

A National Appeal.

Addressed to the American Negro and the Friends of Human Liberty. May we be Permitted to Peacefully Live as Common Citizens of the Country that is as Dear to us as Life, or Must We Submit to the Cruel, Merciless Judgment of Judge Lynch, the Faggot, and the Enemy's Bullet?

The world beyond the boundaries of the United States will doubtless look upon this appeal with great astonishment, when it is recognized as coming from a class of American citizens whose *claims* upon *America* are anteceded only by the original American (the Indian). We, the American Negroes, have been grafted into the fibres of the American government so firmly, that we have lost every vestige of our African ancestry, save the *color* of our skin, which hangs on as a barrier to our progress and happiness. Three centuries more will suffice to erase this impediment, and, strange as it may seem, many of our alleged friends (white) say, *wait!* But can we afford to wait three centuries longer as time of grace for the states and territories of the United States to learn that *we are human beings—American citizens?*

LOYALTY TO THE UNION.

When we were slaves we were at the mercy of our masters. They were, then, our only protection. But when the voice of God, by the hand of Abraham Lincoln, proclaimed us to be free people, and the subsequent order from the same sacred power placed the immortal flag of the Union in our hands, and the musket on our shoulders and nap-sack on our backs, and commanded us to fight for the preservation of *our* Union and the maintenance of human liberty, then we presumed that we had gained the favor of a new master (the Federal government), and had *earned* the right to claim his protection in the simple discharge of our rights and duties as common citizens.

REPUBLICAN PARTY UNTRUE.

What has been our experience? Twenty-seven years have come and gone since we were clothed with the rights of citizenship, by law, and endowed with all the privileges incident thereto, and yet, during this period, 10,091 Negroes have been shot down like dogs; skinned alive; hung to trees; or burned to stakes, without the interference of the federal government only in one instance. But we are told to be patient, to wait! Yes, wait! wait until the majority of our race are murdered, and possibly by that time public sentiment will be awakened sufficiently to force us to waft our way Bishop-Turnerward, across the sea, or, more likely, into the middle of some *black sea*.

But we must not talk thus plainly else we lay ourselves liable to the charge of indulging in fanaticism. We must not tell the whole *truth*, or we give license to our friends (?) to charge us with disloyalty to the party-politic that nobly championed our cause thirty, twenty-seven, twenty-four and twenty years ago. But, my fellow-negroes and fellow lovers of liberty, it is not what was nor what has been that we are now contending for. The past will never more return. The present and future demand our attention.

OUR CONDITION GROWS WORSE.

Were it not true that our condition in many of the states has grown alarmingly worse within the last three years, and especially within the last and present years, we might not be warranted in taking the steps we are now taking. But when we look over the records of the recent state legislative acts of Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, and other southern states, and see the legalized discriminations against us in direct violation of the federal constitution, and observe that not even the slightest emotion is aroused on the part of the present administration or the federal congress, we are forced to convene ourselves together from time to time and swing high and far the tocsin of our ignoble, inhuman, un-American treatment. Within the last twelve months there have been more Negroes murdered single-handed, three to one, than in any previous year since 1872, even including the four years under Democratic rule. More states have passed discriminating laws against us during the last year than during all the years that have intervened since the reconstruction period. One state, within the last year, has practically disfranchised the negro. What does all this mean? Is it purely incidental, only an accident; or does it prove that it is time for us to wake up and open our eyes, and view the situation as it is and not as we would it were?

THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE.

General J. S. Clarkson has said that the most potent question before the American body politic to day, is the Negro problem, but the administration evidently differs from him and so does his party, according to the Minneapolis convention.

We submit that protection to American industries is much needed, and we suggest that to protect the lives of American citizens upon American soil is equally as needful. Observation and experience have taught us that a platform that declares for a free ballot and a fair count is as naked in accomplishments as a wired skeleton. It suggests to us the lesson of "Bricks without Straw."

DEMAND PROTECTION.

Protect the lives of the citizen, be he black or white, and the ballot will be cast with no uncertainty, and the count will be rendered accordingly. If the party that was once sacred to our race when led by Lincoln, Grant, Sumner, Chase, Seward, Garrison and Phillips is still sincere, why don't it stand by the cardinal principles of the original party founders, who advocated human equality before the law, who condemned "State-Rights," and demanded protection for all of the citizens of the Union in all parts of the Union?

OUR OWN BLAME.

I am satisfied that our silence, as a race, and our blind political action have, to some extent, augmented our present deplorable condition in the south.

I wish to call the attention of every Negro and lover of liberty in the land to the excited interest of the federal congress, at this time manifested, on account of the recent conflict between the Carnegie strikers and Pinkerton men, which resulted in the killing of seventeen persons. No one deplors this situation worse than we, and I yield to no one in my contempt for the Pinkerton system, but it awakens new thoughts of surprise within us to note that congress is more concerned in the shooting of these seventeen people than in the killing of the whole 10,091 Negroes during the past 27 years, or the killing and burning at the stake of the 178 Negroes for alleged crime during the past nine months.

GOING TO LIBERIA.

Hundreds of Negroes are to day enroute to Liberia, many of whom are penniless and half naked, but they prefer a foreign home without money or raiment, if they may only be permitted to breathe the *pure air*

of liberty, to their native American home, without protection to their lives. We appeal to the conscience of the world to pass judgment upon this situation.

TO EXTERMINATE THE NEGRO.

In the State of Alabama is found an organization known as the "Knights of the White Shield." The advertised object of this organization is to exterminate the Negro. Are we not forced then to organize for our own protection?

It is not the purpose of this organization to injure or aid any political party, for the writer has never cast a ballot only for Republican candidates, except twice in local elections, when my judgment led me to vote the People's Party ticket, of which I am neither ashamed nor sorry.

The time has come when the condition of our race in the south demands that every Negro in the north stand up to be counted with the race. We must strike at the root of the evil which threatens our existence and menaces our progress. We must hew to the line, let the chips fall where they may. Let us realize the fact that the welfare of our race and the lives of American citizens are paramount to the success of any political party. An enemy is an enemy and a friend is a friend, no matter what may be his political affiliation.

We denounce state rights and adhere to the supremacy of the Federal government. We heartily endorse the Federal constitution, and are forever ready to offer our lives for its defense. Under it we claim the rights of citizenship and demand protection to our lives. We appeal to the lovers of liberty everywhere and the American people especially, in whom we still have faith, to assist us in peacefully securing what the law of the land, as well as the divine law of God already accord us: *Equality before the law; protection to our lives.*

The National Colored Men's Protective Association of America will meet in national convention in the city of Indianapolis, Ind., September 22d, 1892, for the purpose of furthering these ends.

All friends of human liberty who sympathize with us in this effort for the protection of human life will be welcomed to our convention.

Respectfully submitted to the public.

GEO. E. TAYLOR,

Pres. National Colored Men's Protective Ass'n of America.
Oskaloosa, Iowa, July 14, 1892.