

MOVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE OF COLOUR. LOUR.

A pamphlet has recently been published, by J. W. Allen, son of the late Bishop Allen, of Philadelphia, containing the Constitution of the "*American Society of Free Persons of Colour, for improving their condition in the United States, for the purchase of lands, and for the establishment of a settlement in Upper Canada.*" To this Constitution is appended the proceedings of a Convention of Coloured persons, held sometime since, in Philadelphia, and also an Address, from that body, to their coloured brethren in the United States.

We cannot but hail the enterprising exertions of these people with lively satisfaction; and believing that the readers of this work will take a deep interest therein, the proceedings of said Convention, together with the Address alluded to, are here inserted. Nothing will have so powerful a tendency to meliorate the unfortunate condition of the coloured race, in America, as

their own pacific, yet spirited, efforts to elevate themselves above their degradation. Every true philanthropist will encourage them therein.

CONVENTION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR.

As much anxiety has prevailed on account of the enactment of laws in several states of the Union, especially that of Ohio, abridging the liberties and privileges of the Free People of Colour, and subjecting them to a series of privations and sufferings, by denying them a right of residence, unless they comply with certain requisitions not exacted of the Whites, a course altogether incompatible with the principles of civil and religious liberty.

In consideration of which, a delegation was appointed from the states of Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, to meet in Convention in Philadelphia, to consider the propriety of forming a settlement in the province of Upper Canada, in order to afford a place of refuge to those who may be obliged to leave their homes, as well as to others inclined to emigrate with the view of improving their condition.

The said Convention accordingly met in Bethel Church, city of Philadelphia, on the 20th of September, 1830; and having fully considered the peculiar situation of many of their brethren, and the advantages to be derived from the proposed settlement, adopted the following

ADDRESS

To the Free People of Color of these United States.

Brethren,

Impressed with a firm and settled conviction, and more especially being taught by that inestimable and invaluable instrument, namely, the Declaration of Independence, that all men are born free and equal, and consequently are endowed with unalienable rights, among which are the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuits of happiness.

Viewing these as incontrovertable facts, we have been led to the following conclusions: that our forlorn and deplorable situation earnestly and loudly demand of us to devise and pursue all legal means for the speedy elevation of ourselves and brethren to the scale and standing of men.

And in pursuit of this great object, various ways and means have been resorted to; among others, the African Colonization Society is the most prominent. Not doubting the sincerity of many friends who are engaged in that cause; yet we beg leave to say, that it does not meet with our approbation. However great the debt which these United States may owe to injured Africa, and however unjustly her sons have been made to bleed, and her daughters to drink of the cup of affliction, still we, who have been born and nurtured on this soil, we, whose habits, manners, and customs are the same in common with other Americans, can never consent to take our lives in our hands, and be the bearers of the redress offered by that Society to that much afflicted country.

Tell it not to barbarians, lest they refuse to be civilised, and eject our christian missionaries from among them, that in the nineteenth century of the christian era, laws have been enacted in some of the states of this great republic, to compel an unprotected and harmless portion of our brethren, to leave their homes and seek an asylum in foreign climes: and in taking a view of the unhappy situation of many of these, whom

the oppressive laws alluded to continually crowd into the Atlantic cities, dependent for their support upon their daily labour, and who often suffer for want of employment, we have had to lament that no means have yet been devised for their relief.

These considerations have led us to the conclusion, that the formation of a settlement in the British province of Upper Canada, would be a great advantage to the people of color. In accordance with these views, we pledge ourselves to aid each other by all honourable means, to plant and support one in that country, and therefore we earnestly and most feelingly appeal to our coloured brethren, and to all philanthropists, here and elsewhere, to assist in this benevolent and important work.

To encourage our brethren earnestly to cooperate with us, we offer the following, viz. 1st. Under that government no invidious distinction of colour is recognised, but there we shall be entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of other citizens. 2d. That the language, climate, soil, and productions are similar to those in this country. 3d. That land of the best quality can be purchased at the moderate price of one dollar and fifty cents per acre, by the one hundred acres. 4th. The market for different kinds of produce raised in that colony, is such as to render a suitable reward to the industrious farmer, equal in our opinion to that of the United States. And lastly, as the erection of buildings must necessarily claim the attention of the emigrants, we would invite the mechanics from our large cities to embark in the enterprise; the advancement of architecture depending much on their exertions, as they must consequently take with them the arts and improvements of our well-regulated communities.

It will be much to the advantage of those who have large families, and desire to see them happy and respected, to locate themselves in a land where the laws and prejudices of society will have no effect in retarding their advancement to the summit of civil and religious improvement. There the diligent student will have ample opportunity to reap the reward due to industry and perseverance; whilst those of moderate attainments, if properly nurtured, may be enabled to take their stand as men in the several offices and situations necessary to promote union, peace, order and tranquility. It is to these we must look for the strength and spirit of our future prosperity.

Before we close, we would just remark, that it has been a subject of deep regret to this convention, that we as a people, have not availing, appreciated every opportunity placed within our power by the benevolent efforts of the friends of humanity, in elevating our condition to the rank of freemen. That our mental and physical qualities have not been more actively engaged in pursuits more lasting, is attributable in a great measure to a want of unity among ourselves whilst our only stimulus to action has been to become domestics, which at best is but a precarious and degraded situation.

It is to obviate these evils, that we have recommended our views to our fellow-citizens in the foregoing instrument, with a desire of raising the moral and political standing of ourselves; and we cannot devise any plan more likely to accomplish this end, than by encouraging agricultural and mechanical arts: for by the first, we shall be enabled to act with a degree of independenc

which as yet has fallen to the lot of but few among us; and the faithful pursuit of the latter, in connexion with the sciences, which expand and ennoble the mind, will eventually give us the standing and condition we desire.

To effect these great objects, we would earnestly request our brethren throughout the United States, to co-operate with us, by forming societies *auxiliary* to the Parent Institution, about being established in the city of Philadelphia, under the patronage of the GENERAL CONVENTION. And we further recommend to our friends and brethren, who reside in places where, *at present*, this may be impracticable, so far to aid us, by contributing to the funds of the Parent Institution; and, if disposed, to appoint one delegate to represent them in the next Convention, to be held in Philadelphia the first Monday in June next, it being fully understood, that organized societies be at liberty to send any number of delegates not exceeding *five*.

Signed by order of the Convention,

Rev. RICHARD ALLEN, *President*,
Senior Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal
Churches.

Junius C. Morel, *Secretary*.