though born of those parents) in comparison to its debt to the nation. Through the national government it has become the elegant and beautiful city that it is. It is the nation that has graded and paved its broad and far-reaching streets and avenues; it is the nation that has fenced and beautified its numerous parks and reservations, and made them the joy of our children, and the admiration of our visitors; it is the nation that has adorned its ample public squares and circles with choice flowers, flowing fountains, and imposing statuary; it is the nation that has erected enduring monuments of bronze and marble in honor of our statesmen, warriors, patriots, and heroes; it is the nation that has built here those vast structures the different departments, and crowned yonder hill with a capitol, one of the proudest architectural wonders of the world; it is the nation that has built Washington monument, the pride of the city, the tallest structure that ever rose from the ground toward heaven at the bidding of human pride, patriotism, or piety; standing there in full view of all comers, whether approaching land or water, with its base deep down in the earth, and its capstone against the sky, receiving and reflecting every light and shadow of the passing hour, steady alike in sunshine and storm, defying lightning, whirlwind, and earthquake, its grandeur and sublimity, like Niagara, impress us more and more the longer we hold it in range of vision.

But the nation, as I have already said, has done more for the District of Columbia than to clothe it with material greatness and splendor. It has given it the best government it enjoyed in a moral beauty. It has not only made it a pleasure to the eye, but a joy to the heart. No material adornment or addition has ever done or could do for this District what the abolition of slavery has done. This has given it a great and good thing fifteen years ago by giving us a local government and a Shepherd that lifted the city out of its deep mud and above its blinding dust, and put it on the way to its present greatness, but it did a greater and better thing when it lifted it out of the mire of barbarism coincident with slavery.

Fellow-citizens, we are proud to-day, and justly proud, of the prosperity and the increasing liberality of Washington. With all our fellow-citizens we behold it with pride and pleasure rising and spreading noiselessly around us, almost like the temple of Solomon, without the sound of a hammer. New faces meet us at the corners of the streets and greet us in the market places. Conveniences and improvements are multiplying on every hand. We walk in the shade of its beautiful trees by day and in the rays of its soft electric lights by night. We make it warm where it is cool, and cool where it is warm, and healthy where it is noxious. Our magnificence fills the stranger and sojourner with admiration and wonder. The contrast between the old time of slavery and the new dispensation of liberty looms upon us on every hand. We feel it in the very air we breathe, and in the friendly aspect of all around us. But time would fail to tell of the vast and wonderful advancement in civilization made in this city by the abolition of slavery.

Perhaps a better idea could be formed of what has been done for Washington and for us, by imagining what would be the case in a return to the old condition of things. Imagine the wheels of progress reversed; imagine that by some strange and mysterious freak of fortune, slavery with all its horrid concomitants was revived; imagine that under the dome of yonder capitol legislation was carried on, as formerly, by men with pistols in their belts and bullets in their pockets; imagine the right of speech denied, the right of petition stamped out, the press of the District muzzled, and a word in the streets against slavery the sign for a mob; imagine a lone woman like Miss Myrtilla Miner, having to defend her right to teach colored girls to read and write, with a pistol in her hand, here, in this very city, now dotted all over with colored schools, which rival in magnificence the white schools of any other city of the Union; imagine this, and more, and ask yourselves the question, What progress has been made in liberty and civilization within the borders of this capital? Further on let us ask, Of what avail would be our cloud-capped towers, our gorgeous palaces, and our solemn temples if slavery again held sway here? Of what avail would be our marble halls if once more they resounded with the crack of the slave whip, the clank of the fetter, and the rattle of chains; if slave auctions were held in front of the halls of justice, and chainings were marched over Pennsylvania avenue to the Long Bridge for the New Orleans market? Of what avail would be our state dinners, our splendid receptions if, like Babylon of old, our people were making merchandise of God's image, trafficking in human blood and in the souls and bodies of men? Were this District once more covered with this moral blight and mildew you would hear of no plans, as now, for celebrating within its borders the centennial anniversary of the adoption of the constitution of the United States. Bold and audacious as were the advocates of slavery in the olden time they would have been ashamed to invite here the representatives of the civilized world to inspect the workings of their slave system. To have done so would have been like inviting a clean man to touch pitch, a humane man to witness an execution, a tender-hearted woman to witness a slaughter. In its boldest days slavery drew in its claws and presented a velvet paw to strangers. They knew it was like Lord Granby's character, which could only pass without reprobation as it passed without observation. Emancipation liberated the master as well as the slave. The fact that our citizens are now loudly proclaiming Washington to be the right place for the celebration of the discovery of the continent by Columbus and the adoption of the constitution of the United States is an acknowledgement and an attestation of the higher civilization that has in their judgment, come here with the abolition of slavery. They no longer dread the gaze of civilized men. They no longer fear lest a word of liberty should fall into the ear of a trembling captive and awaken his manhood. They are no longer required to defend with their lips what they must have condemned in their hearts. When the galling chain dropped from the limbs of the slave the mantle of shame dropped from the brows of their masters. The emancipation of the one was the deliverance of the other; so that this day, in fact, belongs to the one as truly as it belongs to the other, though it is left to us alone to keep it in memory.

It is usual on occasions of this kind, not only to set forth, as I have in some measure done, what has been gained by the abolition of slavery, but also to speak of the causes and instrumentalities which contributed to that desired result. If this were my first appearance before you on similar anniversaries, I should feel it entirely proper to do so now, but having discharged this duty faithfully and fully in several former addresses there is no special reason for a repetition of it in this instance. In one of those addresses I specially endeavored to trace, and did trace with more or less success, the history of the anti-slavery movement and anti-slavery sentiments in this country and in England. I described the rise, progress, and final triumph of the abolition movement in both countries. I claim in no case omitted to do justice to the noble band of men and women who gave voice to the cause of the slave in the early days of its weakness, and when to do so was to make themselves of no reputation and subjects of the vilest abuse. I then held up their example of virtuous self-sacrifice as a stimulation and and imitation of all who would serve the human family in its march from barbarism to a higher state of civilization. In my judgment there never was a band of reformers more unselfish, more consistent with their principles, more ardent in their devotion to any cause than were these early anti-slavery men and women of this country.

The charge is sometimes made that the colored people are ungrateful to their benefactors. In my judgment no charge could be more unjust. In whatever else they have failed they have ever shown a laudable sense of gratitude. The name of William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, John P. Hale, Charles Sumner, Gerrit Smith, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and a host of others are never pronounced by us but with sentiments of high appreciation and sincere gratitude.

Of course, I cannot deny that there are those amongst us, who, either thoughtlessly or selfishly, or both, dare to deny their obligations to the great Republican party and its leaders. They insist upon it that freedom came to them only as an act of military necessity. They see in it no sentiment of justice, no moral preference. They profess to see no difference between the Republican party and the Democratic party, and insist that one party has no more claim to their support than the other. Such men are about as ready to join one party as the other. Perhaps they even lean a little more to the Democratic than to the Republican party. I admit that were they fair representatives of the colored people of the United States the charge of ingratitude might be very easily sustained. But, happily, such men do not represent the sentiments of the colored people, but greatly and egregiously misrepresent them. The colored people do see a difference between the two parties, as broad as the moral universe, and as palpable as the difference between the character of those who fought for slavery and those who will forget that every concession of liberty made to the colored people of the United States has come to them through the action of the Republican party, and that all the opposition made to those concessions has come from the Democratic party. Any colored man who either denies this or endeavors to disparage that party and belittle their concessions by attributing them entirely to selfish and cowardly motives brands himself as unjust, uncharitable, and ungrateful. The blindness of such men is very surprising. Do they not see that in denying their obligations to the Republican party they only expose themselves to the scorn and contempt of the Democratic party? Do they not understand that they are advertising themselves as base political ingrates? Do they not know that they are giving notice to the Democratic party—the party that they profess to think refuses to conciliate—that they will be as unjust and ungrateful to that party for any concessions from it as they declare themselves to be to the Republican party for what that party has done?

But, fellow-citizens, while I gratefully remember the important services of the Republican party in emancipating and enfranchising the colored people of the United States, I do not forget that the work of that party is manifestly incomplete. We are yet, as a people, only half free. The promise of liberty has been unfulfilled. We stand to-day only in the twilight of American liberty. The sunbeams of perfect day are still behind the mountains, and the mission of the Republican party will not be ended until the people, regardless of race and the ballot of the colored man shall be as well protected in every state of the American Union as are such rights in the case of the white man. The Republican party is not perfect. It is cautious even to timidity, conservative to a fault; but it is, nevertheless, the best political force and friend we have.

And now I return to the point at which I commenced these remarks. I have spoken to you of the adoption of the constitution of the United States and of its national influence and prosperity under that instrument; I have called your attention to the noble objects announced in the preamble of the constitution. I did not stop there and tell you that these were the objects, so solemnly proclaimed to the world and so often sworn to, have been attained, or to point out how far they have been practically disregarded and abandoned by the government ordained to practically carry them into effect. I now undertake to say that neither the constitution of 1789 nor the constitution as amended since the war is the law of the land. That constitution has been slain in the house of its friends. So far as the colored people of this country are concerned, the constitution is but a stupendous sham, a rope of sand, a Dead sea apple, fair without and foul within, keeping the promise to the eye and breaking it to the hope. The federal government, so far as we are concerned, has abdicated its functions and abandoned the objects for which the constitution was framed and adopted, and for this I arraign it at the bar of public opinion, both of this country and that of the civilized world. I am here to tell the truth and to tell it without fear or favor, and the truth is that neither the Republican party nor the Democratic party has yet complied with the solemn oath taken by their respective representatives, to support the Constitution, and execute the laws enacted under its provisions. They have promised us law, and abandoned us in anarchy; they have promised protection and given us violence; they have promised us fish and given us a serpent. A vital and fundamental object which they have sworn to realize to the best of their ability, is the establishment of justice. This is one of the six fundamental objects for which the constitution was ordained, but when, where, and how has any attempt been made by the federal government to enforce or establish justice in any one of the late slaveholding states? Has any one of our Republican Presidents, since Grant, earnestly endeavored to establish justice in the south? According to the highest legal authorities, justice is the perpetual disposition to secure to every man, by due process of law, protection to his person, his property, and his political rights. "Due process of law" has a definite and legal meaning. It means the right to be tried in open court by a jury of one's peers, and before an impartial judge. It means that the accused shall be brought face to face with his accusers; that he shall be allowed to call witnesses in his defense, and that he shall have the assistance of counsel; it means that, preceding his trial, he shall be safe in the custody of the government, and that no harm shall come to him for any alleged offense till he is fairly tried, convicted, and sentenced by the court. This protection is given to the vilest white criminal in the land. He cannot be murdered while there is even a reasonable doubt in the minds of the jury as to his guilt. But to the colored man accused of crime in the southern states, a different rule is almost everywhere applied. With him, to be accused is to be convicted. The court in which he is tried is a lynching mob. This mob takes the place of "due process of law," of judge, jury, witness, and counsel. It does not come to ascertain the guilt or innocence of the accused, but to hang, shoot, stab, burn, or whip him to death. Neither courts, jails, nor marshals are allowed to protect him. Every day brings us tidings of these outrages. I will not stop to detail individual instances. Their name is legion. Everybody knows that what I say is true, and that no power is employed by the government to prevent this lawless violence. Yet our chief magistrates and other officers, Democratic and Republican, continue to go through the solemn mockery, the empty form of swearing by the name of Almighty God that they will execute the laws and the constitution; that they will establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity.

Only a few weeks ago, at Carrolton court house, Mississippi, in the the absence of all political excitement, while the government of the nation, as well as the governments of the southern states, was safely in the hands of the Democratic party, when there was no pending election, and no pretence of a fear of possible negro supremacy, one hundred white citizens, on horseback, armed to the teeth, deliberately assembled and in cold blood opened a deadly fire upon a party of peaceable, unarmed colored men, killing eleven of them on the spot, and mortally wounding nine others, most of whom have since died. The sad thing is, that, in the average American mind, horrors of this character have become so frequent since the slaveholding rebellion, that they excite neither shame nor surprise, neither pity for the slain, nor indignation for the slayers. It is the old story verified.

"Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,
That to be hated, needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

It is said that those who live on the banks of Niagara neither hear its thunder nor shudder at its overwhelming power. In any other country such a frightful crime as the Carrolton massacre—in any other country than this a scream would have gone up from all quarters of the land for the arrest and punishment of these cold-blooded murderers; but alas! nothing like this has happened here. We are used to the shedding of innocent blood, and the heart of this nation is torpid, if not dead, to the natural claims of justice and humanity, where the victims are of the colored race. Where are the sworn ministers of the law? Where are the guardians of public justice? Where are the defenders of the constitution? What hand in House or Senate, what voice in court or cabinet is uplifted to stay this tide of violence, blood, and barbarism? Neither governors, Presidents, nor statesmen have yet declared that these barbarities shall be stopped. On the contrary, they all confess themselves powerless to protect our class, and you, you and I and all of us are struck down, and bloody treason flourishes over us. In view of this confessed impotency of the government and this apparent insensibility of the nation to the claims of humanity, do you ask me why I expend my time and breath in denouncing these wholesale murders when there is no seeming prospect of a favorable response? I answer in turn, how can I, how can you, how can any man with a heart in his breast do otherwise when, louder than the blood of Abel, the blood of his fellow man cries from the ground?

"Shall tongues be mute when deeds are wrought
Which well might shame extremest hell,
Shall freemen lock the indignant thought,
Shall mercy's bosom cease to swell;
Shall honor bleed, shall truth succumb,
Shall pen, and press, and soul be dumb?
By all around, above, below,
Be ours the indignant answer, No!"

In a former address delivered on the occasion of this anniversary I was at the pains of showing that much of the crime attributed to colored people, and for which they were held responsible, imprisoned, and murdered, was, in fact, committed by white men disguised as negroes. I affirmed that all presumptious in courts of law and in the community were against the negro, and that color was the safest disguise a white man could assume in which to commit crime; that all he had to do to commit the worst crimes with impunity was to blacken his face and take on the attitude of a negro, but even this disguise sometimes fails. Only a few days ago a Mr. J. H. Junis, an eminent citizen of Granger county, Tenn., attempted under this disguise to commit a cunningly devised robbery and have his offense fixed upon a negro. All worked well till a bullet brought him to the ground and a little soap and water was applied to his face, when he was found to be no negro at all, but a very respectable white citizen.

Dark, desperate, and forlorn as I have described the situation, the reality exceeds the description. In most of the gulf states, and in some parts of the border states, I have sometimes thought that we should be about as well situated for the purposes of justice, if there were no constitution of the United States at all, as well off if there were no law, or lawmakers, no constables, no jails, no court of justice, and we were left entirely without the pretence of legal protection, for we are now at the mercy of midnight raiders, assassins, and murderers, and we should only be in the same condition if these pretended safeguards were abandoned. They now only mock us. Other men are presumed to be innocent until they are proved guilty. We are presumed to be guilty until we are proved to be innocent.

The charge is often made that negroes are by nature the criminal class of America; that they furnish a larger proportion of petty thieves than any other class. I admit the charge, but deny that nature, race, or color has anything to do with the fact. Any other race with the same antecedents and the same condition would show a similar thieving propensity.

The American people have this lesson to learn: That where justice is denied, where poverty is enforced, where ignorance prevails, and where any one class is made the footstool of society is an organized conspiracy to oppress, rob, and degrade them, neither persons nor property will be safe. I deny that nature has made the negro a thief or a burglar. Look at these black criminals as they are brought into your police courts; view and study their faces, their forms and their features, as I have done for years as marshal of this District, and you will see that their antecedents are written all over them. Two hundred and fifty years of grinding slavery has done its work upon them. They stand before you to-day physically and mentally maimed and mutilated beyond all recognition as men. Many of their mothers and grandmothers were lashed to agony before their birth by cruel overseers, and the children have inherited in their faces the anguish and resentment felt by their parents. Many of these poor creatures have not been free long enough to outgrow the marks of the lash on their backs, and the deeper marks on their souls. No, no! It is not nature that has erred in making the negro. That shame rests with slavery. It has twisted his limbs, deformed his body, flattened his feet, and distorted his features, and made him, though black, no longer comely. In infancy he slept on the cold clay floor of his cabin, with quick circulation on one side, and tardy circulation on the other. So that he has grown up unequal, unsymmetrical, and is no longer a vertical well-rounded man, in body or in mind. Time, and much time, will be needed to restore him to natural proportions, for, though bruised and blasted, he is yet a man.

The school of the negro since leaving slavery has not been much of an improvement on his former condition. Individuals and schools have here and there enjoyed large benefits from emancipation, and the result is seen in their conduct, but the mass have had their liberty coupled with hardships which tend strongly to keep them a dwarfed and miserable class. A man who labors ten hours a day with pickax, crowbar, and shovel, and has a family to support and house rent to pay, and receives for his work but a dollar and a half, and what is worse still, he is deprived of labor a large part of his time by reason of sickness and the weather, in his poverty, easily falls before the temptation to steal and rob. Hungry men will not, desperate men will commit crime, outraged men will seek revenge. It is said to be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. I have sometimes thought it harder still for a poor man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Man is so constituted that if he cannot get a living honestly, he will get it dishonestly. "Skin for skin," as the devil said of Job. "All that a man hath will he give for his life." Oppressed people are not wise men mad and reckless, for illustration I pray look at East St. Louis.

In the southern states to-day a landlord system is in operation which keeps the negroes of that section in rags and wretchedness, almost to the point of starvation. As a rule, this system puts it out of the power of the negro to own land. There is, to be sure, no law forbidding the selling of land to the colored people, but there is an understanding which has the full effect of law. That understanding is that the land must be kept in the hands of the old master class. The colored people can rent land, it is true, and many of them do rent many acres of the slaveholders' land, but the end of the year than at the beginning, because they are charged more a year for rent per acre than the land would bring at auction sale. The landlord and tenant system of Ireland, which has conducted that country to the jaws of ruin, bad as it is, is not worse than that which prevails at this hour at the south, and yet the colored people of the south are constantly reproached for their poverty. They are asked to make bricks without straw. Their hands are tied, and they asked to work. They are are forced to be poor, and laughed at for their destitution.

I speak more plainly to colored men to-night, but I want my words to find their way to the eyes, ears, heads, and hearts of my white fellow-countrymen, hoping that some among them may be made to think, some hearts among them will be made to feel, and some of their number will be made to act. I appeal to our white fellow-countrymen. The power to protect is in their hands. This is and must be practically the white man's government. He has the numbers and the intelligence to control and direct. To him belongs the responsibility of its honor or dishonor, its glory or its shame, its salvation or its ruin. If they can protect the rights of white men, they can protect the rights of black men; if they can defend the rights of white citizens abroad, they can defend them at home; if they can use the army to protect the rights of Chinamen, they can use the army to protect the rights of colored men. The only trouble is the will; the will the will! Here, as elsewhere, "Where there is a will there is a way."

I have now said, not all that could be said, but enough to indicate the relations at present existing between the white and colored people of this country, especially the relations subsisting between the two classes of the late slaveholding states. Time would fail me to trace this relation in all its ramifications; but that labor is neither required by his audiences nor by the country. The condition of the emancipation class is known alike to ourselves and to the government, to pulpit and press, and to both of the great political parties. These have only to do their duty and all will be well.

Once use of this annual celebration is to keep the subject of our grievances before the people and government and to urge both to do their respective parts in the happy solution of the race problem. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, but simple truth, addressed to heart and sense of justice of the American people. If this fails we are lost. We have no armies or generals, no swords or cannons to enforce our claims, and do not want any.

We are often asked with an air of reproach by white men at the north, "Why don't your people fight their way to the ballot box?" The question adds insult to injury. Whom are we called upon to fight? They are the men who held this nation, with all its tremendous resources of men and money, at bay during four long and bloody years. Whom are we to fight? I answer, not a few midnight assassins, not the rabble mob, but trained armies, skilled generals of the confederate army, and in the last resort we should have to meet the federal army. Though that army cannot now be employed to defend the weak against the strong, means would certainly be found for its employment to protect the strong against the weak. In such a case insurrection would be madness.

But there is another remedy proposed. These people are advised to make an exodus to the Pacific slope. With the best intentions they are told of the fertility of the soil and salubrity of the climate. If they should tell the same as existing in the moon the simple question, How shall they get there? would knock the life out of it at once. Without money, without friends, without knowledge, and only gaining enough by daily toil to keep them above the starvation point, where they are, how can such a people rise and cross the continent? The measure on its face is no remedy at all. Besides who does not know that should these people ever attempt such an exodus, that they would be met with shotguns at every cross road. Who does not know that the white landholders of the south would never consent to let that labor, which alone gives value to their land, march off without opposition. Who does not know that if the federal government is powerless to protect these people in staying that it would be equally powerless to protect them in going en masse? For one, I say, away with such contrivances, such lame and impotent substitutes for the justice and protection due us. The first duty that the national government owes to its citizens is protection.

While, however, I hold now, as I held years ago, that the south is the natural home of the colored race, and that there must the destiny of that race be mainly worked out, I still believe that means can be and ought to be adopted to assist in the emigration of such of their number as may wish to change their residence to parts of the country where their civil and political rights are better protected than at present they are be at the south.

I adopt the suggestion of the NATIONAL REPUBLICAN, of this city, that *dispersion* is the true policy for the colored people of the south. All, of course, cannot leave that section, and ought not; but some can, and the condition of those who must remain will be better because of those who go. Men, like trees, may be too thickly planted to thrive. If the labor market of Mississippi were to-day not overloaded and oversupplied the laborers would be more fully appreciated; but this work of diffusion and distribution cannot be carried on by the emancipated class alone. They need and ought to have the sympathy and aid of the white and colored people of the free states. A million of dollars devoted to this purpose would do more for the colored people of the south than the same amount expended in any other way. There is no sentiment of false pride, no loss of self-respect, in asking this aid, considering the circumstances of these people. The white people of this nation owe them this help and a great deal more. The keepers of the future must not be concentration, but diffusion—distribution. This may not be a remedy for all evils now uncured, but it certainly will be a help in the right direction.

A word here in respect of another remedy for the black man's ills. It calls itself independent political action. This has, during the past few years, been advocated with much zeal and spirit by several of our leading colored men, and also with much ability, though I am bound to say not with much success. First, their plan, if I understand it, is to separate the colored people of the country from the Republican party. This with them is the primary and essential condition of making the colored vote independent. Hence all their artillery is directed to making that party odious in the eyes of the colored voters. Colored men who adhere to the Republican party are selfish as slaves, officeseekers, serviles, "knuckle-close" Republicans, as tools of white men, traitors to their race, and much more of the same sort. Perhaps no one has been a more prominent target for such denunciation than your humble speaker.

Now, the position to which these gentlemen invite us is one of neutrality, between the two great political parties—and to vote with either or against either, according to the prevailing motive when the time for action shall arrive. In the interval we are to have no standing with either party, and have no active influence to sustain the principles we may advocate, or to stand alone, and hold ourselves ready to serve one or to serve the other, or both, as we may incline at the moment.

With all respect to these political doctors, I must say that their remedy is no remedy at all. No man can serve two masters in politics any more than one, and there is no more despicable position in life more despicable in the eyes of man, and more condemned by nature than another, it is that of neutrality. Besides, if there is one thing more impossible than another, it is a permanent third party in politics. Our friends, Fortune, Downing, and others, flatter themselves that they have reached the perfection, but they are utterly mistaken. No man can be a political leader without seeing their animus of hate to the Republican party, and their preference for the Democratic party. The fault is not so much in their intention, as in their position. They are neither the one nor the other, for men prefer imitations impartially. They are compelled by their position to either serve the one and oppose the other, and they cannot serve or oppose both alike. Independence, like neutrality, is also impossible. As long as the colored race do not depend upon the Republican party, he will depend upon the Democratic party, and if he does neither, he becomes a nonentity in American politics. Many gentlemen do, in effect, ask us to break down the power of the Republican party, when to do it is to put the government in the hands of the Democratic party. Colored men are already in the Republican party, and to come out of it is to defeat it.

For one, I must say that the Democratic party has as yet given me no sufficient reasons for doing it any such service, nor has the Republican party made it, that they are doing it for its great rival. With all its faults it is the best party now in existence. In it are the best elements of the American people, and if any good is to come to us politically, it will be through that party.

I must cease to remember a great many things and must forget a great things before I can counsel any man, colored or white, to join the Democratic party, or to take up a position of neutrality between that party and the Republican party. Such a position of the colored people of this country will prove about as comfortable as between the upper and nether millstones. Individuals may make money as Independents are doing better service to the Democratic party under the Independent mask than they could do if they came out honestly for the Democratic party.

I am reminded by recommending the inaugural address of President Cleveland. I am not ashamed of that charge. I said at the time that no better words for the colored citizen had dropped from the east portico of the capitol since the days of Lincoln. I stand by that. I say so still. I did not say, as my traducer lying says, that Mr. Cleveland said better words than Lincoln or Grant. But it would not have sinned the man who had so spoken. Desperate men will depart in his heart and falsehood in his throat to be more truthful in Petersburg than in Washington. This malcontent accuser seeks to make the impression that those who thought and spoke well of the inaugural address did so from selfish motives, and from a desire to get or retain office. "Out of the heart the mouth speaketh." "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, the same shall be measured to you again." He ought to remember, however, that a serpent without a fang, a scorpion without a sting, has no more ability to poison and kill than a man without the ability to deceive has to injure. It so happens that we had two Presidents and one Vice President prior to President Cleveland, and I challenge my ambitious and envious accuser to find any letter written by any one of them, or any of this country in the inaugural addresses of either than is found in the inaugural address of President Cleveland. I also beg my accuser to remember that I gave no pledge that Mr. Cleveland would be able to live up to the sentiments of that address, but, on the contrary, I doubted even the probability of his success in doing so. I gave him credit, however, for an honest