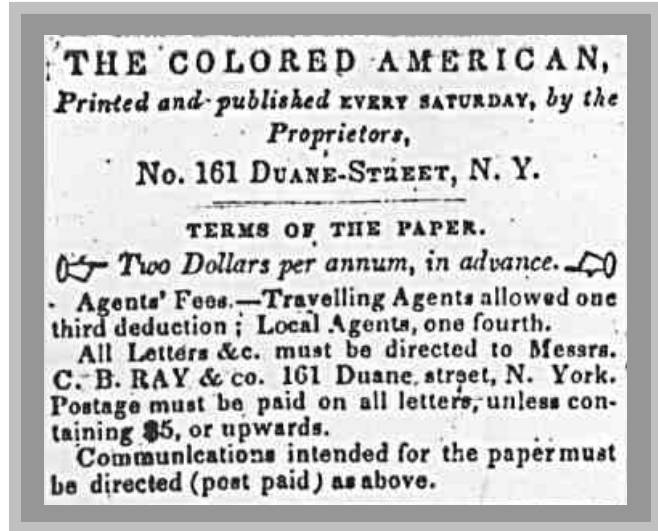




# One year of the *Colored American*

African American newspaper  
New York City

Selections from the year  
March 1837- March 1838



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Founded by two black clergymen and abolition activists, Charles Bennett Ray and Samuel E. Cornish, the weekly newspaper *Colored American* issued its first edition on March 4, 1837, joining the total of forty-plus antebellum African American newspapers. The thirty editorials and articles in this selection, published from March 1837 through March 1838, provide a microcosm of the antebellum black voice in print. Most of the editorials were written by Ray, while Cornish and the publisher Robert Sears submitted occasional pieces.

While reflecting the founders' goals of abolition, racial uplift, and civil rights, these pieces also reveal the divisions among free blacks concerning political and economic goals, modes of self-help and community action, farming and land ownership by free blacks, the appropriate name for black Americans, co-activism with white abolitionists, the stance of white Christian clergy on slavery, free blacks' responsibilities to fugitive slaves, emigration to Canada and Africa, and the growing sectional tensions in the country.

## Why We Should Have a Paper

*Colored American*, 4 March 1837

1. Because the colored people of these United States have to contend with all the multiplied ills of slavery, more cruel in its practice and unlimited in its duration than was ever before inflicted upon any people: and we are proscribed and pressed down by prejudice more wicked and fatal than even slavery itself. These evils not only pervade the length and breadth of the land, but they have their strong hold in the Church of Jesus Christ, where they abide and act them selves out, contrary to all its holy precepts. Colored men must do something, must make some effort to drive these “abominations of desolation” from the church and the world; they must establish and maintain the PRESS and through it, speak out in THUNDER TONES, until the nation repent and render to every man that which is just and equal—and until the church possess herself of the mind which was in Christ Jesus, and cease to oppress her poor brother, because God hath dyed him a darker hue.

2. Because our afflicted population in the free states, are scattered in handfulls over nearly 5000 towns and can only be reached by the Press—a public journal must therefore be sent down, at least weekly, to rouse them up. To call all their energies into action—and where they have been down-trodden, paralyzed and worn out, to create new energies for them, that such dry bones may live.

Such an organ can be furnished at little cost, so as to come within the reach of every man, and carry to him lessons of instruction on religion and morals, lessons on industry and economy—until our entire people, are of one heart and of one mind, in all the means of their salvation, both temporal and spiritual.

3. Because without such an organ we never can enlist the sympathy of the nation in our behalf, and in behalf of the slave; and until this be done, we shall have accomplished nothing not shall we have proved ourselves worthy to be free-men and to have our grievances redressed. Before the wise and good awake and consecrate themselves to our cause, we ourselves must have proclaimed our oppression and wrongs from the HOUSE-TOP. When did Greece and Poland win the sympathy of the world: after they had published their wrongs,

asserted their rights and sued for freedom at the hands of their oppressors. Then, and only then, were they worthy to be free-men, nor should we expect the *boon*, until we feel its importance and pray for its possession.—With us this is to be a great moral struggle, and let us brethren, be united in our efforts.

4. Because no class of men, however pious and benevolent can take our place in the great work of redeeming our character and removing our disabilities. They may identify themselves with us, and enter into our sympathies. Still it is ours to will and to do—both of which, we trust, are about to be done, and in the doing of which, we trust are about to be done, and in the doing of which, this journal *as an appropriate engine*, may exert a powerful agency. We propose to make it a journal of facts and of instruction. It will go our freighted with information for all—it will tell tales of woe, both in the church and out of the church; such as are calculated to make the heart to bleed and the ear to burn. It will bring to light many hidden things, which must be revealed and repented of, or this nation must perish.

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## Title of This Journal

*Colored American*, 4 March 1837

THE editor, aware of the diversity of opinion in reference to the title of the “Paper,” thinks it not amiss here to state some reasons for selecting this name, as more appropriate than any other—Many would gladly rob us of the endeared name, “AMERICANS,” a distinction more emphatically belonging to us, than five-sixths of this nation, and one that we will never yield. In complexion, in blood, and in nativity, we are decidedly more exclusively “American” than our white brethren; hence the propriety of the name of our paper, COLORED AMERICAN, and of identifying the name with all our institutions, in spite of our enemies, who would rob us of our nationality and reproach us as exoticks.

But why colored? some have said: why draw this cord of cast?—because the peculiarity of our circumstances require special instrumentalities and action,—we have in view, objects peculiar to ourselves, and in contradistinction from the mass.— How, then, shall we be known and our

interests presented in community, but by some distinct, specific name—and what appellation is so inoffensive, so acceptable as COLORED PEOPLE—COLORED AMERICANS.

We are written about, preached to, and prayed for, as *Negroes*, *Africans*, and *blacks*, all of which have been stereotyped, as names of reproach, and on that account, if no other, are unacceptable.

Let us and our friends unite, in baptizing the term “*Colored Americans*,” and henceforth let us be written of, preached of, and prayed for as such. It is the true term, and one which is above reproach.

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### New-York Petitions to the Legislature

*Colored American*, 11 March 1837

Three Petitions from the colored people of this City, addressed to the Legislature of this State, were last week forwarded to Albany [New York].

One—To *repeal* laws authorizing Slavery which are yet found on the Statute Book of this State; to which there were annexed the names of 876 petitioners—605 men—271 women. The petition was 25 feet long.

Another petition prayed for the passage of a law granting a *jury trial* to persons of color arrested on a claim of being fugitive slaves. To this petition there were annexed 761 names—489 males—272 females. It was 23 feet long.

The third petition was for an alteration of the Constitution of this State, so as to extend *the right of voting* to all the male citizens of the State, on the same terms, *without distinction of color*. To this petition there were the names of 620 men. It was 20 feet long.

To the last petition more than half the names—about 365, were in the signers’ own proper handwriting, and a large number of the signatures, by the ease and freedom with which they were written, furnished ground for inferences favorable to their general improvement in education, and in fitness to fill places of business, which we were not fully prepared to expect. . . .

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### A Mistaken Notion

*The Colored American*, 8 April 1837

We have frequently been told, by some of our

white friends, that we should teach our colored people to be content with their lot, and to make themselves useful in *their place*, evidently meaning that place to be one of inferior subserviency. This would be well enough, did we know that the decrees of God were, that the colored man should always be down trodden, and that the means which elevate others, should never have influence in his case.

But we do not believe such doctrine.—we believe the colored man should be taught to respect himself, and to use all the means of moral and intellectual improvement. And should he, by a virtuous and useful life, extra industry, provident expenditure of his earnings, and intellectual efforts, ascend the pinnacle of earthly glory, that would emphatically be his place.

It is a mistaken notion, that colored people should be taught nothing but abasement. They should be taught self-respect. Before our colored population can ever be elevated in the scale of being, they must be made to respect themselves. To feel as much their relations to God and to men and things, as do any other class of the community. Throw them under responsibilities, and then you will make a people of them.

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### The Importance of Agricultural Pursuits

*Colored American*, 15 April 1837

America, in many respects, is a glorious country. She rivals boasted England in the excellence of her agriculture. The whole length and breadth of her land might, by proper culture, be converted into one universal and fertile garden, pouring forth her riches in exuberant abundance. . . .

On the subject of agricultural pursuits, our people are too indifferent. It is a subject, however, of immense importance to colored interest, both individual and general, and cannot be treated of too frequently or earnestly, by journals which advocate our cause. If we would have more men among us in comfortable circumstances, we must turn our attention to farming. If we would have men, who might exert a powerful influence in different communities, we must have the sturdy cultivators of the soil. It is beyond a doubt, that the influence which our farmers exert is great, and extensive; and it is evident, that wherever there may be located

respectable, intelligent and wealthy colored agriculturists, there they will be respected, and soon rise into power and influence. . . .

There is too great a disposition among our men of capital [money available for investment], to congregate in large cities, where their influence is, in a measure, entirely lost. To be sure, the advantages accruing to some, from a city settlement, are infinitely greater than a country one; but in many cases the individual, and the community at large, would be vastly benefited by the residence of our capitalists in different parts of our country.

It is highly important therefore, I conceive, that this subject be duly, and attentively considered by our people generally. We must gain some influence in *our own* country. At present we have none. In our large cities, we are passed by as not at all incorporated in the body politic. Let us then resort to those measures, and pursue that course, which will be the most advantage to us, and will cause a colored American's influence to be weighed and valued.

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## Mistaken Notion — No. 2

*Colored American*, 15 April 1837

WE have frequently been told by our white brethren, *professors too*, that were they in our place, they would do as the pilgrim fathers did, leave their country. *They would go to Africa.*—We should never remain in a country where we could not enjoy ourselves, and where our way was blocked up. (By the way, this is very generous on the part of our brethren, first to trample on us, and then persuade us, it is too intolerable to be borne.) . . .

We always, as Christians, have tenderness and pity in our hearts, for the American people, who so cruelly rob us of ourselves, and of our rights. This is the only spirit we desire or mean to cherish, towards our white fellow-citizens. We are aware that it is far better to be the oppressed, than to be the oppressors, and that we have far less to envy, than to pity. . . .

The few of us that have qualifications for, and the means of leaving the country, should act the part of *base traitors* were we to do so, and leave behind the millions of our brethren, who are in bondage, and cannot go. We will never do it.—God hath placed beneath a colored skin a soul too

noble to be guilty of such conduct. We have suffered sore affliction, and we know how to suffer still. Our tribulation has worked in us patience, and patience experience, and experience hope—such as maketh not ashamed.

We will never swerve from our purposes—universal emancipation, and universal enfranchisement—should we die in the pursuit, we will die *virtuous martyrs* in a holy cause.

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## Dartmouth College

*Colored American*, 22 April 1837

[Remarks following the reprint of an article reporting the admission of a black student to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.]

Christians in New-York, contrast the liberal principles of *good old* DARTMOUTH, with the narrow, cruel practice of shutting out colored youth from schools and seminaries in this city. A short time ago, we called on the Pastor of one of our largest Presbyterian churches, *a minister beloved*, and with whom we have sat in Presbytery for ten years, and asked him if there were no school connected with his church, where we could send our two little boys, (whose morals are as well taken care of, as any others,) knowing, at the same time, that a number of his leading church members had united, and established just such a school as we desired for our children, and that it was taught by a minister, a member, and we think, an elder in the same church.

His reply was, you had better start a school of your own, where your colored children can be taught the higher branches, and not come in contact with the prejudices of the whites. We told the good brother—we call him good brother, because we really love him, notwithstanding his sin of prejudice, that *a separate school* did not meet our views. We should never engage in *separate schools nor separate churches*. They were more highly calculated to keep up prejudice against color, and Christian caste, than any thing else.—They so shackled the intellect of colored youth, that an education acquired under such circumstances, was, comparatively, of little advantage, our young men, when brought on the stage of life, from such institutions, could not draw on their resources, and consequently, were but *half men*. All did not avail, and we were left to

return home, in mortification, sorrow, and disappointment.

The subject, however, was too momentous to be abandoned. We called on the Rev. Teacher, and made application on behalf of our boys.— This good brother, after taking a week or more to consult his patrons, most of whom were officers and members in the Presbyterian church, called on us, with the painful intelligence, that our children could not be admitted. True, his conscience afterwards smote him, and he called and said, if we would go and consult Mr. N——, Mr. S——, and Mr. M——, and get their consent, he would take them. This, true dignity of character, and independence of feeling would not admit of. Consequently, we have three children whose united ages to amount to over thirty-two, out of suitable schools, and denied the privileges of the institutions of the Church, in this city, and we are this year, making preparation to leave an extensive field of usefulness, and go from the city, if not from the country, that we may educate our children, and hide them from that scorching, withering prejudice against their color, which is calculated to chain down their intellect, dry up the charity of heart, and make them haters of God and of man.

Be it known, therefore, in heaven and throughout the world, that we, a Presbyterian minister of seventeen years standing *in the city of N. York*, where we have thirty-eight Presbyterian churches, with regular settled pastors, and innumerable schools and seminaries established, and supported by the ministers and members of those churches, are denied the privilege of every institution, suited to the capacity and age of our children, on the account of their color.

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## The Peace of Community

*Colored American*, 29 April 1837

OUR northern communities will be subject to excitements, riots, and confusion, so long as northern citizens lend themselves, as “cats paws,” to the negro catchers of the South.

Many of our ablest jurists [judges] have given it as their opinion, that the law of Congress apprehending fugitives in the free States, is unconstitutional.— If this be the case, and we believe it is, why do our magistrates act under it at all? We

should think they would gladly keep out of such painful and trying investigations.

It cannot be that our civil authorities are under any obligations whatever, to become the tools of these remorseless soul hunters. All our efforts to catch their human prey is gratuitous.

Our beautiful Parks and consecrated Halls of Justice should not be defiled by these domestic traders. Their inhuman traffic should be confined to the contaminated regions of the South.

Our Municipal Authorities, our Judges, and Police Magistrates, should set their faces against this traffic in human bones, and human blood, and frown it down.

The good order of society, the laws of humanity, and all the precepts of the Bible, alike call on our citizens to banish this civilized barbarism from northern communities.

If the South cannot keep her HUMAN property at home, she has not right to disturb our peace by her frequent outrages upon humanity, within our borders. Freemen of the north, who have washed their hands from the guilt of slavery, should not so often be subjected to its shame.

Let public sentiment be as much arrayed against slave hunters, and their abettors, as it is against slavery itself.

Constables, Lawyers, and all others, who sell themselves to NEGRO CATCHERS, should be driven by public indignation, to the darkness of obscurity: and if they be seeking honor in their degraded calling, let them have it in retirement, and let posterity heap it upon them in mountain weights, and in midnight darkness.

If their object be money, and they get it, God will see that it perish with them. Like Judas, of old, many of them, with the wages of iniquity, the price of blood in their hands, will yet go out and hang themselves.

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## With Whom Are We in Union?

*Colored American*, 6 May 1837

For the last four or five years, certain classes of our northern citizens have been more than ordinarily interested in our GLORIOUS UNION! They have resisted the compunctions of conscience, the warning voice of Abolitionists, and the mandates of God, by crying out “the Union, the Union, the Union is in danger!!”

A Union with a vengeance to it!!!\* What is the Union worth if it must be maintained at the expense of the liberty of the north? A northern citizen cannot cross the Potomac [River], without subjecting himself to all the liabilities of “Lynch Law.” He knows not how soon he may be tared and feathered, rode upon a rail, or cowskinned. . . .

The facts are, our Southern Planters, in education and habits, are aristocrats of the worst kind. They have no respect whatever for northerners, and are determined to trample on them and their rights, whenever they come in contact with their own interests.

We are lynched and bullied out of every thing by them. The north can propose no measure, nor claim no right in our National Congress, that in the least clashes with, even an individual interest of the South, without subjecting herself to a tirade of threatenings and abuse.

It is time we had taken a stand on this subject, if we sleep much longer, we shall be shorn of the last remnants of our liberty, and reduced to a bondage far less tolerable than the British yoke.

But let the South annex Texas to the Union, and divide it into States, and our NATIONAL SENATE is immediately a SOUTHERN HOUSE OF DICTATION: and the *liberties of the north, or the blessed Union, one of the two, are gone.*

Our only hope for the existence of liberty, with the Union of the States, is in the yeomanry and labouring classes of the north. THEY MUST SPEAK OUT on this subject. They have trusted these matters to others long enough. Half their rights are already bartered away, by other hands.

Half the States of the Union are now closed against them. For no man who has not the means and the conscience, to purchase and drive slaves, can live in a slave State. If he do, he will be of no repute—not eligible to any place of profit or honor.

How much longer northern freemen will sleep over their dying liberties, and suffer demagogues, newspaper editors, and southern traders, and speculators, to rule the county, we cannot tell.

This much we know, however, that Southern aristocrats, and northern office seeking demagogues, should no longer dictate, the terms of our

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\*We admire the Union, and think our form of Government, the best upon earth.

It is the hypocritical cant of interested traders, and political demagogues, that we despise. [footnote in original]

Union, nor the measure of our prosperity. . . .

## Difficulties of Abolition

*Colored American*, 27 May 1837

The colored man who does not hold the person, the character and the doings, of American Abolitionists in the highest estimation, is unworthy the form he wears, and the standing he holds among the reputable of his race. . . .

Upon the Altar of conscience and of God, they have placed their lives, their property, and their sacred honor—willing to sink or swim, live or die, by their principles. We concede to them every thing which contitu[t]es purity of motive, and zeal, in prosecution. They are, emphatically, our best friends; we love and honor them as such, and we would commend them to the confidence and affection of our *brethren every where*. Yet, with the wise and good Reformers of every age, they have much to investigate, and to learn, before they are fully furnished to the work in which they are engaged. . . .

If we ever occupy a level, and we surely shall, with our white brethren, we must possess the same cardinal virtues, the same intrinsic worth which they possess. We would have our friends and brethren know, unless our moral and intellectual attainments *be measured by the same rule, and brought, to the same standard* by which our white brethren are tried and estimated, we cannot occupy the same place in society, nor be held in the same repute.

We want NO FAVOURS in this matter—we wish not to be carried forward with any of our imperfections. We feel ourselves under the same obligations, and capable of the same moral and intellectual responsibilities.

If we have not the same culture, appoint us not to the same posts. If we have not the same moral worth, repose not in us the same confidence. If we have not the same social capacities, bring us not into the same associations.

We hope we shall not be misunderstood, though we have written these paragraphs obscurely—let him that can *understand, read*. We hold Abolition doctrine, and well directed Abolition effort, as we do Bible doctrine, and Christian effort. To them all, we would say, “*God speed.*”

## They Glory in Their Shame

*Colored American*, 10 June 1837

“*Work for the Lawyers.*— Yesterday afternoon, a stout negro hailed an omnibus that was passing up Broadway, and attempted to get in. The driver turning his head, and observing the color of his new passenger, jumped up, in great fury, and flourished his whip high in the air, threatening the negro with a sound flogging if he did not instantly retire. The latter did not seem much disposed to follow such advice, but the whipcord coming in fearful contiguity with his ears, he reluctantly retired, threatening the driver with an action at law, Coachee shook his whip in defiance—the negro shook his head, and the bystanders shook their sides with laughter.”  
—[*New York Times*].

Did we not fear it would be casting pearl before swine, we would rebuke, severely, the whole posse of the above, the editor, the driver, and the merry-making bystanders.

Are these thoughtless men without human souls? or do they think there is no righteous God, before whom they are accountable? Men who can chronicle, with approbation, or laugh at such oppressive, BRUTAL DOINGS as the above, must be lost to the feeling of sympathy and humanity, without which, a man is A MERE ANIMAL, worse than dead while he lives.

We envy not the American, who at this enlightened day, can look with approbation on such scenes. Is it not enough, that we have dragged in chains, the poor colored man from his native home, and exuded from his *blood and bones*, millions of treasures, without making him any reward. Shall we be *so narrow-souled*, so FIENDLIKE, as after having ruined a fellow-being, to add insult, and to make merry over his sufferings?

Let such men know that GOD REIGNETH, and that at least, they are accumulating wrath for posterity. The day is coming when Jehovah will, they having been sufficiently warned, “laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh upon them.”

Our Omnibuses are licensed for the good of the public, and have no right to refuse, or eject, any decent citizen. We hope the insulted colored man will seek legal redress. . . .

The cause of the poor labouring man, *white or colored*, and the cause of the slave, is ONE and the SAME. The same aristocratic feeling—the same greediness of gain—the same disregard of their interest, and the same want of sympathy for

them, are ALIKE, trampling the white labourer and the slave, INTO THE VERY DUST: and should not the oppressed sympathize with each other? Judge ye.

## What Can We Do for the Poor Slave?

*Colored American*, 24 June 1837

Much, reader, every way; if you be a white man, you can join the Anti-Slavery Society, and LIVE DOWN prejudice; this will be a powerful engine in the cause of emancipation. If you be a colored man, you can give your mite, prudently demean yourself, and establish a character for Colored Americans.

You can educate your children; cultivate your own mind; be industrious and economical, and acquire property and influence. These will speak volumes in behalf of the liberty of the slave.

Let us but make our whole people as virtuous and intelligent, as any other part of the community, and we shall at one stroke, break off the whole body of oppression and slavery. Our difficulty is not so much in *color*, but in *condition*. It is only shameful American custom, that has connected color with degradation.

Could we but change place, to-morrow, with our white population, in respect to wealth and intelligence, we should ascend and be the uppermost people. They might envy, yet they would revere us.

In proof of this, place a colored man in a stage coach or rail road car, from this to Niagara, with one hundred passengers, and let him be more learned, intelligent, and refined than any other of the passengers, and he will be more respected, receive more politeness, and influence a larger circle among his fellow travellers, than any other individual among them.

So you see, brethren, what we can do for the poor slave, and for ourselves. Let us make a character, of *a high order and of a holy kind*, and the whole work is done. Men can as well despise themselves then, as to despise and underrate us.

To conclude, we can pray for the poor slave, and for his master; for our God is a prayer-hearing God.

## Serious Reflections

*Colored American*, 8 July 1837

“If ye love me, keep my Commandments,” is a divine injunction. But alas! how few are willing to be influenced by it! The precept “As ye would men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” is known to be neglected, abused and despised.

More than sixty years ago, the different states of this Confederacy [United States], combined in publishing that ever memorable document, the “Declaration of Independence,” in which all men are declared to be free and equal,—and they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to support the holy principle.

Yet, strange inconsistency!—after the lapse of sixty odd years of light and improvement, the same great Confederacy continue to hold more than two millions of slaves, in a bondage most cruel; and the few of their colored brethren, who have escaped the iron fetter, in mere nominal freedom, subject to prejudices which are at war with every principle of righteousness, and contrary to the genius of our Government. Tell it not in the wilds of Africa,—publish it not in despotic Europe, lest Mehomedan Turkey bring us into reproach, and Pagan Africa make us a hissing and a by-word.

When such reflections lead us to contemplate the Eternal as “a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation,” we tremble for our country.

How long will Americans,—the sons of the Pilgrims, turn a deaf ear to the cries of oppressed humanity, and to the warning voice of God?—How long will they keep up these invidious distinctions? Shall the creatures of God, who are but as grasshoppers in His sight, and whose duration is but for a moment—indulge in prejudices against their brethren, made in the same image of God, merely because they differ from themselves in complexion?

Shall the example and efforts of the philanthropists go unheeded, and these dark and damning features of our national policy continue to render our Fourth of July, *to all parties*, a more fit day of mourning than of rejoicing.

Fellow citizens, remember the dealing of God to other nations; national sins have always been followed by national calamities. . . .

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## First of August, 1834

*Colored American*, 29 July 1837

Thanks be to God, we are not wholly left without times and circumstances in which to rejoice. Our heavenly Master has mingled our bitters with many MEASURES of sweet. Some rays of light and glory deck our gloomy path, all-the-way-a-long. Mediatorial blessings and mercies BEAM OUT from heaven, to cheer our fainting hearts, and to rouse up our drooping spirits wherever we turn. . . .

The first of August, 1834, is a day that should be remembered, observed, and consecrated to gratitude and gladness, by every colored man and his friend. It is a RAIN-BOW of promise—a pledge that GOD has not forgotten our down-trodden race. 800,000 of Christ’s suffering poor were emancipated in his Britanic Majesty’s dominions [British colonies] at the first dawn of that auspicious morning. Is not this an earnest of what God will do for a whole people, that have sat in the darkness of oppression, and the regions of sorrow?

Does it not TRUMPET the approach of LIBERTY, the goddess of nations? Let tyrants tremble, for they cannot stay the comings of the Lord of Hosts. Freedom is Heaven’s boon, and by the Grace of God, Jesus Christ has tasted death, that he might give it to EVERY MAN. . . .

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## Our Friends Discourage Us

*Colored American*, 12 August 1837

The fatal practice of HALF qualifying, and then HALF paying a colored brother for his services, has long discouraged and well nigh ruined, our very best men.

We will here call in facts to their legitimate purpose, and illustrate the truth of our caption [article title] by them. We know a colored man who has a white friend, whom he esteems above all others, and considers the most efficient, in the work of righteousness, benevolence, and mercy. His friend often employs him to perform responsible duties, and difficult services. This colored brother, from his high esteem for his friend, NEVER FAILS to fulfil every duty and perfect every service, to the complete satisfaction of his employer. Nevertheless he is always paid,



(solely on account of his color) with three hundred per cent less, than would be offered to any white man.

This poor man seldom gets for his best service, more than pays him for the clothing worn out in that service. We mention these facts for no other reason, than to show our friends how they weaken our ambition, and paralyze our efforts, by illiberal views and scanty rewards. . . .

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### Increase of Prejudice

*Colored American*, 9 September 1837

The abolitionists are often accused, by their dishonest opponents, of having *increased* the prejudice of the “whites” against the “colored” citizens. This accusation is false, and we cannot believe that those who make it, are honest in doing so. The convictions of their *own minds* are against them. They know that with themselves, and with the community at large, prejudice against color has become a matter of CONSCIENCE. Men cannot now practice it with impunity, but five years ago they did so, without any difficulty or compunctions. In this ONE FACT, abolitionists have gained *ninety nine points* in every hundred.

The facts are these; ten years ago, our colored population were looked upon as *goods and chattels*, and every consideration conferred upon them, was done as A FAVOR, and our best men took to themselves *merit* for every instance of the kind. In their contracted, narrow views and feelings, and in their false education, they thought themselves, *on the account of their color*, infinitely elevated above their colored brethren, and therefore could treat them with a *little kindness*, without the danger of being thought on an equality with them. And they had kept the colored man’s mind *so dark* on the subject of his rights, that *he himself*, did not presume to make any claims on the ground of equity, of law, and of religion. No wonder that there was sometimes, under these circumstances, a little stooping on the part of our oppressors, towards the oppressed and *deeply injured* colored man; for who will not sometimes play with his dog?

But now the SCALE IS TURNED. Abolitionists have thrown off the veil. They have shown that God created all men EQUAL, and of the same blood, and that in equity and law, they

are on a LEVEL. (We speak of them naturally.) Of all this, the colored man is *fully convinced*; hence he stands ERECT, with his eyes uplifted to heaven, and acknowledges NO SUPERIOR but GOD. Here is the RUB, and here is the *increased prejudice*. The colored man asks nothing as a FAVOR, nor will he have it as such. He demands it as a RIGHT, and he is bound in conscience, under God, to have it as such.

This is a *bitter pill* for his oppressors, who have always arrogated to themselves superiority, on the account of their complexion. They cannot drink down the acrid drug at once, yet the CONSCIENCE which abolitionists, under God, have created, is pressing it down by degrees. Its application will be *sure and effectual*, for the antidote is taken from God’s moral ethics. . . .

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### The Enlargement of Our Paper

*Colored American*, 16 September 1837

Will not our brethren come forward at once, and give us their united aid in our enterprise? We long to have our subscription list full, that we may enlarge the paper. It will not in its present size contain one half the matter we wish to throw out weekly to our communities, white and colored. It is very desirable that our brethren, especially the young, should keep pace with the occurrences and transactions of the *civilized world*, and it is impossible to do it, until our sheet is greatly enlarged. We can *barely* crowd in the domestic affairs of the community in which we live, with its present size.

We beg the brethren in all the Cities and Towns in the free States, to hold meetings and Resolve on giving three thousand subscribers by the first of January next. We will then immediately double the size of our sheet, and make its price, permanently, two dollars per annum. We will further guarantee the paper to be doubly interesting. It shall contain a complete summary of all the Foreign and Domestic News of the world, with a large portion of those grand principles, upon which the Salvation of our race is predicated.

This is an easy thing for our brethren to do. Only meet together in your own communities and determine to have our paper what it OUGHT TO BE, and the work is done.

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## Right of Suffrage

*Colored American*, 23 September 1837

An effort is now being made, and we believe with a commendable zeal, by Messrs.\* [Charles] Ray and [Philip] Bell, the proprietor and agent of this paper, to get up suitable petitions to the next legislature of this State, praying for the enfranchisement of every colored citizen. This, brethren, is an effort worthy of us. The right of suffrage is ours by BIRTH RIGHT, and though it be for a time ILLEGALLY denied us, it should never be yielded up as lost, so long as *God is righteous, and man accountable*.

Our white brethren cannot much longer, sustain their present position, in reference to the rights of colored citizens. They will soon be tired of the place of tyrants. That love of liberty which is daily and hourly growing in their hearts, will soon act itself out, *universally and gloriously*. It remains only for us to be virtuous and intelligent—to make ourselves worthy, and we shall possess the desired boon.

Our inducements to virtue, to industry, to enterprize and to all that is intelligent and holy, are *abundantly over and above* those possessed by our fathers. *If we be and abound not MORE ABUNDANTLY* than they, in untiring efforts and noble aspirations, we shall be unworthy the parents who gave us birth, the age in which we live, and the nation to which we belong. To live content, brethren, in a Republican State, without the right of suffrage, is pusillanimously to be MERE ANIMALS, AND NOT MEN. It is to EFFACE from ourselves the image of God, and disgrace the character of man.

We hope, readers, no means will be unoccupied, no expense nor efforts spared, in pushing legal measures in the cause of human rights to a glorious consummation. Every brother should willingly, AND AT ONCE, give his one or five dollars, as may be found necessary, in sending our agents to every part of the state. The brethren and their friends, in all the remote towns, must be visited. They are alive to the work, and only need to be called into action. Righteousness, reason, the genius of our government, and what is infinitely more still, God, are all on our side. We

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\**Mssrs*: English abbreviation for *Misters*, from the French *messieurs* (sirs).

have but to ask and receive. . . .

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## Colored Orphan Asylum

*Colored American*, 28 October 1837

*October 23d.*—This morning, with our little daughter, we visited the Asylum of Colored Orphans, founded lately in this city by a few benevolent Christian ladies. It is a cottage building in 12th street, between the 5th and 6th Avenues, formerly the residence of the late, lamented Dr. McLeod. The building, though small, is conveniently arranged and comfortable; capable of accommodating at least 50 children. The yard is roomy and retired—containing perhaps a quarter of an acre, and in every way suited to the innocent gambols of the DEAR PARENTLESS CHILDREN. . . .

. . . All of us who are in health and prosperity can spare something from our earnings, *if it be ever so trifling*, towards the maintenance of such a benevolent and praiseworthy institution.

We recommend the Directress to set apart a day, at least once a month, on which the colored citizens, those who are able, may visit the Asylum and carry such contributions in money, clothing, and provisions, as may be convenient, and on which females who have leisure, may go and mend and make up garments for the children. . . .

It is to be hoped that the good ladies whom GOD has blessed with friends and plenty, in all the towns and cities of our happy country where colored orphans are denied the benefits of their Institutions, will follow the example of the good ladies of New York.

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## Education of Youth

*Colored American*, 11 November 1837

THE time has come in which Education should occupy a larger place in the minds of Colored Americans, than it has heretofore done. Our views have been too limited, in respect to its importance and its kind. Many have been wholly careless whether they availed themselves or not, of the advantages held out by the schools of our land, and others, who have felt the importance of the cultivation of themselves and children, have entertained very mistaken views respecting the course of study to be pursued—hence the

deficiency of our schools, in number and in quality.

To read, write, and cypher, with a mere smattering of geography and grammar, have bounded our ambition, and limited our education. We have never sought after those sciences and arts, calculated to expand the mind, increase the ideas, govern the reasoning powers, and mature the judgment. The laws of mind and matter have been wholly unknown and neglected by us. If we have been busied in them both, our knowledge of them has been rather instinctive, than the scientific.

Brethren, the rising generations of our people must be led into a broader field of education.—They must no longer be left to “*measure themselves by themselves, and to compare themselves among themselves.*” All that mind and philosophy can procure for our children, should be industriously sought after.

Before our young men can rank in intelligence with their paler faced brethren, they must acquaint themselves with natural and moral philosophy, with ancient and modern history, with chemistry, mineralogy, geology, botany, natural history, church history, physiology, rhetoric, astronomy, analogy, composition,—mathematics in all its branches, and with the ancient and modern languages, and the arts generally.

All these sciences must be learned in their theory, and by suitable instruments and apparatus, reduced to their practical application. Hence the necessity of procuring the admission of our sons to the learned institutions of the land, or of providing for them suitable establishments among ourselves—well furnished with competent teachers, and all necessary apparatus, of demonstration and application.

We think it unnecessary to tell parents generally, at this enlightened age, that it is their duty to educate their sons more thoroughly. A republican government cannot be maintained, without an educated people. But it may not be amiss to urge upon our people, the necessity of making more sacrifices to accomplish this desirable end. Colored Americans have as yet sacrificed nothing for the purposes of education. They have not even denied themselves the luxuries of life, that they might educate their sons. We have seen white families confine themselves to the occupancy of a single room, and to the most

homely fare, in order to keep a son at a college or medical school, or at the study of the law.

We must, brethren, go and do likewise, or we never can attain to our proper level in society.—Let us consecrate to the purposes of education, a family box, and throw into it every spare shilling, until it is full of monies, sacred to the cultivation of intellect, and to the general diffusion of knowledge among us. . . .

## Emigration of Colored People to Canada

*Colored American*, 18 November 1837

. . . In most cases, where there has been any disposition to emigrate, the attention of the persons, has most invariably been turned to Canada; nothing short of entirely leaving the States would answer.

It appears to me, that this selection has been wrong; especially is it now, at these times of disaffection there. The attention of colored persons to Canada, as the place of their destination, has been because of the equal laws existing there. . . .

Some of the disadvantages of Canada, which more than counteract the equal laws are, the few internal improvements, and the consequent lack of labor. Wages are also much less than in the States, tho’ provisions, some kinds, are lower, not sufficiently, however, to make up for the reduction of wages.

Some persons go to Canada, because land is cheap, only just as cheap as in the States. Others to get rid of prejudice; in this they are defeated. Prejudice is just as strong there as here, and rather worse. Canadians borrow their prejudice, and do not know how to use it, and they consequently abuse it, and it bears more heavy upon the colored man. The people of Canada are afraid of emancipation, and dread it; they think because the fugitive escapes there for a refuge, if emancipation take place, the current will set them all northerly, and empty them into Canada, and they will be overrun with colored people. . . .

In my tour I visited two colored farmers, in the western part of this State [Ontario]. One of them owned two hundred acres of land and upwards, in one farm, in a beautiful part of the State, and another smaller, some fifteen miles distant, cultivated by his son. The old gentleman lives among an intelligent farming community; he nor his children know very little about prejudice; and

suffer nothing on account of it. He is consulted in town matters, and church matters, and they consult each other. If we would run away from prejudice, it is not necessary that we should run out of the U. States; but scatter thousands of us all over the country, and buy up the soil, and become cultivators of it. In this way, better than in any other, can we get rid of prejudice. . . .

The Territory of Wisconsin, in my view, holds out greater inducements to colored men to emigrate to, than any spot on earth. It is an immense tract of country, west of the State of Michigan, one inch of which has not yet been sold, nor has it been brought into the market for sale. Yet it is fast being peopled, by honest and industrious farmers. It has an excellent soil for producing, and a climate not colder, if as cold as Oneida County, of this State [New York]. . . .

I travelled on the canal, a short distance, some weeks since, with men and their families bound to Wisconsin. The men had been there, selected their plots of ground, got in their crop, prepared for their families, returned for them, and were then going back, to take up their permanent residence.

Men of color, with a very small amount of money, can do the same, and in a few years be independent men—for who is so independent as the farmer. They may go ahead of their families, 14 months, select their plot of ground, clear up some, get in their crop, build their log house, and return with their families, and arrive there sufficiently early in the season, to gather in their crops, and will not want ten dollars in money when they arrive. . . .

Another advantage in emigrating to Wisconsin is, it is yet a territory; there is, therefore, no state constitution, nor corrupt statute laws. If colored men emigrate there, and become settlers and citizens, when it shall be proposed to make a state of it, and to draw up a constitution for it, they will have a right to a voice, in saying what shall be the character of that instrument, and of those laws by which themselves, and the citizens generally, are to be governed; and by their influence, they may have them just and equal. . . .

I hope our readers among our people, (and I would more of our people, were readers of our paper,) will give this subject a little attention, especially before they determine to settle in Canada.

Brethren, it is time we were up and doing, and

awake to every good thing, to every enterprise, interest and improvement.



## The Destitute Poor

*Colored American*, 25 November 1837

The approaching winter, will, in all human probability, bring with it, the most unparalleled distress and misery, among the poorer classes of our citizens. From the embarrassed situation into which our city has been plunged, thousands of the honest, and industrious, have been thrown out of their wonted employments, and are now left without any means, or prospects of subsistence. Many with large rising, and helpless families, are in utter destitution, shut out from all hopes of sustenance, save in that beggarly pittance which they may obtain at the doors of the charitable and benevolent. The destitute poor alone can know, and feel the extent of the misery that awaits them. All, who will devote a few of their unoccupied hours in visiting the hovels of wretchedness, which may be found in every street and alley of our city, will be convinced that an exaggerated picture of the poor man's misery cannot be drawn.

There must, of necessity, be a vast number of our own people, who are totally unprepared to meet the severity and exigencies of the coming season. Those therefore, among us, who by the good providence of God, are placed in more favorable circumstances, should esteem it an imperative duty to search out these objects of charity and administer to their relief; a relief, how little soever it may be, will be truly welcome to starving and perishing families, nor will it be unremembered in the great day of account, by him who is alike the God of the rich and the poor man.



## The Domestic Slave Trade

*Colored American*, 25 November 1837

CORNISH [Maine],—The following article is taken from a late number of the *New York Sun*, and the Editor anxiously asks, “CAN THIS BE TRUE?” as if he had never heard before of such inhuman conduct. We answer, “YES,” and we have FACTS in our possession, in relation to the traffic in American Citizens, which are ten-fold worse than the African slave trade itself. Let it be

remem-bered, that all the particulars, in this case, come directly from the very scene of these atrocities. . . .

Now here is a *free* MAN, born and brought up in one of the British Provinces of America, put in prison by some ruthless white ruffian; and unless he has some *white witness* at hand to prove this freedom, HE MUST BE SOLD INTO SLAVERY, *to pay for the expenses of his arrest!* Is not his acting on inhuman and worse than heathen principles? Shall it not be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the Judgment, than for slaveholding in America? We caution colored seamen, especially, against going among those soul-catchers and man-stealers. When will that day arrive, when we shall be spared the *painful* necessity of calling the attention of the public, to such inhuman and disgraceful conduct, in a land of Bibles and Missionaries; and in a country, too, professedly the freest, most enlightened, and Christian, of any other on the face of our globe.

Yours, &c.

R. S. [Robert Sears, publisher]

*Can this be true?* . . . Yes, indeed, it is too true. The Marshall of the District of Columbia advertises in the *Globe*, that a colored man, of a dark copper color, 23 years of age, 5 feet 10 1-2 inches high, calling himself William Richardson, was committed to the prison of Washington city as a runaway. He claims to be free, and says he was born and raised in St. John, New Brunswick [Canada]: that Mr. Warren Hathaway, farmer, on Deer Island, near Eastport [Maine], knows him; that he lived with and worked for Mr. Hathaway a long time; that he followed the sea, and came to Wash. in the ship *Romulus*, from Liverpool [England]. The Marshall gives notice to his owner to prove him, &c., *or he will be sold to pay his prison expenses!* proclaim it, ye presses of the *enchained* nations of Europe, and do our matchless nation of *freemen* the common justice of exhibiting to the world the *beauty*, the *equality*, the *justice* which govern at the centre of our transcendent republic!

### The Church Must Awake!

*Colored American*, 2 December 1837

. . . It is one of the strangest and most unac-

countable circumstances, that the majority of the American Ministers should be so much in favor of Peace, Temperance, and Missionary efforts, while they seem indifferent to the welfare of their own enslaved, oppressed, and degraded countrymen? And notwithstanding all the LIGHT that has hitherto been shed upon the subject of Slavery, both minister and people are almost entirely *shut up*. A deathly silence pervades most of the pulpits in our land. May GOD speedily open the eyes of *all*, to see the enormities of this system among us, and to free ourselves from all participation in its guilt; for I believe, that a JUST GOD will not much longer *suffer* a Nation, like ours, blessed with the light of Revelation, *to legalize* MURDER, Sabbath breaking, Intemperance and Slaveholding!—as well as “violated faith with the RED MAN of the forest.” Would to God that the *whole* Church were awake; for well do they know, that the sin of SLAVERY is swelling the ocean of divine wrath, which threatens to deluge our whole land with judgments.

I have conversed with many of our Ministers on this subject. They say, “they know it to be wrong;” but their faith is so weak, and their ideas of God’s mercy so vague and indefinite, that they cannot perceive the gathering storm.—Our churches are actually manufacturing Infidels by the wholesale at *home*, while the “price of blood” is put in the Treasury of God, to send out agents to convert the *distant heathen*, and abolish slavery and caste in foreign lands. And shall not God visit us for such HYPOCRISY, in offering for his service the price of bodies and souls of many of his own precious and redeemed family?

R. S. [Robert Sears, publisher]

### Editorial Correspondence

*Colored American*, 2 December 1837

*Philadelphia*, Nov. 27th, 1837.

MR. RAY,—*Dear Sir*,—We closed our Communication last week, by stating the improving condition of the young people of Philadelphia.—We have since been enabled to make further inquiry on the subject, and the result of our investigation is most satisfactory. There is an organized regular system of operations, based upon the surest foundation, going on in this city, for the mental and moral cultivation of our people.

We visited, Monday evening last, the “PHILADELPHIA LIBRARY FOR COLORED PEOPLE,” founded by Mr. Hinton, and some others of our patriotic brethren, some two or three years ago. They are incorporated, and have in their cases nearly 1000 vols., neatly labelled and arranged. Their room is a spacious one, well located, and neatly furnished. The institution present an appearance of respectability and mental enterprise, *worthy the young men of Philadelphia*, and calculated to encourage the heart and strengthen the hand of every philanthropist.

The young men of this city, through the instrumentality of librarians and other kindred institutions are developing powers, and bringing out principles, which must and will give them an influence and control in community. They spend two and three evenings, weekly, in debating moral and literary questions, highly calculated to expand the mind and improve the heart. Their room is ordinarily attended by large and improving audiences of the young of both sexes, and by many of the aged and patriotic, *without distinction of color*. . . .

We have visited the several colored churches of this city and liberties. They are neat, well arranged, and well attended buildings; their congregations are generally full and very orderly. We have one thing, however, to lament on this subject—that is, the number of them. There are too many colored churches in Philadelphia. our brethren are *too much divided* in their church capacity. There is an efficient church-going population, sufficient to support not more than two-thirds the number of organized churches, and any multiplication beyond that number, is rendering inefficient and weak, the whole body of religious institutions in Philadelphia. We were *sorry* to find that there were three colored Wesley churches, instead of one. In UNION, brethren, there is STRENGTH.

The Public Schools of this city, for our youth, are not equal to the same class of schools in New York, nor do we think it possible they ever can be, until they are furnished with well-qualified and well-paid *colored teachers*. Yet the philanthropists of Philadelphia are doing more to extend the education of our youth, than the friends of the cause are doing in New York. They have founded a high-school, and furnished a classic teacher in Cherry-street, where, I believe, our youth may, at

a moderate expense, prepare for college. In our goodly city, we have no such institution. . . .

I am, your’s &c.,

THE EDITOR [Samuel E. Cornish]

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## Our Second Year

*Colored American*, 13 January 1838

“Witherto the Lord hath helped us.” One year ago, we commenced this Journal, with less than one hundred subscribers, and the prejudices of three fourths of the community against us. One in ten, of our people, did not then see the utility of the enterprize. But thanks to a good Providence, the importance and usefulness of our paper, have weekly and hourly, so magnified in the estimation of our brethren and friends, as to make it the Organ of communication, for our people, in half the states of the union. It is now taken by at least eighteen hundred of them, and weekly read by more than ten thousand.

In fine, our press is elevating the moral standard, refining the taste, concentrating the means, directing the energies and giving tone to the character of Colored Americans, throughout our extended country. From eastern Maine to the Mississippi and through all the western vallies, its moral lessons are read and its civil and social policies adopted, and practised. Our heart is encouraged and our hands strengthened, in view of what has been accomplished in one short year. Colored citizens through the instrumentality of our paper, have been brought to see, *eye to eye*, and to consecrate their means their moral and intellectual powers to the cause of humanity and of human rights. Our brethren throughout the land, in all the important and noble interests, for which we live, and for which our fathers lived, and bled, and died, feel that they are ONE. This has been in part, brought about and will be perfected, by our paper.

That our views, in many respects, have been imperfect and our efforts deficient we readily acknowledge—we lay no claims to infallibility. But that we have succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations, we as readily affirm, and are strengthened in the conviction that the PRESS, *under God*, is the most efficient, and only means, by which the moral, intellectual and civil elevation of our people, in this country, can be

effected. . . .

We are aware of the deficiency of our editorial Thanks be to God, this spirit is evinced in this city.—More than thirty of our brethren, well experienced in the affairs and interests of our people, and veterans in the cause of human rights, have come forward to our aid, and resolved that the “Colored American,” shall live. We now have at our right hand, many of our best men, who are willing to give their time, their efforts and their money, to this humane and holy cause. If in one year, single handed and alone, we have accomplished so much, what may not be expected in a few years, with such an augmented host at our side.

Brethren, we take courage and shall go forward, the Lord helping us, *drawing out and enlisting* all the elements we can command, in the moral elevation and civil enfranchisement, of our oppressed and proscribed people.

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### *The Colonization Herald*

*Colored American*, 27 January 1838

We have received the first number [issue] of the above paper. It is published by the Penn. Colonization Society, and takes for its motto, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”—What consummate hypocrisy!!! This principle, carried out, AT ONCE does away the necessity of Colonization [emigration of African Americans to Africa]. Brethren, but be TRUE to your [biblical] text, and Colonization may go to the winds. Only treat colored men as you would have them treat you, were your circumstances changed with theirs, and righteousness and THE BIBLE for it, you will have no need of a Colonization Society. No need of sending colored citizens to the pestilential shores of Africa, to starve and to die there, in order that you may respect and *treat them* as christian brethren, and you will then have learned to regard men, irrespective of color.

Seriously, from our heart, and before God, we wish the colonization humbug annihilated from the land. It has been the great despoiler of the colored man’s interest and happiness in this country for twenty years, as well as to Africa, as far as American effort and influence go in that country, the BANE of every thing great and holy.

The time was, when men might act under colonization influence, with comparative blamelessness; but that time has past, and God has poured so much light on the subject, as to leave no room for any other, than wilful ignorance. . . .

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### *The Importance of Our Paper*

*Colored American*, 3 February 1838

Every day we see more and more the importance of a well conducted, extensively circulated paper, published by US, and devoted to the interests of the colored people of this country. We live in eventful times.—The multiplied, various and varying means of persecution and oppression, resorted to by our enemies in this country, require, *on our part*, the WISDOM of the serpent, and the PURITY of the dove.

Without a paper—an organ of communication through which we may keep up an interchange of views, and maintain a unity of feeling and effort, how could we possibly sustain ourselves? If ever a people needed the advantage of all the moral and mental resources they possessed, we are that people. If we have prudence, if we have enterprise, if we have moral worth, ALL, should be brought to bear upon our interests, and be employed in the improvement of our condition, and the elevation of our character.

If any of us have felt more, and thought more, consequently know more than others, let us feel that our greater experience and more mature judgment, are common property, and through the columns of our paper, give the advantage of them to THE BODY of our oppressed people. . . .

There is not a legislative body, a national or a state convention, nor is there an ecclesiastical association who meet to legislate for the nation or for the church, that do not devise some means, enact some laws, or throw out some publications, having for their object the oppression of our colored population, or that tend, in some measure, to their greater degradation. Under these circumstances, this state of cruel and burning domination, do we not need a breathing place? Verily, we do—and where shall we find it, but through OUR PRESS. Through what other organ can our prayers and our remonstrances be heard? Through what other medium can we exhort each other to patience and forbearance—to love and to good

works. Truly we have friends and papers among our white brethren, who sympathize with us and advocate our cause, but they cannot begin to feel, as WE FEEL. The physician may know the nature of a malady, but the patient ONLY feels the racking pain, and the burning fever.

Through OUR PRESS, we do weekly throw out from two to three thousand copies, and are heard by fifty or a hundred thousand readers, (for all our leading articles are extensively copied by a large exchange list, of the best papers in the land) and if need be, in *any* important emergency, we can throw out *any* number of extra copies, and send them where we please. In a word, OUR PRESS is our great NATIONAL SHIELD, to ward off persecution and save an injured people from greater afflictions. It is the MIGHTY ENGINE, under God, of our elevation and improvement—MORALLY, MENTALLY AND CIVILLY. Brethren, support THE PRESS.

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### Self-Respect

*Colored American*, 10 February 1838

It is right that *all communities* and *all men* should be careful not to think more highly of themselves, than they ought to think—but rather esteem *others*, better than themselves. Yet it is the privilege and duty of every man to respect himself. Without self-respect, we shall never respect others: nor shall we ever discharge those sacred duties which we owe to ourselves, and to our fellow men.

Self-respect is the first spring of virtue—the first incentive of the soul, to virtuous action, to benevolent and noble doings. Until you teach a nation or a community to *respect themselves*, you can never teach them to sustain their rightful positions in society, to discharge their individual duties, nor to elevate themselves in the scale of being. . . .

The grand cause of failure, in most of the *very feeble* efforts which have been made to elevate the character of colored men in this country, has been the impolitic and unrighteous course taken by their mistaken friends, for that purpose. Instead of teaching them that MERIT, and not COLOR, makes the man—and that if they would get the same intelligence, practice the same virtues, and

be adorned in the same graces, they would be as OTHER MEN—we have taught them, that if they would go to Liberia, they might be as respectable, *and much respected* as other people; or if they would be virtuous and good, they might be esteemed as worthy and respectable servants, &c. &c. . . .

Our highest ambition is, that the way be opened to us, as it is to other men, and that we be respected, irrespective of our complexion, according to our intelligence and virtue. We ask no *favours*, but claim what is just and equal, as a reward to virtuous conduct.

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### Our Brethren in Philadelphia

*Colored American*, 15 March 1838

The good sense of some [of] our brethren in Philadelphia [delegates to the national black convention], seems to have forsaken them. They are quarrelling about trifles while their enemies are robbing them of diamonds and of gold. Nothing can be more ridiculous nor ludicrous, than their contentions about NAMES—if they quarrel it should be about THINGS.

But what caps the climax is, that while these sages are frightened half to death, at the idea of being called COLORED their FRIENDS and their FOES, in the contention, in the Assembly and in the Senate; through the pulpit and the press, call them nothing but NEGROES, NEGROES, THE NEGROES of Pennsylvania.

To us, and we should think to any one of good sense, laboring under such persecutions as the colored citizens [of] Philadelphia are, to be called “Colored Americans” would be like a ray of *Heavenly* light, shining amidst the blackness of darkness.

Oppressed Americans! *who are they?* nonsense brethren!! You are THE COLORED AMERICANS. The Indians are RED AMERICANS, and the white people are WHITE AMERICANS and *you are as good as they, and they are no better than you*—God made all of the same blood. Do not fool away any more of your time nor fill up any more of your papers, with SUCH NONSENSE.