

1408 MORGAN ST., ST. LOUIS, MO.

March—, 1892.

Dear Sir:—

We enclose an address to the colored people of the United States accompanied by directions explaining the mode of the proposed action, all of which is submitted for your approval.

If you think well of the purpose set forth in the address, and of the plan of action outlined, we ask that you permit your name to be signed to said address and directions, which will, when reprinted with your signatures, be sent broadcast through the land.

We ask you to take part in the distribution of these circulars, after reprint, either by sending them directly from your homes or by furnishing us with addresses to which they may be sent.

If you choose the latter, please furnish the addresses in your reply to this. Remember, we want to reach as many localities as possible.

We are soliciting the approval and signatures of more than two hundred ladies and gentlemen of all denominations and living in all parts of the country.

We will thank you for suggestions tending to make the movement more effective.

Please answer promptly.

PETER H. CLARK,
JOHN A. AGEE,
WALTER M. FARMER,
JNO. A. KELLEY,
ARTHUR D. LANGSTON. } Committee.

To the Colored People of United States And Their Friends.

You cannot be indifferent to the awful condition of affairs in parts of our country, in consequence of which scores of men and women of our race are annually condemned to sudden and cruel deaths by the rope, the pistol and more horrible still, by burning alive.

These deaths are inflicted by mobs upon men who are *accused* of crimes for which the law provides adequate punishment and in communities where the punishment of crimes committed by colored men is sure, for the reason that in those same communities the prejudices of judges and juries against the negro race are so deep, that innocent men find it difficult to escape the penalties assessed against the crimes with which they are charged.

These murders by mobs are most frequently committed in yards surrounding court houses, which should be temples of justice; sometimes in sight of school-houses, awful object lessons to the future voters of this Republic, which can exist only so long as its citizens respect and obey their self-imposed laws; not unfrequently they are perpetrated in the shadow of churches, whose ministers are, perhaps overawed by the prevalent passions of their communities, or worse, their consciences are seared, their ears are deaf and they fail to hear the voice of their brother's blood when it cries from the ground.

The newspapers of the country, with rare and honorable exceptions, are silent when these murders are committed. Stories of bloody violence, which, if enacted in Ireland or far off Russia, would bring out long columns of indignant protest, or of Pharisical laudation of American civilization, are printed in columns of general news without note or comment.

The Associated Press, that agent so powerful for the enlightenment of the public and the formation of opinion, gives its assent to murder, by branding the victims with vile epithets, and many sleep in bloody graves, stigmatized as "black fiends," "negro monsters" and the like, who with fair trials might have gone free.

The condition is an appalling one. It discloses the awful fact that there are men in the country who desire to solve the Negro Problem by massacre. It proves that over wide districts of our country, this party of men has many members and is powerful enough to defy the law and work its murderous will upon its helpless victims.

This condition demands action at our hands. For us to sit silently, saying nothing and doing nothing would prove that we have not the feelings of men.

What shall we do?—

What can we do?—

The local authorities where these murders take place are with difficulty aroused to the necessity of burying the corpses of the victims, so horribly disfigured by strangulation, by shot and by flame.

The State authorities are indifferent, and the National authorities, who so lately equipped warlike fleets and sent them in angry haste to avenge the death of an adopted citizen, slain in a distant port, confess themselves powerless to protect their citizens murdered upon their native soil.

'Tis vain to look to any of these for relief.

To whom then can we turn, save to the Lord God; to Him, Who has the power to enlighten and soften men's hearts; to Him, Who brought Israel out of bondage with many signs and wonders; to Him, Who recently in the history of our country caused "the wrath of man to praise Him" and forced from the unwilling hand of Abraham Lincoln the Emancipation Proclamation.

Let us turn to Him —

We therefore request you to set aside the 31st day of May next as a day of humiliation, fasting and prayer.

Let the more devout fast faithfully.

Let all pray.

Let the farmer leave his plow, the mechanic his bench, the business man his shop, let the school-master secure for himself and pupils a vacation, let those employed as household servants get leave of absence.

Let us meet in our places of worship and there led by our ministers devoutly pray to Almighty God.

First—That if it is our fault that the hearts of our fellow countrymen are so cruelly turned against us, that He will show to us the evil and give us the wisdom to remove it.

Second—That our white fellow citizens may be made to see that the only security for the continuance of republican institutions is found in the observance of law by all, however powerful, and by the extension of its protection to all, however weak. That He will make them see that in permitting these lynchings they are sowing a wind which will grow to a whirlwind in the time of their children.

Finally that they will remember our lately enslaved condition, that they will not forget our centuries of toil without requital upon the fields of their fathers, and that instead of visiting us with proscription and murder, they will be patient with our short-comings and encourage us to rise to that level of intelligence and virtue which marks the character of a good citizen.