

RACE AND REUNION

THE CIVIL WAR IN
AMERICAN MEMORY

DAVID W. BLIGHT

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resisting Turner. Sampson despised the decision, but he invoked African American sacrifice in a litany of Civil War battles and counseled confidence that "the public mind is softening as it ripens." Blacks could "afford to be loyal still," Sampson believed, because "Christianity and civilization" were on their side. As Turner spent the next twenty years trying to civilize and redeem Africa, other African Americans, with divergent views of the past and competing strategies of uplift, would struggle with how best to live with the realities that the civil rights decision had put in motion. With the color line sharpening, the black community faced decisions over just how to compete for its place in America's collective memory. Should blacks embrace or reject the nation they had helped to preserve and reinvent? Should they celebrate their own past, or lament its agonies? Should they fight the Lost Cause and segregation, or retreat into group self-development? Should they, in season and out, remind the country of their former enslavement, or simply not look back? Most African Americans heeded some version of the warning of Joseph C. Price, the young black educator and founder of Livingstone College in Salisbury, North Carolina. "The South was more conquered than convinced," said Price in 1890; "it was overpowered rather than fully persuaded. The Confederacy surrendered its sword at Appomattox, but did not there surrender its convictions."¹⁹

LATE-NINETEENTH-CENTURY BLACKS commonly referred to the era of slavery as a kind of historical void, a long dark night of denial and futility. For many this attitude flew in the face of experience and memory. Freedpeople knew that they had lived useful, creative lives; they could see what they had built and remember what they had imagined. For many, their faith reminded them that they were forever part of a purposeful history. Many others had to face a past they could never come to terms with, a formative experience that may have impoverished their minds and ravaged their bodies. Remembering slavery was, thus, a paradoxical memory: it was a world of real experience, one complicated by relationships with whites that were both horrible and endearing and enriched or traumatized by their own family and community relations. Slavery was also a collective racial experience in which it was difficult to take pride when the larger society looked on with so much amusement and contempt. Indeed, any perusal of the heart-rending advertisements in black newspapers by the 1880s for loved ones sepa-

rated from families during slavery or the war demonstrates both the vitality and the destruction of family life. Looking back was not easy, but it was also unavoidable.

The emotional legacy in the personal advertisements was one of loss. The search for kin in newspapers began even before the war ended. In the summer of 1865, the national black paper, the *Christian Recorder*, ran numerous appeals demonstrating that slavery and emancipation had caused a new diaspora. Writing from Crawfordsville, Indiana, Elizabeth Ann Jackson sought the whereabouts of two sisters and two brothers last seen in Virginia. Sold away from Virginia to New Orleans ten years before, Hannah Cole hoped to find her son, John, "the only child I have and I desire to find him much."²⁰ Sale and separation dominated the memories of many ex-slaves seeking their lost families.

By the 1880s, many freedpeople still desperately searched and waited. Thomas Cooper wrote from New Jersey, hoping for news of his mother, father, two brothers, two sisters, and his only daughter. In the chaos of the war, he had last seen his daughter in Kentucky and recollected that the rest of his family had been "sold in Virginia by William Goult." Many who submitted these notices could remember precise details of masters, traders, buyers, and locations in the South. They remembered many facts, but had no control over fate. Celia Poole of Iowa could name her owners and buyers through more than twenty years of haze, but she was left only to write: "When quite young, I was sold with my mother and brother Aaron to traders. My mother was sold again soon after leaving home. Since then I have never heard of her." Searching for her mother in 1880, another woman's plea reflected her name: separated from her mother in 1852, she "was sold to a speculator by the name of Alex Hopkin and was brought to Georgia [from North Carolina] . . . my name is Patience."²¹

In 1881, Albert Butts of Brooklyn, New York, still advertised for his brother, William. "We parted at the battle of Antietam," wrote Albert, in a war memory oddly out of place amidst the soldiers' reminiscences of the 1880s. Thousands of black women spent their aging lives trying to reassemble lost families dislocated by emancipation's diaspora. The Butts brothers, probably camp hands or gravediggers for the Union forces, no doubt had many war stories to tell. But no major magazine solicited the tales of many freedpeople and black war veterans. If they had, the culture of reconciliation taking hold in the 1880s might have included the epic of emancipation. That

epic would be uncovered nearly a century later in scholarship and by the re-discovery of slave narratives.²² But as Blue-Gray fraternalism grew in popularity, no such understanding of the effects of slavery and emancipation on African Americans penetrated the historical consciousness of most Americans.

The names, places, and unrequited hopes expressed in freedmen's advertisements provide a glimpse of how ordinary black individuals and families privately, as well as publicly, rejected the plantation legend. As Thomas Nelson Page's and Joel Chandler Harris's endearing uncles narrated story after story of slave loyalty and nostalgia for the Old South, black survivors of slavery named the names of "speculators" who had sold them and their kin into a deeper South. It was America's national tragedy that the memories of slavery that were popularized and sold in the last decades of the nineteenth century were the romantic fantasies of dialect writers, not the actual remembrance of ex-slaves themselves. Unfortunately, stories of slave sales, of displaced black migrants seeking new lives in new places, of the deprivation and humiliation of slavery, did not sell in a culture eager to purchase tales of reunion and soldiers' glory. How could a nation reunify itself by telling its epic through the experience of slavery and its consequences? Far better to root the new national narrative in a heritage of mutual heroism and in yearning for a lost civilization crushed by industrialization and an unavoidable war. To this day, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, much of Civil War nostalgia is still rooted in the fateful memory choices made in the latter two decades of the nineteenth century. As the *Christian Recorder* put it in 1890, "the poetry of the 'Blue and the Gray' is much more acceptable than the song of the black and the white."²³

By the 1880s and 1890s, North or South, in a city or in a sharecropper's shack, where did most African Americans look for a safe haven in the past? Where could they find themselves a part of some uplifting history in the age of Progress? In what narrative did they root their fragile citizenship? What American story could they own? For many, looking back into the past forced an encounter with the shame of slavery. In an age that exalted self-made business titans, when Christianity stressed personal responsibility, and in a culture riven by theories of inherent racial characteristics, blacks carried the stigma of bondage. When Tourgée wrote in 1888 of blacks facing a slave past of "only darkness replete with unimaginable horrors," he only echoed a discourse well under way among blacks themselves. Bondage had left the collective "injury of slavery," said *Christian Recorder* editor Benjamin Tanner in

1878. "The very remembrance of our experience is hideous." In 1887, Tanner's paper ran a poem, "Keep Out of the Past," by Emma Wheeler Wilcox, which had an unmistakable meaning for blacks:

Keep out of the past! for its highways
 Are damp with malarial gloom.
 Its gardens are sere, and its forests are drear,
 And everywhere moulders a tomb . . .

Keep out of the past! It is haunted.
 He who in its avenues gropes
 Shall find there the ghost of a joy prized the most,
 And a skeleton throng of dead hopes. . .

Keep out of the past! It is lonely
 And barren and bleak to the view,
 Its fires have grown cold and its stories are old,
 Turn, turn to the present, the new!

Hence, in a thousand settings, from magazine articles to sermons, from emancipation exhibitions to anniversaries, and in private communication, many blacks tended to consider slavery as an American prehistory that was painful to revisit. As the black sociologist Kelly Miller put it, "in order to measure . . . progress, we need a knowledge of the starting-point as well as a fixed standard of calculation. We may say that the Negro began at the zero point, with nothing to his credit but the crude physical discipline of slavery."²⁴ With this notion of emancipation as the *zero point* of group development, blacks risked reflection on their past and measured their progress.

Among the remarkable range of memories recalled in interviews with ex-slaves conducted in the twentieth century are many expressions of the sheer agony of remembering slavery at all. Delia Garlic, who had been sold several times and enslaved in three states, told of the sale of her "babies" to "speculators." "I could tell you 'bout it all day, but even den you couldn't guess de awfulness of it." Some former slaves may have exorcised their anger in the act of reconstructing their memories. "I's hear tell of dem good slave days," said a Texan, Jenny Proctor, "but I ain't nev'r seen no good times den." Her story was one of separation from kin and "cotton patch" labor. Born around 1858, Sarah Wooden Johnson of Petersburg, Virginia, wondered why her interviewer, Susie Byrd (also black), wanted to know so much of her past.

"Now don't ax me no mo' 'bout dat," Sarah admonished Susie. "What in de world is you gwine do wid all dis here longy, longy go stuff . . . ? Ha, ha, ha. Say you is writin' hist'ry? A slave ain't had no say so of his own 'til de 'render [surrender] come and he was sot free. Glory, glory gal! . . . Dat's back stuff honey. Dis here is new time. Let dat be." Angry or painful memories are not the same thing as shame. Indeed, it is difficult to know when ex-slaves felt shame or when they merely exhibited a stoical disposition to not look backward. In ex-slave memory, one finds expressions of shame sometimes mixed with conservative nostalgia and intraracial contempt. Former North Carolina house servant Sarah Debro looked back at age ninety and declared: "My folks don't want me to talk about slavery, they's shame niggers ever was slaves. But, while for most colored folks freedom is the best, they's still some niggers that ought to be slaves now." Debro seems never to have abandoned her sense of class distinction as handmaid to her mistress. "I look back and thinks," she said. "I ain't never forgot them slavery days, and I ain't never forgot Miss Polly and my white starched aprons."²⁵

At the end of the 1930s, when most of the slave narratives were recorded as part of the federal WPA project, the novelist Richard Wright, in his lyrical history of African Americans, *Twelve Million Black Voices* (1941), left a pained expression about the endurance of slavery's shadow. "When we compare our hopelessness with the vast vistas of progress around us," wrote Wright, "when we feel self-disgust at our bare lot, when we contemplate our lack of courage in the face of daily force, we are seized with a desire to escape our shameful identification."²⁶ A profound sense of grievance over the ravages and legacies of slavery and sharecropping, about the numbing persistence of poverty, animate Wright's work. That desire among blacks to escape the past was many decades old by the time Wright penned his proletarian manifesto of black history.

Black intellectuals of the late nineteenth century differed, often fiercely, over just how historically minded their people ought to be. At Storer College in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, on Memorial Day, May 30, 1885, Alexander Crummell, one of the most distinguished black intellectuals, gave a commencement address, "The Need of New Ideas and New Aims for a New Era," to the graduates of the institution founded for freedmen at the end of the war. Crummell, an Episcopal priest educated at the abolitionist Oneida Institute in upstate New York and at Cambridge University in England in the 1840s, had spent nearly twenty years as a missionary and an advocate of African nationalism in Liberia (1853-71). Although Crummell could not resist ac-

knowledging Harpers Ferry's associations with John Brown as a setting "full of the most thrilling memories in the history of our race," he hoped to turn the new generation of blacks, most of whom were born just before or during the war, away from dwelling "morbidly and absorbingly upon the servile past"; instead, they should embrace the urgent "needs of the present." As a minister and theologian, and as a social conservative, Crummell was concerned not only with racial uplift—his ultimate themes were family, labor, industrial education, and especially moral improvement—but also with the unburdening of young blacks from what he perceived as the "painful memory of servitude."²⁷

Blacks, Crummell believed, were becoming a people paralyzed by "fanatical anxieties upon the subject of slavery." Black leaders seemed to "settle down in the dismal swamps of dark and distressful memory," and ordinary black folk fashioned life "too much after the conduct of the children of Israel." In his stern rebuke, Crummell made a distinction between memory and recollection. Memory, he contended, was a passive, unavoidable part of group consciousness; recollection, on the other hand, was active, a matter of choice, and dangerous in excess. "What I would fain have you guard against," he told the Storer graduates, "is not the memory of slavery, but the constant recollection of it." Such recollection, Crummell maintained, would only degrade racial progress; for him, unmistakably, "duty lies in the future."²⁸

Prominent in the audience that day at Harpers Ferry was Frederick Douglass. According to Crummell's own account, his call to reorient African American consciousness away from the past met with Douglass's "emphatic and most earnest protest." No verbatim account of what Douglass said at Harpers Ferry that day survives, but his many anniversary and Memorial Day speeches during the 1880s offer a clear picture of what he may have said. A healthy level of forgetting, said Douglass in 1884, was "Nature's plan of relief." But in season and out, Douglass insisted that whatever the psychological need of avoiding the woeful legacy of slavery, that legacy would resist all human effort at suppression. The history of African Americans, he remarked many times in the 1880s, could "be traced like that of a wounded man through a crowd by the blood."²⁹ Better to confront such a past, he believed, than to wait for its resurgence.

In his many postwar speeches about memory, Douglass would often admit that his own personal memory of slavery was best kept sleeping like a "half-forgotten dream." But he despised the politics of forgetting that the

culture of reconciliation demanded. "We are not here to visit upon the children the sins of the fathers," Douglass told a Memorial Day audience in Rochester in 1883, "but we are here to remember the causes, the incidents, and the results of the late rebellion." Most of all, Douglass objected to the historical construction that portrayed emancipation as a great national "failure." The growing argument (made by some blacks as well as whites) that slavery had protected and civilized blacks, while freedom had gradually sent them "falling into a state of barbarism," forced Douglass to argue for aggressive vigilance about memory. The problem was "not confined to the South," Douglass declared in 1888. "It [the theory of black degeneration coupled with historical misrepresentations of emancipation and Reconstruction] has gone forth to the North. It has crossed the ocean. It has gone to Europe, and it has gone as far as the wings of the press, and the power of speech can carry it."³⁰

Crummell and Douglass had great respect for each other, but they had very different personal histories and different agendas: Crummell had never been a slave; he achieved a classical education, was a missionary of evangelical Christianity and a thinker of conservative instincts, and had spent almost the entire Civil War era in West Africa. He returned to the United States twice during the war to recruit blacks to emigrate to Liberia, while Douglass worked aggressively as an advocate of emancipation and recruited approximately one hundred members of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment. Crummell represented a brand of black nationalism that combined Western Christian civilizationalism and race pride. He contended that the principal problems faced by American blacks were moral weakness, self-hatred, and industrial primitiveness. Douglass, the former slave, had established his fame by writing and speaking about the meaning of slavery; his life's work and his very identity were inextricably linked to the transformations of the Civil War. The past made and inspired Douglass, and he had risen from slavery's prison; there was no meaning for him without memory, whatever the consequences of "recollection." The past also had made Crummell, but his connections to many of the benchmarks of African American social memory were tenuous and informed by African nationalism and Christian mission. For Douglass, emancipation and the Civil War were *felt* history, a moral and legal foundation upon which to demand citizenship and equality. For Crummell, they were potentially paralyzing memories—not the epic to be retold, but merely the source of future needs.³¹

Remembering slavery and emancipation thus became a forked road. Douglass's and Crummell's differing dispositions toward the past represent

two directions that black thought could go in the 1880s. Both sought racial uplift, but one would take the risk of sustaining a sense of historic grievance against America as the means of making the nation fulfill its promises; the other would look back only with caution and focus on group moral and economic regeneration. Crummell sought to redeem Africa, and to inspire moral values in the freedpeople by the example of an elite black leadership. Douglass embraced the same values but sought to redeem the civil and political rights established by the verdicts of Fort Wagner and Appomattox. Crummell had tried to be a founding father of Liberia; Douglass dearly wished to see himself as a founding father of a reinvented American republic. With differing aims, Crummell and Douglass both sought to teach a new generation of African Americans how to understand and use the legacy of slavery and the Civil War era, how to preserve and destroy the past.

That past lingered in the writings of many blacks who joined the chorus of racial uplift ideology in the late nineteenth century. In one of her moralistic poems, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, a novelist and lecturer, wrote of the "Dying Bondman" (1884) who had once been a chieftain in Africa. On his deathbed he pleads with his kind master for his freedom:

"Master," said the dying chieftain,
 "Home and friends I soon shall see;
 But before I reach my country,
 Master, write that I am free;"

"For the spirits of my fathers
 Would shrink back from me in pride,
 If I told them at our greeting
 I a slave had lived and died . . ."

"Precious token" in hand, the old man dies "free" of the burden of telling his kinsmen in heaven that his life was forever stained with slavery. The idea of slavery as the burdensome past informed much black religious writing, whether or not, as was often the case, the authors converted that burden into evidence of racial progress. Slavery had "blasted" the "higher powers" of "the Negro," wrote one AME minister, and had forced him to drag its legacies around like "a relic of the infirmity of those years he carries in his heart and brain." Uplift advocates were acutely aware of the servile past. The novelist Pauline Hopkins wrote in the preface of her romantic novel about Reconstruction, *Contending Forces* (1900), of her sincere desire "to do all that I can

to raise the stigma of degradation from my race." Such a quest was particularly poignant for black women, who carried a special burden in seeking bourgeois respectability in a society that had for so long defined them only in maternal or sexual terms.³²

The future beckoned, but the past remained a heavy weight to carry. Forgetting might seem wise, but also perilous. To face the past was to court the agony of one's potential limitations, to wonder if the rabbits really could outwit the foxes or whether some creatures in the forest just did have history and breeding on their side. "As slavery was a degrading thing," Crummell had said in his Storer address, "the constant recalling of it to the mind serves, by the law of association, to degradation." Long before Du Bois wrote of a struggle with the "double consciousness" of being American and black, African American freedmen had to decide how to look backward and forward. Many may have been like the characters Toni Morrison created in *Beloved* (1987)—haunted by slavery's physical and psychic tortures, but desperate to live in peace and normalcy. When Paul D says to Sethe, "me and you, we got more yesterday than anybody, we need some kind of tomorrow," Morrison imagined herself into the heart of late-nineteenth-century black memory. Memory is sometimes that human burden we can live comfortably neither with nor without. Douglass believed that black memory was a weapon and that its abandonment was dangerous to his people's survival. Crummell argued that a people can "get inspiration and instruction in the *yesterdays* of existence, but we cannot healthily live in them."³³ The story of black Civil War memory demonstrates that both were right.

WITH EMANCIPATION widely viewed as a new creation, as the zero point of black racial development, a vast "progress of the race" rhetoric took hold in African American life and letters by the end of the nineteenth century. Part of this discourse was driven by the imperatives of uplift ideology: for the race to rise, build its own institutions, and defend itself against racist attacks and assumptions about group degeneration, the race's spokesmen had to demonstrate black advancement. Slavery might not always be mentioned in claims of racial progress, but it was the obvious presence behind most such expressions. The "progress of the race" and its implicit acknowledgment of slavery's legacy was, therefore, an inherent part of Booker T. Washington's accommodationist social philosophy and uplift strategy.

From the earliest stage of his public career to its end in 1915 during the

74. Mosby to Dr. A. Monteiro, February 19, 1895, San Francisco, Mosby to Judge Rueben Page, June 11, 1902, Akron, Colo., John C. Ropes to Mosby, February 16, 1896, Boston, Mosby to Lunsford L. Lomax, February 19, 1896, San Francisco; Mosby to Marcus J. Wright, February 22, 1896, San Francisco, Mosby to John C. Ropes, December 13, 1897, Warrenton, Va., in Adele H. Mitchell, ed., *The Letters of John S. Mosby* (Charlottesville: Stuart-Mosby Historical Society, 1986), 75, 83-90, 111-113; Mosby to Sam Chapman, January 21, February 15, 1910, GLC, ML; Mosby to Bradley T. Johnson, December 20, 1897, Bradley T. Johnson Papers, PL, DU.
75. Mosby to Dr. A. Monteiro, June 9, 1894, San Francisco, Mosby to Judge Rueben Page, June 11, 1902, in Mitchell, ed., *Letters of John S. Mosby*, 69, 97; Mosby to (illegible), June 22, 1894, Mosby Scrapbooks 1, University of Virginia Library; George L. Christian, "Report of the UCV History Committee," 1907, MOC.
76. Mosby to Sam Chapman, June 4, 1907, February 15, 1910, Washington, D.C., GLC, ML.

9. *Black Memory and Progress of the Race*

1. *Washington Bee*, January 6, 1883; Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 219-221.
2. *People's Advocate* (Washington, D.C.), January 6, 1883, clipping in Leon Gardiner Collection, Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia; *Washington Bee*, January 6, 1883; Abraham Lincoln, "First Inaugural Address," March 4, 1861, in Basler, ed., *Collected Works*, vol. 4, 271.
3. *Washington Bee*, January 6, 1883.
4. *New York Globe*, January 6, 1883.
5. *Washington Bee*, January 6, 1883. I draw the term "felt history" from Robert Penn Warren, *The Legacy of the Civil War* (1961; rpt. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 4. Warren writes: "The Civil War is our only felt history—history lived in the national imagination."
6. On just what blacks faced in preserving their own sense of historical memory against the Lost Cause tradition, see Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Knopf, 1998), chs. 1-2.
7. Ralph Ellison, "The World and the Jug," 1963, in Ellison, *Shadow and Act* (New York: Random House, 1964), 124.
8. *CR*, July 26, 1883; *New York Globe*, January 10, February 3, 24, June 9, 1883; *Washington Bee*, June 10, 1883; Degler, *The Other South*, 276-300.
9. *New York Globe*, February 24, 1883.
10. *Washington Bee*, April 21, 1883. The drill team averaged some 40 men per team. On cities, democratic civic culture, and parades, see Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

11. *Washington Bee*, April 21, 1883.
12. *CR*, October 4, 1883. On the variety of state conventions, and especially the growing sentiment for political independence, see August Meier, *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 26-41, 69-71. Richard T. Greener opposed the national convention, declaring in May: "Conventions!—there never was one that did not disgrace the race by wranglings. We need some common sense, not conventions." See *New York Globe*, May 12, 1883.
13. Douglass, "Address to the People of the United States," Louisville, Ky., September 24, 1883, in Foner, ed., *Life and Writings*, vol. 4, 373-374, 377-380.
14. *Ibid.*, 384.
15. See speech by J. M. Gregory at the Douglass banquet, *Washington Bee*, January 13, 1883; "Civil Rights Laws," *New York Globe*, February 3, 1883. On the cases and Harlan's dissent, see Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*, 114-118.
16. Douglass, "Speech at the Civil Rights Mass Meeting," Lincoln Hall, Washington, D.C., October 22, 1883, in Foner, ed., *Life and Writings*, vol. 4, 393, 402; other papers quoted in *CR*, October 25, 1883. Also see Blight, *Frederick Douglass' Civil War*, 221-222.
17. *CR*, November 15, 1883.
18. *Ibid.*, June 21, November 8, December 13, 1883.
19. *Ibid.*, December 27, 1883; Joseph C. Price, "The Race Problem Stated," in Carter G. Woodson, ed., *Negro Orators and Their Orations*, (1925; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1969), 490. On Turner, see Stephen Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African American Religion in the South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992).
20. *CR*, March 18, June 3, 24, 1865.
21. *Ibid.*, January 1, 1880, June 14, 1883.
22. *Ibid.*, March 17, 29, 1881. See also Ira Berlin, et al., eds., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867*, 4 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982-94). But especially see the supplementary volume, Ira Berlin and Leslie S. Rowland, eds., *Families and Freedom: A Documentary History of African American Kinship in the Civil War Era* (New York: New Press, 1997).
23. *CR*, July 13, 1890. On the often highly publicized reunions of former slaves with white families, see Litwack, *Trouble in Mind*, 189-190. On the planning of these events as "Ex-Slave Reunion Days," such as one in Tyler, Tex., in 1893, organized by blacks, see *CR*, August 4, 1893.
24. Tourg e, "South as a Field for Fiction," 409-410; *CR*, April 25, 1878, September 29, 1887; Kelly Miller, "The Negro's Part in the Negro Problem," in *Race Adjustment: Essays on the Negro in America* (1908; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1968), 99.

25. Delia Garlic, interviewed in Montgomery, Ala., n.d., in Rawick, ed., *American Slave*, ser. 1, vol. 6 (Ala.), 129-132, and Jenny Proctor, interviewed in Tex., n.d., Rawick, ed., *American Slave*, ser. 1, vol. 5 (Tex.), 208-217, both in Ira Berlin, Marc Favreau, and Steven F. Miller, eds., *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation* (New York: New Press, 1998), 8-11, 30-31; Sarah Wooden Johnson, interviewed in Petersburg, Va., n.d., in Charles L. Perdue Jr., Thomas E. Barden, and Robert K. Phillips, eds., *Weevils in the Wheat: Interviews with Virginia Ex-Slaves* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), 163; Sarah Debro, interviewed in Durham, N.C., July 24, 1937, in Belinda Hurmence, ed., *My Folks Don't Want Me to Talk about Slavery* (Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, 1984), 61.
26. Richard Wright, *Twelve Million Black Voices: A Folk History of the Negro in the United States* (New York: Viking Press, 1941), 46-47.
27. "The Need of New Ideas and New Aims for a New Era," address to the graduating class of Storer College, Harpers Ferry, W.Va., May 30, 1885, in Alexander Crummell, *Africa and America: Addresses and Discourses* (1893; rpt. New York: Atheneum, 1969), iii, 13-15. The speech was originally published in the *AME Review* 2 (October 1885), 115-127. On Crummell see Wilson J. Moses, *Alexander Crummell: A Study of Civilization and Its Discontent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); and Alfred A. Moss, *The American Negro Academy: Voice of the Talented Tenth* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 19-34, 53-62. Crummell was the founder of the American Negro Academy, a group of black intellectuals that met occasionally in the 1890s and during the first decade of the new century to deliver formal papers. On the Crummell-Douglass encounter at Harpers Ferry, see Blight, "Quarrel Forgotten or a Revolution Remembered?" in Blight and Brooks D. Simpson, eds., *Union and Emancipation: Essays on Politics and Race in the Civil War Era* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1997), 160-166.
28. Crummell, "The Need of New Ideas and New Aims," 18.
29. Frederick Douglass, "Speech at the Thirty-Third Anniversary of the Jerry Rescue," 1884, Douglass Papers, LC, reel 16.
30. Frederick Douglass, "Thoughts and Recollections of the Antislavery Conflict," speech undated, but it is at least as late as the early 1880s; "Decoration Day," speech at Mt. Hope Cemetery, Rochester, N.Y., May 1883; and "Address Delivered on the 26th Anniversary of Abolition in the District of Columbia," April 16, 1888, Washington, D.C., all in Douglass Papers, LC, reel 15. On the role of white supremacy in the development of theories of black "degeneration," see Smith, *An Old Creed for the New South*, 103-196, 239-277, and on the permanence with which these ideas were held, Fredrickson, *Black Image in the White Mind*, 320-322.

31. See Moses, *Alexander Crummell*, 226-228; William S. McFeely, *Frederick Douglass*, (New York: Norton, 1991), 238-304; and Blight, *Frederick Douglass Civil War*, 189-245.
32. Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "The Dying Bondman," *AME Review* 1 (July 1884), 45; Rev. James M. Henderson, "The Negro in America," *AME Review* 4 (April 1888), 384; Pauline E. Hopkins, *Contending Forces: A Romance Illustrative of Negro Life North and South* (1900; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 13. On black women and the question of respectability, see Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993); and Cynthia Neverdon-Morton, *Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race, 1895-1925* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1989).
33. Crummell, "The Need of New Ideas and New Aims," 19, 13; Du Bois, *Souls*, 38; Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (New York: New American Library, 1987), 273.
34. "Address to the Negro Society of Virginia," November 12, 1914, in Louis R. Harlan and Raymond W. Smock, eds., *The Booker T. Washington Papers* (hereafter *BTW Papers*), 14 vols. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972-1980), 13, 170; "Address before Brooklyn Institute of Science," February 2, 1903, *BTW Papers*, vol. 7, 88-89; "Religious Life of the Negro," *North American Review*, July 1905, and *Boston Globe*, October 4, 1904, *BTW Papers*, vol. 8, 333, 84.
35. *CR*, April 22, 1880; Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (1901; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 8-10.
36. Henry McNeal Turner, *The Negro in All Ages: A Lecture Delivered in the Second Baptist Church of Savannah, Georgia, April 8, 1873* (Savannah, 1873), 29; *Nashville Christian Advocate*, October 8, 1888, in Edwin S. Redkey, ed., *Respect Black: The Writings and Speeches of Henry McNeal Turner* (New York: Arno Press, 1971), 74-75. On Turner's attachment to the doctrine of Providence, his speech at Davis's funeral, and Lee's response, see *CR*, January 2, 9, 1890, and Stephen Ward Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African American Religion in the South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 263-266. Discussion of slavery and the Confederacy as paradoxical or even as divine agents of black liberation was nothing new. Even William Still, in his massive history of the Underground Railroad in 1872, announced in his preface that "the slave auction block indirectly proved to be in some respects a very active agent in promoting travel on the UGRR, just as Jeff. Davis was an agent in helping to bring about the downfall of Slavery." See William Still, *Underground Railroad* (1872; rpt. New York: Arno Press, 1968), 2.
37. Turner, letter from Freetown, Sierra Leone, November 16, 1891, in Redkey, ed., *Respect Black*, 111.