CRUSADER FOR FREEDOM
FREDERICK DOUGLASS—ABOLITIONIST
1817-1865

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August 9, 1969
TO MY

BELOVED PARENTS

MICHAEL SR. AND CORINNE SANDRA

FOR WITHOUT THEIR UNEAStING

EFFORTS AND ENCOURAGEMENTS,

MY COLLEGE EDUCATION WOULD

ONLY HAVE BEEN A DREAM.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. THE RELUCTANT CAPTIVE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LAUNCHING THE NEGRO SHIP OF STATE</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CHARTING THE COURSE TOWARD RACIAL FREEDOM</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. HUMANITARIAN GROWING PAINS</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. INTO THE EYE OF A HURRICANE</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. TO ENDURE IS TO OVERCOME</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
purpose of holding potatoes, not for warming one's body. For his year round use, Frederick was issued two coarse linen shirts and two pairs of trousers. Adding to Frederick's grief and misery was Aunt Katy, the cook, who received some type of sadistic joy by depriving Frederick of food on various occasions.19 "The very taste of white bread was unknown to him. He was fascinated by the white biscuits he saw carried to Colonel Lloyd's table. He vowed that he too would have some to eat every morning when he was a man."20

During the summer months, scarcely a day passed by on Colonel Lloyd's plantation without a little "nigger" boy being whipped for snatching fruit from the plush gardens of the mansion.21 Frederick was wise enough to never give a negative answer when questioned about the treatment he was receiving from his master. He had already seen many others sold to Georgia slavetraders for the "wrong" answers. In 1855, Douglass said that he had been just as well aware of the unjust, unnatural and murderous character of slavery when he was nine as he was then in 1855.22

Young Frederick was subjected to several overseers, but one Mr. Austin Gore held a special place in his memory. "Gore was cruel enough to inflict the severest punishment, artful

19 Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass: op. cit., p. 22.
20 Holland, op. cit., p. 11.
21 Douglass, op. cit., p. 16.
22 Holland, op. cit., p. 13.
enough to descend to the lowest trickery, and obdurate enough to be insensible to the voice of a reproving conscience."23 Frederick recalled the day that a slave friend, Denby, was shot and killed for not obeying a command by Mr. Gore.24 Because the master had power of life and death over his slaves, the crime was not submitted to judicial investigation. There were many other examples to which Frederick was subjected to, and it increased his seemingly insatiable appetite for personal freedom.

One of his few pleasant memories, on the plantation in Maryland, was Captain Thomas Auld's daughter, Lucretia, who, on various occasions, would reward little Freddie with a slice of bread, sometimes buttered, for singing under her window.

Frederick Douglass, in his narrative on manhood, wrote that it was probably the intercession of Lucretia that saved the boyish spirit of Frederick from being crushed into submission to his lot, and gave him the key to the prison door.25 Frederick said that it was from Lucretia that he received the first kindness he had ever experienced from one of a complexion different from his own.26

23 Frederick Douglass-Narrative, op. cit., p. 22; Douglass-Life and Times, op. cit., p. 56.
24 Ibid., p. 57.
25 Holland, loc. cit.
26 Toner, op. cit., p. 16. As cited in New York Herald, September 6, 1866.
Although unable to ascertain the meaning of the word discrimination, Frederick was capable of realizing that the position of his race was far from enviable. He despised the white boys' joke of it being worth "one-half cent to kill a nigger and the other half-cent to bury one."

In the spring of 1825, Frederick was sent to Baltimore to work for Hugh Auld, a distant relative of Captain Anthony and brother to Thomas.27 "Going to live at Baltimore laid the foundation and opened the gateway, to all his subsequent prosperity."28 Had Frederick not been hired out during his youth, there is great probability that his abolitionist career would never have begun. Freedom of movement was the key that enabled Frederick to unlock the door of knowledge and discover the treasures of abolitionism. His mind ordinarily would not have developed the necessary skills to successfully plead for the cause. However, the hiring system of the upper South allowed Frederick to learn about the so-called "white-men's" world and become gradually initiated into the mysteries of slavery. In striking contrast, had the young Negro been born in the deep South, there can be little doubt that he would have remained an unknown to the eyes and ears of the abolitionists. Treatment of slaves was different in those areas, and the free time allotted to individuals was of a very limited nature. In this way, it would be very difficult for a "smart nigger" to

27Douglass, op. cit., p. 27.
28Foner, op. cit., p. 17. As cited in Douglass' Narrative p. 31.
plan an escape or instigate trouble among slaves by informative gatherings. If it can be said that Frederick had an advantage in slavery, it surely was the fact that he was born and raised in the regions of the "Upper South."

During the seven years he worked in Baltimore, Frederick received his first taste of education from Mrs. Hugh Auld. He overheard her reading some passages from the Bible and promptly entreated her to teach him the alphabet so he too could read.

Mrs. Auld was so overjoyed at Frederick's amazing progress that she informed her husband of the accomplishment. This brought an abrupt end to Frederick's lessons. Auld knew only too well that educating Frederick or any Negro would diminish and soon destroy the slaveholders' power over them. Auld said angrily:

a nigger should know nothing but to obey his master—to do as he is told to do. Learning would spoil the best nigger in the world. If that nigger learns to read, there would be no keeping him. It would forever unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master.29

Upon hearing those words from Auld, he (Frederick) realized his freedom could be attained through education. "This prohibition served only to check the instruction from Mrs. Auld, but had no effect on the ambition. The more obstacles he met with, the stronger became his determination to overcome them."30 Mrs. Auld actually became more violent in her

29 Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, op. cit., p. 23.

opposition to Frederick learning to read than her husband. This did not deter Frederick from seeking ways to obtain an education. Douglass emphasized:

What Auld most dreaded, that I most desired. What he most loved, that I most hated. That which to him was a great evil, to be carefully shunned, was to me a great good, to be diligently sought; and the argument which he so warmly urged against my learning to read, only served to inspire me with a desire and determination to learn.31

Frederick's ability to make friends with many white boys enabled him to enrich his educational background. He gave them the pennies for bread and in return the boys gave him the bread of knowledge.32

With fifty cents that he earned blacking boots, Frederick purchased a copy of the popular book, "The Columbian Orator." It depicted the horrors of slavery and contained many important passages related to human rights.33 "Young Douglass' soul was in sympathetic resonance with the great truth of human brotherhood and equality, and needed only the psychological suggestion which the "Columbian Orator" supplied."34 Through reading and rereading the various passages, Frederick came to fully realize and understand the debaseness of the institution of

31 Douglass, loc. cit.
33 Frederick Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass op. cit., pp. 75-76; My Bondage and My Freedom, p. 157; Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass, p. 39.
slavery. He saw the needs of his people by being exposed to the wealth of others, and began formulating ideas to improve their lot. He soon learned the meanings of many words and the inspiration he received from others would instill within him the desire to free all who were in chains. "The more he read, the more he was led to abhor and detest his enslavers." Frederick could not ascertain why he should be a slave, but was confident, that the term "abolitionists" could be a guide, because he had listened to various slaveholders degrading them. He found his answer in the columns of the Baltimore American. Its pages were literally plastered with petitions that were sent to Congress pleading for the "abolishment" of slavery. Frederick stated that upon reading the Baltimore paper, "the silver trumpet of freedom had roused his soul to eternal wakefulness." Baltimore proved highly profitable for Frederick, not monetarily, but educationally. Through various jobs in the shipyards of Baltimore, he took advantage of every opportunity to watch the carpenters place letters on the timber for use in ship building. He, in turn, would copy the letters and with some added assistance from Master Thomas' Copybook, he succeeded in learning how to write. Frederick's life of comparative

35 Douglass, op. cit., p. 40.
37 Douglass, op. cit., p. 41.
38 Ibid., p. 43.
leisure in Baltimore ended abruptly when Miss Lucretia and her father, Captain Anthony, died. In March of 1832, he was placed into the possession of Thomas Auld, who lived at St. Michaels, approximately thirty miles from Baltimore.

Trouble apparently clung to young Frederick. Once after assisting in several Sunday school sessions, a band of ruffians broke one up eagerly with a stern warning to him, "As for you, there is the great possibility of holding as many steel balls in your body as Nat Turner had." Fearing for the young slave's life, and determined to crush his spirit, Auld hired his "trouble-maker" out to the infamous slave-breaker, Edward Covey, on January 1, 1833.

Covey thrived on dampening the vigorous spirits of Negroes and scarcely a day passed during the first six months of his stay here, that Frederick was not whipped and overworked. "He was seldom free from a sore back and after being overworked and underfed, Covey succeeded in breaking him in body, soul and spirit." (In his narrative) Douglass recalled how he imagined himself to be in hell with slavery. He pleaded with his God for deliverance; and when no help came, questioned the existence of the Creator. On an extremely tormenting day in August, driven by exhaustion and desperation, Frederick found the strength to seize and soundly thrash Covey. Frederick was

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40Douglass, op. cit., p. 63.
fortunate that he lived for taking such action against a white man. Because Covey feared that his reputation would be endangered, Douglass' life was spared. The infamous slave breaker who could not control a Negro youth would surely be questioned by slaveholders, and his professional reputation would be jeopardized. Rather than provoke another incident, Covey abandoned use of the whip for the remaining four months of Frederick's term. The episode rejuvenated the very soul of the young slave, and Douglass referred to the incident as the turning point in his career.

The triumph had placed the realization of his manhood and projected freedom into his future plans. He resolved that he was no longer a slave in fact, even though he remained one in form at that present time.41

On January 1, 1834, Douglass was hired out to Mr. Freeland, whose methods sharply contrasted with those of Covey. The slaves of Freeland were given enough food and allowed the necessary time to consume it. Frederick spent two gratifying years with Freeland and considered him the best master he ever had, excluding himself.42 After an exposed and unsuccessful attempt to escape down the Chesapeake to freedom, Douglass, as the acknowledged leader, was placed in chains in the Talbot County jail.43

41Foner, op. cit., p. 20.
42Douglass, op. cit., p. 82.
43Benjamin Quarles, Frederick Douglass (New York: Atheneum Company, 1943) p. 4.
The illustrious career of Douglass might have ended in this Maryland jail had Thomas Auld not intervened and sent Frederick off to Baltimore. Combining kindness with the hope of revamping his motives of escape, Auld promised freedom to Douglass at twenty-five, depending upon his subsequent behavior.

While in Baltimore, Frederick was hired out to William Gardner, a shipbuilder, became his apprentice, and developed the skills of a caulker. Fair wages were difficult to earn because the white mechanics and southern laborers refused to work with Negroes. To avoid competition, they demanded the expulsion of all Negroes, slave and free. Strong-willed and determined, Frederick stayed on despite an inhuman beating, accompanied by the chants of "kill the nigger" ringing sharply in his ear drums. Frederick was promptly taken into the care of Hugh Auld, and became proficient in the use of mallets and iron for caulking, while working in his shipyard. At the end of a year, Douglass commanded the wages that were usually given to the most experienced caulkers.

Auld permitted Frederick to make his own contracts but demanded most of the seven dollars that he earned weekly. The spirit within Frederick moved restlessly because he surmised that ownership over his person was the only link which enabled

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44 Childs, op. cit., p. 171.

45 Pomer, op. cit., p. 21; Douglass, Life and Times, p. 183; Holland, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

46 Douglass, Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass, op. cit., p. 96.
Auld to demand money from him. Even after being allowed to keep most of his earnings, after May, 1838, the mind of the slave vowed that his present condition was soon to be extinguished forever. Because of his educational endeavors, he met with some learned Negroes who invited Frederick to become a member of the East Baltimore Improvement Society. His voice resounded in several gatherings, and his skills of oratory increased rapidly. Here he met Anna Murray, his future wife. Escaping from bondage was now paramount in the mind of Frederick, and he began preparation for it with the assistance of Anna's savings of nine years. During the summer of 1838, Frederick became involved in an argument with Auld. For this he was punished by losing the privilege of continued self-employment. But even this action did not motivate Douglass into a more active and continued to work diligently for two weeks while carefully preparing for his escape. Douglass remembered how Auld out of "sheer generosity" offered him twenty-five cents and advised him to spend it wisely. That was the last time Auld would ever retain any salary that belonged to him, for on September 2, 1838, with the help of the "protection paper" and an uniform from a friendly Negro sailor, he made his escape without the slightest interruption of any kind. By securing passage on a train he traveled from Baltimore through Philadelphia, and arrived in New

47 Toner, loc. cit.

*A paper listing the physical features of its owner—acknowledging him as a free American sailor and allowing freedom of movement about the country.
City early in the morning of September 4, 1838.48

Frederick's joy of freedom was soon offset by the gnawings of hunger, and he was fortunate enough to be directed to the home of David Ruggles.49 The weary slave would never forget the kindness, vigilance and perseverance offered to him by this estate Negro gentleman. As secretary of the New York Vigilance Committee, Ruggles had aided more than six hundred slaves during his five year affiliation with the organization.50

Douglass was hidden for a few days, during which time Anna was sent for, and they were married by the Reverend James C. Pennington, just twelve days after Frederick had made good his escape. The name Bailey appeared on the marriage certificate because Frederick had changed it to such upon arriving in New York. With little more than their own personal happiness and a five dollar bill from Mr. Ruggles, they journeyed by steamboat to Newport. A short stagecoach ride then took them to New Bedford. Owing to insufficient funds, their baggage was held over until their benefactor, Mr. Nathan Johnson, canceled the debt.51 Later in life as a freedman, Douglass remarked that the entire Johnson family proved themselves quite worthy of the name Abolitionists. It was in New Bedford, that Frederick officially

48Quarles, op. cit., p. 5.


50North Star, April 14, 1848.

51Douglass, op. cit., p. 111.
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Douglass, as was suggested to him by Johnson. Douglass said that Johnson had been reading Sir Walter Scott's "Lady of the Lake" and was so pleased with its great character that he wished him to bear the name. 52

Douglass was quite disappointed at the general appearance of New Bedford because there was no noticeable antislavery activity. Frederick had expected the North to be ablaze with antislavery fervor, but soon compared New Bedford and other towns to the non-slaveholding population of the South. His first opportunity for employment appeared on his third day in New Bedford and consisted of stowing a load of oil on a sloop. "It was now, dirty, and hard work for him, but he went at it with a glad heart and a willing hand." 53 He was driven onward by his own personal freedom and knowledge that no one would be standing by to deprive him of his wages. But such was the prejudice against the Negro in New Bedford, that Frederick was unable to secure employment as a caulker. Using a borrowed wooden horse and saw, from Johnson, he soon found plenty of work, none of which was too hard or dirty. He sawed wood, shoveled coal, swept chimneys and rolled oil casks for three years before becoming known to the antislavery world. 54 Anna played an


53 Frederick Douglass, Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass, op. cit., p. 115.

54 Foner, op. cit., p. 24; Douglass, Ibid., p. 116; Life and Times, op. cit., p. 213.
extremely important role in this stage of his life because without her kindness, understanding and devout cooperation, Frederick might not have risen above his meager surroundings. While bearing and caring for their first two children in 1839 and 1840, Anna worked as a house servant. The ardent love they held for each other and their children enabled the family to remain close together. Frederick read constantly to increase what little formal education he had. He often nailed a newspaper to the post near his bellows and scanned the columns while straining the muscles in his body, to pump the bellows. Douglass attended many meetings of the New Bedford colored and realized that the education of the majority of those in attendance far surpassed those whom he had been familiar with in Baltimore. Frederick was encouraged by the Negro people working together, and he profited from his experiences with them.

In Baltimore, Douglass had been a member of the Negro Sharp Street Methodist Church, but found that he could not assert himself in the local white Methodist Church in New Bedford owing to the pigmentation of his skin. Angered, but not discouraged, he joined the Zion Methodists, and with a Negro following, became a local preacher.

55Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, op. cit. p. 213; Foner, op. cit., p. 24.
56Liberator, August 26, 1839. p. 2.
57National Anti-Slavery Standard, December 23, 1841; Foner, op. cit., p. 25; Quarles, op. cit., p. 11.
While in New Bedford, Frederick subscribed to the *Liberator* and almost immediately began to idolize its editor, William Lloyd Garrison. He told how the paper became his meat and drink and its attacks upon the slaveholders and "their" system sent thrills of joy through his soul such as he had never felt before.  

Douglass now began to attend as many local Negro Antislavery Meetings as time would permit.

The *Liberator* was the first paper to record Frederick Douglass’ position against "the peculiar institution." The article appeared in the March 29, 1839 issue, and stated that a certain Negro called Douglass, spoke out in favor of resolutions condemning slavery at the Christian Church Meeting of March 12, 1839.

Douglass remarked that Garrison was an able orator and deserved the support and confidence of all interested in abolishing slavery. As chairman of a meeting, June 30, 1841, Douglass chastized the Maryland Colonization Society for "threatening to remove the free colored people from that state by coercive means."

The group at the New Bedford meeting advocated resistance. The meeting also formulated a resolution condemning those responsible for the attack on the person of David Ruggles, who, while resisting segregation on board a steamship out of New Bedford, was made an object of scorn.

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58 Douglass, *Narrative of Life of Frederick Douglass*, *op. cit.*, p. 117.


On August 9, 1841, Douglass attended the annual meeting of the Bristol Antislavery Society, held in New Bedford. Here Douglass first heard Garrison speak. Frederick made a few remarks and Garrison made mention of "one especially talented Negro and former slave," whose address held interest in the large and attentive audience.

Frederick decided to attend the Nantucket Convention and on August 12, 1841, in the midst of white and Negro abolitionists, he was given the opportunity to express his thoughts.

The desire to speak was strong in Douglass and urged on by William C. Coffin, he approached the platform. Coffin, an abolitionist, had heard Frederick speak during Negro meetings in New Bedford. His presentation was well received. Garrison picked up the opportunity and used it to illustrate the fact that a slave was still a human being. The audience responded and thunderous roars echoed throughout the crowded Athenaeum Hall as they praised the young Negro man who stood before them. Frederick, was definitely a man to them, and they vowed never to allow him to be taken back into bondage. A correspondent of the National Anti-Slavery Standard commented on the effect that Douglass drew from that gathering:

One recently from the house of bondage spoke with great power. Flinty hearts were pierced, and cold ones melted by his eloquence. Our best pleaders...

61 Ibid., August 20, 1841.
62 Ibid., p. 2.
63 Douglass, loc. cit.
for the slave held their breath for fear of interrupting him. Mr. Garrison said his [Douglass'] speech would have done honor to Patrick Henry. In the evening, ... at the last meeting, he was again called forward, and was listened to by a multitude with mingled emotions of admiration, pity and honor.64

Garrison, later declared that he would never forget that first speech of Douglass. He had never hated slavery so intensely as at that moment. His perception of the enormous outrage which was inflicted by it; on the godlike nature of its victims, was rendered clearer than ever. At the adjournment of the meeting, Frederick was approached by John A. Collins, agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, who entreated him to become an agent for the society. Astonished, flattered, and somewhat doubtful of his own ability, Douglass hesitatingly accepted to tour for three months.65 "He now colored agent was restless not only because he left his family but because he now exposed himself to discovery and arrest.66 When approached later in life as to his motives for accepting, Douglass felt that his story and usefulness would surely terminate at the end of that tour.67 This marked one of the few times that Douglass seemed to have lacked confidence in his ability to sway an audience. The following week Frederick left his job at the foundry, and as an agent, began active work to abolish slavery in the nation.68

64 National Anti-Slavery Standard, August 26, 1841 p. 2.
66 Holland, op. cit., p. 59.
67 Ibid., p. 217; Holland, loc. cit.
68 Graham, op. cit., p. 102.
On Tuesday, August 17, 1841, at Millbury, in the County of Worcester, Massachusetts, Douglass spoke, along with Garrison and Wendell Phillips. This was the first step in an Abolitionist career which was to lead him to the opposite shores of the Atlantic in a time sequence spanning more than half a century.

69 Liberator, August 27, 1841. p. 2.
CHAPTER II

LAUNCHING THE NEGRO SHIP OF STATE

"We don't allow no niggers in here, Get up from that seat nigger, don't you know you ain't allowed to sit among white people, How did that nig' ever escape from the South?" Such were the remarks which Frederick endured after he joined forces with the Garrisonian abolitionists. Frederick realized that he must be the spokesman for the entire black race, turn the other cheek often, and endure many thousands of sharp and bitter remarks. If by speech and actions, Douglass could make the people listen and understand the horrors of slavery, then the black humanitarian had at least taken a step along the road to freedom of the Negro race.

Judgment day for young Frederick began that summer evening of 1841 in Nantucket, Rhode Island, when he addressed his first white audience. He was sonorously introduced by John A. Collins as "one who had recently graduated from the peculiar institution with his diploma written on his back." Frederick remembered that first speech as the only one he ever made of which he could not remember a single connected sentence. He related: "It was with the utmost difficulty that I could stand

erect, and command and articulate two words without hesitation and stammering." His humility could not filter out the fiery eloquence of his capacious soul, "burning with the indignant and unfading memories of the outrages and deep injustice which slavery had inflicted upon his brethren in bonds." Garrison was moved by Frederick's fervor and he resounded that even "Patrick Henry had never made a more eloquent speech in the cause of liberty than the one which just came from the lips of Douglass, a hunted fugitive."4

During his first year as an employed abolitionist of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, Douglass's soul and spirit soared to the greatest heights and the deepest cravasses, but his inner strength enabled him to continue his service. Later in life, Frederick modestly announced that his only actual formal education was received during his early years as a Garrisonian Abolitionist, from the leading antislavery institution of Massachusetts Abolition University, with Garrison acting as president. For approximately ten years, Douglass would adhere to the ideals, edicts and commitments of Garrison and his brand of abolitionism. It was not only in 1851 that Frederick's opinions changed regarding the position of the Garrisonians, for during his early years as an abolitionist he


4Ibid., p. 505.
had questioned the Garrisonian philosophy of non-voting and constitutional hatred.

Frederick was advised to tell only his story during the early months of his new career but that in itself could not satisfy his real reasons for joining the abolitionist cause. Douglass was advised by other Garrisonians such as John Collins and George Foster, to simply relate the story of slavery as he experienced it; and the veteran abolitionists would take care of the philosophy.5 Through discontent with mere narration, Frederick began to read, ponder and finally assume the role of a denunciator of the chattel system. His inborn gift of enunciation enabled him to lash out frequently and effectively at those who contended that slavery was a necessary part of their social order. Feared that the purpose of Frederick's slave image would be destroyed, Garrison reminded Frederick that he should confine his comments for the most part, to a subtle narrative. Frederick had a profound and sincere respect for Garrison. As editor of the Liberator, Garrison had overcome powerful opposition from such New York abolitionists as Gerrit Smith and Arthur and Lewis Tappan and warranted such admiration. In the 1840's Garrison emerged as the undisputed leader of the American Anti-Slavery Society. It was this respect for Garrison, and only that which prevented Douglass from at least attempting an early separation from the abolitionist leader.6

5Douglass, on cit., p. 361.
6See Columns of Liberator, 1840; and Benjamin Quarles, Frederick Douglass. (New York: Atheneum, 1948), p. 16-17 citing The True History of the Late Division in the American Anti-Slavery Society, second Annual Report of the Massachusetts Abolition Society. Part II.
Although Frederick's thoughts were primarily centered around unshackling his race, he soon became accustomed to the complete Garrisonian framework which included, "Anti-clericalism, anti-sabbatarianism, pacifism and no-human governmentism." The true Garrisonians "eschewed the ballot and became in politics, as the religion, a 'come-outer,' holding that all sects and parties were corrupted by slavery."  

Frederick, the "rookie" abolitionist, labored earnestly and justified the compliments received from many members of the American Anti-Slavery Society. However, it was impossible for the newcomer to digest all the viewpoints that were championed by the veteran abolitionists. Frederick continually stressed his insatiable desire to exterminate the slave system. To abolish the system was easy. Just free the black man and thereby end the system. Thus, the task was simple; and the abolitionist should point towards that final goal. The added attractions or by-products of the abolitionist movement, as noted by many white abolitionists, were strange to the former slave. To him the slave problem loomed easy. However, Frederick's sincerity and composure while in public, overshadowed his most blatant shortcomings. James R. Lowell commented that when Frederick stood before an audience, "the very look and bearing of this colored orator was an irresistible logic against the oppression of his race."  

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7Quarles, p. 19.

8Ibid., p. 18.

9Quarles, citing the Pennsylvania Freeman, February 13, 1845, p. 19.
During his first abolitionist engagements, Frederick was accompanied by John Collins, who helped orient him into the movement. The Liberator summarizing Frederick's appearance at Abington, Massachusetts, stated that "this Negro gave a fresh impulse to anti-slavery." A few weeks later, the Liberator commented that the pleasant articulation of Frederick's voice woed the crowds, and "Georgetown, Massachusetts, was only one of the many places where large and attentive audiences gathered." The Worcester, Massachusetts North Division Society Convention even adopted a resolution welcoming Frederick and extending to him the "right hand of fellowship." Delegates were present from various towns of the county in spite of poor weather. The audience was very attentive and they expressed their approval with applause. Combining the situation with brilliant efforts of Frederick Douglass, "The occasion was one of deep interest and solemnity."

Frederick also attended and spoke at various meetings at Hingham in November and early December of 1841, and was considered by the editor of the Hingham Patriot "to rank along with Spartacus."

As Douglass stood there in manly attitude with erect form, and glistening eye, and deep toned voice telling us about his secretly devised plans to effect his

10 Liberator, September 14, 1841.
11 Ibid., October 15, 1841.
12 Ibid., October 29, 1841; Phillip Foner, The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, Vol. I, p. 47.
13 Liberator, October 29, 1841.
14 Ibid., December 3, 1841.
escape from bondage, we could not help thinking of
Spartacus the Gladiator • • • A man of his shrewdness
and his power both physically and intellectually,
must be poor stuff thought we, to make a slave of.
He is very fluent and his choice of language is
appropriate • • • He is forcible, keen and very
sarcastic; and considering the poor advantages he
must have had as a slave, he is certainly a remarka-
ble man.\textsuperscript{15}

Slavery was definitely the burden of the Negro in the
South, but Frederick also took time to relate some of the
atrocities that were inflicted upon former slaves now living in
New England. On one occasion in Plymouth, Massachusetts,
Frederick discussed the prejudice that existed on railroad
cars as well as some hypocritical clergymen of the Methodist
Church. The blacks were required to stand away from God’s
alter until all the whites had partaken of communion. Frederick
added, “the minister then took a long breath, and exclaimed—
come-up-colored friends, come-up—for don’t you know that God
is no respecter of persons.”\textsuperscript{16} Frederick told his audience
that because of that particular incident, he would never walk
through the doors of that church again.

Upon conclusion of the Massachusetts tour, Frederick,
along with Parker Pillsbury, James Monroe and others, crossed
into Rhode Island, spending two weeks there in the middle of
December, 1841. They were successful in defeating the pro-
posed constitution of Thomas W. Dorr, who with his "Dorrites,”

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{Liberator,} 100: cit.

\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Ibid.,} December 10, 1841; \textit{National Anti-Slavery Standard,}
December 23, 1841; \textit{Foner, op. cit.}, pp. 103-105.
and attempted to restrict suffrage to white persons.\(^{17}\) Frederick was influential and his effectiveness can be ascertained from the article written by N. P. Rogers, editor of the Concord Herald of Freedom.

"... Douglass was up when we arrived. This is an extraordinary man. He was cut for a hero. In a rising for Liberty he would have been a Toussaint or a Hamilton. He has the heart to conceive, the head to contrive, and the hand to execute. A commanding person over six feet, ... and of most manly proportions. His head would strike a phrenologist amid a sea of them in Exeter Hall, and his voice would ring like a trumpet in the field. Let the South congratulate herself that he is a fugitive. It would not have been safe for her if he had remained about the plantation a year or two longer ... As a speaker he has few equals. It is not declamation—but oratory, power of debate. He has wit, arguments, sarcasm, pathos—all that first-rate men show in their master efforts. His voice is highly melodious and rich. His enunciation is quite elegant and yet he has been but two or three years out in the trade of business."\(^{18}\)

Franklin Hall in Providence, Rhode Island, had enjoyed few speakers more impressive than Douglass.

Douglass and his associates were denounced as an entourage of outsiders by the urban labor groups of Rhode Island, but were welcomed by the propertied conservatives to whom white male suffrage was a fearful portent.\(^{19}\)

Woonsocket Falls and North Scituate were only two of the


\(^{18}\) Liberator, September 17, 24, October 15, 29, November 12, 19, December 9, 14, 1841; January 14, 1842; Herald of Freedom as cited in Liberator, December 10, 1841; Foner, op. cit., p. 43; Holland, op. cit., pp. 65-64; Washington, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

\(^{19}\) Quarles, op. cit., p. 21.
many towns in the state of Rhode Island where Douglass held meetings. The cries of "down with nigger voting" were numerous, but the abolitionists stood courageous and were successful in denouncing the 'white clause' of the so-called "People's constitution." During the various meetings, Douglass and the other abolitionists raised over $1,000 for the cause. Frederick stressed that what the abolitionists actually wanted and labored to obtain was "a constitution free from the narrow, selfish, and senseless limitations of the word white."21

The popularity of Douglass mushroomed during his speeches in Rhode Island; and while attending the annual Rhode Island State Anti-Slavery Convention, he was placed on the committee that went before the suffrage convention to protest against the hastily "white-clause, and, "help canvass the ballots of the new constitution."22

The "Dorrites," more commonly branded as the pseudo-champions of free suffrage, were defeated with the passage of the constitution in 1843. The statement relating to the franchise was explicit. "All male citizens were enfranchised who paid a yearly tax of not less than one dollar.23


22National Anti-Slavery Standard, loc. cit; Foner, loc. cit.

23Quarles, loc. cit.
Frederick returned to Boston, realizing that he had moved only a fraction of an inch on the explored, but as yet untested, sea of antislavery. While moving, Frederick did broaden his own antislavery spectrum in that he had discussed the progress of the cause instead of limiting himself entirely to sheer narrative. The colored orator made his presence known in the closing months of 1841, by slashing the "peculiar institution," amidst roars from large Massachusetts gatherings. Douglass reminded the audiences of the discrimination of railroads toward Negroes, as he was not allowed to sit in any car even after paying full fare. He went further by stating he could not even find work as a caulker or sit in equality in the house of the Creator. Douglass retorted:

You degrade us and then ask why we are degraded—you shut our mouths, and then ask why we don't speak—you close your colleges and seminaries against us, and then ask why we don't know more."

Although similar to Garrison in many ways, Frederick was yet different, in that he was a living example of the slave system and could express in vivid, burning terms, the pent-up indignation of the American Negro. While in Boston, Douglass mingled and spoke with the elite of seacoast abolitionism; and attended the three day proceedings of the Massachusetts Society. There he recalled the kindness received from Dr. Henry Bowditch of the Liberty Party, in Boston, and further remarked that Bowditch was the "first of his color who ever treated him as if

\[24\text{Liberator, November 12, 26, December 3, 1841; National Anti-Slavery Standard, December 23, 1841.}\]
He were a man." This pleasant gesture on Bowditch's part may have lingered with Douglass, and enabled him to make some politically oriented decisions before his split with the Garrisonian Camp in ten short years.

Frederick's early speeches were void of any startling originality, but he more than compensated for that flaw by injecting into the veins of the abolitionist movement, new vitality that invigorated the stagnating Garrisonian movement. During the years of organization and expansion, the Garrisonians had set a pattern that appeared regularly in all speeches. The Garrisonian lecturer would certainly make a plea for the slave and wind up condemning the constitution and all politicians and churches which would support it. While attending the annual meeting in Massachusetts in late January, 1844, Frederick gained valuable experiences, as the society was given the "opportunity to pass on the conduct of the executive committee, and recommend new lines of action, publicize achievements... rejoice over past progress and pledge new and larger contributions... for the future." Thus Douglass was given some valuable insights as to the inner workings of the organization to which he had become a permanent fixture.

The first lecture Douglass delivered at the Massachusetts state-wide convention clearly illustrated that he would not only...

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25 Holland, op. cit., p. 66.

be an example, but would act as a catalyst in an attempt to aid his black brethren. Frederick agreed with many of the proposed resolutions at that meeting which "condemned the churches as combinations of thieves, adulterers and pirates... branding them as outcasts by all who would exculpate themselves from the guilt of slaveholding."27 A new fire spread throughout the soul of Frederick and the "severe criticism he heard leveled by the Garrisonians against the church, weaned him away from his religious bent and led him to go through life examining religious institutions from the outside."28

Frederick was masterful in enrapturing an audience through the subtle use of invectives and periodic injections of humor. He would bring shouts of happiness from his audiences while remedying ill by leveling the 'slavebreaker' Covey and culminating it with the satisfaction he received from throwing the astonished man into the mud. Frederick's range was so complete that he could rouse his audiences to boisterous laughter and then quickly bring tears to their eyes by recounting the destitution and extreme harshness of the accursed bondage that enveloped his brethren. Frederick was truly a competent abolitionist because his abilities and experiences enabled him to sell the merchandise that abolition offered.

27Liberator, January 21, 1842.

28Evidence from the biographers of Douglass demonstrates clearly that had Frederick not joined the Garrisonians, he would have become a successful Negro Minister, owing to his scholarly oratory. See Quarles, Holland, Washington references to early life.
In early February, 1842, the "Fugitive from slavery" spoke to a large audience in Boston's Faneuil Hall. The meeting, a one-night stand, had been called to agitate for the immediate abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. Although the building had a shabby and barnlike appearance, relieved only by portraits of George Washington and Peter Faneuil, its historic associations with liberty made it quite the appropriate choice. Frederick used his keen sense of humor that evening and combined it with a "devastating array of mimicry through voice inflection and held his audience in a state of utter amazement and awareness." He berated the manner in which the slaveholding clergymen would exhort the slaves to obey their masters.

They, the ministers, could take a text and say this—Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. And ... they would explain it to mean, slaveholders, do unto slaveholders what you would have them do unto you, and then looking impudently up into the slave's gallery ... looking high up to the poor colored drivers and the rest, and spreading his hands gracefully abroad, he says (mimicking), and you too, my friends, have souls of infinite value—souls that will labor diligently to make your calling and election sure. Oh, receive into your souls these words of the holy apostle-Servants, be obedient to your masters.

(Shouts of laughter and applause).

Oh, consider the wonderful goodness of God! Look at your hard, horny hands, your strong muscular frames, and see how mercifully he has adapted you to the duties you are to fulfill! (Continued laughter and applause) while to your masters, who have slender...
frames, delicate fingers, he has given brilliant intellects, that they may do the thinking while you do the working. It has been said here at the North, that the slaves have the gospel preached to them. But you will see what sort of gospel it is—a gospel, which more than chains or whips, or thumbscrews, it gives perpetuity to this horrible system. (Shouts of applause).

To add to the praise of Douglass, John A. Collins, in his annual report to the Society, lauded young Frederick as extremely capable and efficient during their sixty town excursion covering more than 3,500 miles. Collins wrote that his descriptions of slavery were graphic and his style of speaking was free and forcible. His enunciation was clear and distinct and his long addresses were seldom tedious, "Due to his energetic mannerisms, interspersed with both humor and satire."33 Collins was correct in assuming that his Negro companion would perform a very amount of good for the oppressed black race.

Douglass had found a home and accepted the invitation to continue as a lecturing agent for the Massachusetts Society.34 Frederick received $170.34 for his three months service as a guest lecturer.35 Throughout the winter and spring of 1842, Frederick accompanied Garrison, Samuel J. May, Charles Lenox Remond, and the musically oriented family of Hutchinsons, on a


33Ibid., pp. 105-106 as cited in Foner, op. cit., p. 52; Quarles, loc. cit.

34Liberator, February 4, 1842, p. 3 citing the Tenth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, Boston 1842, pp. 105-106.

35Ibid., p. 106.
tour of eastern and central Massachusetts. Many of the anti-
slavery newspapers carried editorial comments about the new
entry into the field of agitation and a majority of the northern
papers were at least judicious in their appraisal of him. In
April and May, 1842, Douglass lectured in many towns and spoke
at Harvard. The columns of the Liberator were filled with
his appearances in Boston, Northborough, Westborough, Upton,
Milford, Medway, Bellingham and Farborough. The Liberator
requested that Douglass inform the general agent of the
Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society regarding his scheduled
appointments for the approaching weeks. Frederick was usually
informed as to his lecturing engagements in special citations
in that paper.

In late April, 1842, Frederick lectured at various meetings
of the Middlesex County Anti-Slavery Society and joined in the
discussions of resolutions. The Liberator also carried
Frederick's lecturing tour for May, 1842, and it included the
towns of Millbury, Auburn, Oxford, Charlton, Sturbridge, South-
bridge, Dudley, and Webster. Frederick's brand of abolitionism

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36 See Columns of Liberator, February 4, 11, 18, 1842, citing
the Herald of Freedom, New State Democrat, Boston Bee; National
Anti-Slavery Standard, February 24, March 1, 1842, Comments pre-
pared for Liberator by Maria Weston Chapman.
37 Liberator, April 1, 1842, p. 3.
38 Ibid., April 8, 14, 22, 29, 1842.
39 Liberator, April 29 & July 22, 1842, p. 3.
40 Ibid., April 29, 1842, p. 3.
41 Ibid., p. 5.
was praised in the *Herald of Freedom* and the editor exclaimed that Douglass had "already made color not only honorable, but enviable."\(^{42}\)

On May 25, 1842, a reporter for the *Boston Courier*, although not especially friendly towards abolition listened attentively to Douglass' speech at the Gordon Street Chapel in Boston and came away with a genuine respect for the talent, good taste and zeal of the black orator. His correspondence read:

> We have seldom heard a better speech before a popular assembly—better we mean as to the language and manner. Many of the speakers who followed him, and of a lighter complexion, men who boasted that they were ministers, and who had doubtless the advantage of education, which the man of color could never have enjoyed, might well be desirous of emulating the appropriateness of his dictation and gesticulation, and the grammatical accuracy of his sentences.\(^{43}\)

The *Liberator* in early June carried an article from the *Boston Daily Ledger* which remarked favorably on Frederick's appearance at the New England Anti-Slavery Convention. The correspondent reported that the meeting at the Chardon Street Chapel was enhanced by "a colored man, ... formerly a slave ... who showed up the inconsistency of southern slaveholding Christians in great style, imitating, their peculiar manner of preaching the gospel to the slaves."\(^{44}\) The following week, an article was placed in the *Liberator* from the *Herald of Freedom*

\(^{42}\)Foner, loc. cit.

\(^{43}\)National Anti-Slavery Standard, June 9, 1842, p. 2.

\(^{44}\)Liberator, June 17, 1842, p. 2.
summarizing in eloquent phraseology the Negro speaker at the New England Convention. The article continued as follows:

"Frederick Douglass... halted here (meaning north in general) like a retreating lion, but turns majestically upon his hunters. He is free here and need not go into Canada or fear the South." 45 The writer continued that as he listened to the "manly and heroic figure dilating in the antislavery debate, he looked into those dark eyes and saw visions of disenthrainment."

Even the veteran abolitionists had praise for the new-comer Douglass and in a letter to Garrison one man said that "it had rarely been his lot to listen to one whose power over him was greater than Douglass, and not only over him, but over all those who heard him." 46

Frederick spoke at Nantucket in early June, pledged to his audience that he was a reformed slave and "vowed never to be one again." 47 The Nantucket Islander correspondent, cool towards abolitionism, at first doubted Frederick's references, but his change of attitude can be seen in his news story.

Although the writer is a bundle of prejudices, he did hear an eloquent Negro. Douglass was chaste in language, brilliant in thought, and truly eloquent in delivery. His mind seemed to overflow with noble ideas, and they always came forth in suitable garb. As far as wit and power of sarcasm, they are remarkable. Giving all men their due, Frederick Douglass' speech was replete with beautiful thoughts, elegantly expressed and eloquently delivered. 48

46 Liberator, June 17, 1842, p. 2.
47 Ibid., July 8, 1842, p. 2.
48 Liberator, loc. cit., citing the Nantucket Islander.
Frederick's life as an antislavery agent was much more than just applause and flattering editorials. He was constantly discriminated against in hotels and all modes of transportation. His patience rarely failed but because he did protest, he was often bruised and needed new apparel. There were numerous instances when Frederick was forcefully removed from a seat and stuffed into a filthy, unkept, "Jim-Crow" car. Frederick retreated hastily from numerous abolition meetings to the sound of vicious mobs barking "Kill that Nigger" or "We'll fix that blacky." One procedure utilized by Frederick was to arrange an outdoor meeting. He made his plea to those who passed him by on many a lonely and desolated street corner. One prominent Grafton, Massachusetts citizen who heard Frederick speak stated that even the "shoemakers would leave their benches and mothers' their domestic avocations... and listen attentively among the large audiences who marveled at the sable orator." Throughout August and continuing on into October, Frederick worked for the American Anti-Slavery Society. He spent those months, "accompanying Collins and Abby Kelly, as they toured Western New York."51

Frederick made his first speech in Rochester, New York;

49 See Columns of Liberator and National Anti-Slavery Standard for examples, September, October, November, December, 1841.

50 Liberator, October 1, 8, 15, 1841; August 26, September 2, 1842 citing [Concord] Herald of Freedom [Massachusetts] August 19, 1842.

on August 30, 1842. Little did he realize at that time, that he would later reside in that central New York city for twenty years of his life. "His most vivid memory of that short and unreported tour was the cordial reception he received at the home of Isaac and Amy Post, two locally prominent abolitionists." It was this friendship that helped prompt Frederick to choose Rochester in 1847, as a home for his family, and focal point for his newspaper, The North Star. Most of Frederick's abolition meetings were informal, and freedom of expression was encouraged. Frederick felt comfortable under such circumstances, and his presence was known during the "business of passing resolutions, framing addresses circulating petitions and raising money for the cause."54

After returning from the New York tour in 1842, Frederick's endeavors were directed into the Latimer case. As a fugitive slave, George Latimer had fled from Norfork, Virginia, to Boston in October, 1842. James B. Gray claimed ownership and had Latimer arrested without a warrant. After both a trial and Writ of Habeas Corpus were denied by Chief Justice Shaw, the abolitionists and the Boston newspapers criticized the actions of Shaw. The Liberator of November 11, 1842, called for agitation and the next issue carried a public letter from Frederick,

52 Quarles, loc. cit.
53 Foner, op. cit., p. 57.
54 Quarles, op. cit., p. 24.
Lynn, November 8, 1842. \(^{55}\) Douglass informed Garrison that Charles Remond and he had held "Latimer Meetings" in New Bedford early in November on "behalf of their outraged brother who had been hunted down like a wild beast and ferociously, dragged through the streets of Boston." \(^{56}\) Meetings held throughout the state were characterized by "deep and solemn feelings," and in mid-November, Gray sold Latimer for 3400. The abolitionists, who had raised the money for his release, seized the opportunity and planned a series of celebrations, sprinkled by Latimer's presence and adorned with the masterful efforts of Frederick Douglass. The black orator was praised by the Salem Register for his "gift of tongue" and his ability to literally move his audiences at will. \(^{57}\) The following week Hansford Leile and Parker Pillebury joined Douglass and Latimer at the quarterly meeting of the Essex County Abolitionists, where Latimer narrated his escape. \(^{58}\) Fate did not release its grasp on Latimer for in 1854, he was arrested for "picking pockets in Boston." \(^{59}\) The sincere efforts of the abolitionists resulted in Massachusetts enacting a law that forbade state officers aiding in the capture of fugitive slaves, and denied use of its jail for their detention.

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\(^{55}\) Liberatore, November, 18, 1842, p. 3.


\(^{57}\) Ibid., December 9, 1842, p. 3, citing the Salem Register.

\(^{58}\) Quarles, op. cit., p. 28, citing Concord [Concord] Herald of Freedom, December 16, 1842.

\(^{59}\) Frederick Douglass' Paper, (Rochester, New York), February 24, 1854.
Frederick next spent three months in Rhode Island and was even appointed to the business committee during the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island State Anti-Slavery Society. He spoke at various places in the state in a futile attempt to raise some money for the society's treasury. Although some pledges were made, they were not always kept and so very little pecuniary aid was given to the Rhode Island Society.

In the spring of 1843, the New England Anti-Slavery Society under the auspices of William Lloyd Garrison decided to hold a series of "One Hundred Conventions." This plan was actually formulated at the Tenth Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society held in New York during the first week of May, 1842. A proposal to engage in such a series of conventions in the West was discussed, but the meeting adjourned before action could be taken. In the middle of the same month, the New England Anti-Slavery Society met and the convention proposal was given top priority. Frederick, as an Executive Committee Member of the New England Society, urged that the proposal be adopted. Upon the earnest recommendation of Douglass, the motion was promptly carried. This was possibly the first instance in the history of the Bay State that a Negro committee

60 *Liberator*, December 2, 1842, p. 3.

61 See columns of *Liberator*, May through December, 1843; *Life and Times of Douglass*, op. cit., p. 229; Chestnutt, op. cit.; p. 39; Holland, op. cit., p. 83; *Washington*, op. cit., pp. 78-82; Shirley Graham, *There Was Once A Slave* (New York: Julian Kessner Incorporated, 1947), p. 120.

62*Douglass*, loc. cit.
member through eloquent oratory, rose to prominence by playing a decisive role in the abolitionist movement. The territory to be embraced during the tour included New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.63

The campaign turned out to be a significant one and required almost six months. Douglass was chosen as an agent and accompanied such notables as John Collins and Charles Remond, "each of whom was a master of the abolitionist subject and an eloquent orator."64 "Others who volunteered their services to the Garrisonian-sponsored convention were James Monroe, George Bradburn, William A. White and Sidney Howard Gay, who at that time was managing editor of the National Anti-Slavery Standard and later the New York Tribune and New York Evening Post."65 Most of those newspapers carried many stimulating articles about Douglass during his eventful career as an abolitionist. Frederick ascertained that he, more than the others, would be greeted with "hisses and catcalls, sticks and stones, stale eggs and decayed cabbages, boots and yells of derision, and decorations of tar and feathers."66

Frederick and Charles Remond began the series of Conventions in the middle of July 1843. In Middlebury, Vermont, Douglass


64Douglass, loc. cit.

65Chestnutt, op. cit., p. 39.

66Ibid., p. 64.
met with intensely bitter and violent opposition, and the un­
receptive audience made his first convention a dismal failure. 67
"Although Vermont boasted that within her borders no slave had
ever been delivered up to a master, the individual towns did
not wish to be involved in agitation." 68 At Ferrisburgh, the
conditions were more favorable, but throughout the majority of
towns, indications demonstrated Vermont to be "surprisingly
under the influence of the slave power." 69

Journeying into New York State, Frederick stopped in
Syracuse, and met with strong opposition from Liberty Party
advocates. Frederick's troupe was forced to hold their first
meeting in a park before an audience numbering about five
hundred. 70 Two days later, Frederick was allowed to "address a
meeting in an old dilapidated church." 71 However, the most
serious difficulty encountered by Frederick's party at Syracuse
came from one of his cohorts, John Collins. It seemed that
Collins had adopted the program of Fourierism, "a type of
utopian socialism which was expounded in the United States by
Albert Brisbane, Horace Greeley and George Ripley." 72 Collins

68 Graham, loc. cit.
69 Douglass, loc. cit.
70 Douglass, op. cit., p. 231; Graham, loc. cit.
71 Holland, op. cit., pp. 86-87; Chesnutt, op. cit., p. 40.
72 Foner, op. cit., p. 56. "Proposed system for reorganizing
society into small co-operative communities."
attempted to entwine his newly found interests within the framework of the abolition meetings. Douglass and Remond vehemently objected to the attempt to "preach communism to a gathering that had assembled to hear a different gospel." 73 Frederick felt so strongly about the situation that he wrote to Maria Weston Chapman a member of the Massachusetts Society and remarked that "if the Board of Managers sanctioned Collins' conduct, he would be compelled to write them, resigning his agency in carrying out the one-hundred conventions plan." 74 Collins himself resigned as general agent of the Massachusetts Society and Douglass continued his tour.

Foner, in his four volume work of Douglass, emphasized that while the "black-bondsman" was not a utopian socialist, he at least sympathized with Collins' desire to establish a more "egalitarian society," in which all exploitation of man by man would be abolished. Foner continued:

But like those who correctly criticized Socialists for claiming that the struggle for Negro rights was unimportant, since with the abolition of capitalism all oppression would end, Douglass condemned Collins for considering the anti-slavery movement as unimportant. It is significant that Collins resigned as an agent because he was convinced that nothing could be accomplished through the abolitionist movement. 75

The pattern was fixed in New York and "all along the Erie

73 Quarles, op. cit., p. 30.

74 Frederick Douglass to Maria Weston Chapman, September 10, 1843 (ISS William Lloyd Garrison, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts).

75 Foner, op. cit., pp. 56-57.
Canal, from Albany to Buffalo, there was apathy, indifference, aversion, and sometimes mobocratic spirit among the people. "76 While in Buffalo, Frederick "was chosen as the colored representative along with Remond, at the Buffalo Colored Convention."77

Buffalo itself was too busy with its steamboats and business interests to show much concern over Douglass, who was alone because Remond was pleading the cause in nearby Rochester. Frederick was at his best for over a week and proclaimed abolitionism at an abandoned post-office to audiences, who increased in both number and respectability.78

At the August 3 meeting of the Western New York Anti-Slavery Society in Rochester, Frederick resolved "That abolitionism was but the application of Christianity to the system of slavery."79 Two days later Frederick introduced a resolution which stated that "the press and its living speaker were the only means by which abolitionism could be advanced and pledged abolitionists to sustain those means."80 Frederick was later joined by Charles Remond, who promptly "attributed the public indifference to Boston's clergy."81

From Buffalo, Frederick and company journeyed to Clinton County, Ohio, where "in a large tent, the abolitionists held a

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76 Douglass, loc. cit.
77 Liberator, August 4, 1843, p. 2.
80 Liberator, loc. cit.
81 Quarles, op. cit., p. 31, citing The Herald of Freedom, September 8, 1843—Letter of Remond to Rogers, August 15, 1843.
mass meeting."\footnote{82} William Allen White and Sidney Howard Gay joined Frederick and after their tour of Clinton County, the group pushed onward into Indiana. Frederick had his misgivings because "that state (Indiana) counted many inhabitants from Virginia and North Carolina who were congenitally unsympathetic to abolitionism."\footnote{83}

In Richmond, they were "mobbed and pel'ted with evil smelling eggs" which left their slim wardrobe in shambles.\footnote{84} Such treatment was comparatively mild to what was served up to Frederick at Pendleton, Indiana. "It was from that town that Frederick received his post-graduate degree."\footnote{85}

Dr. Fussell, a prominent local physician, had invited Frederick to be his house guest, despite the knowledge that the mob spirit of Pendleton was increasing. By the fifteenth day of September in 1843 it was quite pronounced. Violence was averted that same evening only because of a torrential rain storm. On the following day, the abolitionist group, "erected a platform in the woods at the end of town" to offer their program.\footnote{86}

The group was in high spirits, but the meeting had barely commenced when a mob of rowdies "armed with pistols, clubs, stones, and eggs, broke into the gathering and howled, screeched

\footnote{\textit{Chesnutt}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 42.}
\footnote{\textit{Washington}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 80-81.}
\footnote{\textit{Douglass}, \textit{loc. cit.}}
\footnote{\textit{Chesnutt}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 43.}
\footnote{\textit{Graham}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 121.}
and hurled brickbats. Frederick could have escaped but joined the donnybrook after he noticed that William A. White had been pummeled into the ground. White's account to the Liberator stated that "Frederick ... seized a club and rushed into the crowd only to have the weapon snatched out of his hand," and amidst cries of "Kill the Nigger," was thrashed severely until he lay unconscious in a pool of his own blood. White lost several teeth and Frederick severely fractured his right arm. Although tenderly nursed by a Mrs. Neal Hardy, a Quaker, his hand was improperly set, and the mangled orator "never recovered the natural strength and dexterity of his right hand." The former slave "carried to his grave a stiff hand," that served as a grim reminder of that fateful afternoon in Pendleton. Frederick's "dreams were haunted," frequently by that affair, and he realized that it was easier to be an abolitionist in some places than in others.

Douglass began the trek eastward and lectured in Lisbon, Ohio, an old abolitionist town, where he and his company were "well received." While here the executive committee of the Ohio Society unsuccessfully approached Frederick in an attempt

87 Foner, op. cit., p. 57; Graham, loc. cit.
88 Douglass, op. cit., p. 254; Graham, op. cit.; p. 22, Washington, op. cit., p. 82.
89 Chesnutt, loc. cit.
90 Foner, citing William A. White to Garrison; September 22, 1843; Liberator, October 13, 1843; Douglass to William A. White. (Douglass L.S.S.), July 30, 1846; Quarles, loc. cit.
to secure his service on a yearly basis." The New Lisbon (Ohio) Advocate featured an article on Frederick and stated that "although he (Douglass) had been under the iron hoof of oppression, and though he lacked the orthodox constitutional skin, he was a man . . . of extraordinary mental powers who had made a permanent impression on all the audiences he held there." 

The speaker is everything for ability and eloquence, that the eastern papers have represented him to be. Notwithstanding he has never been educated, he is a workman that need not be ashamed. Nature has effected much for him; he need fear no man . . . No, not even the great demi-god of whiggery, Henry Clay, himself. Indeed he used up some of Clay's favorite cherished slavery doctrines most effectively . . . Had Clay been there and felt the force of some of the sarcasm and argument of his man, . . ., he would have crept through an inch-auger-hole to get out of hearing.

The agents briefly toured Pennsylvania and Frederick was praised by the Pittsburgh Spirit of Liberty, for his "eloquent speeches in that city." The Negro prince of oration was compared to the most respected and brilliant orators in the nation; but, "he never for a moment let this knowledge turn his head, or obscure the consciousness that he had brought with him out of slavery with the disabilities of that status."

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91 Liberator, November 10, 17, 1843.
92 Ibid., November 17, 1843.
93 Liberator, loc. cit., citing the Herald of Freedom.
94 Liberator, November 24, December 1, 1843, citing The Pittsburgh Spirit of Liberty.
95 Douglass, op. cit., p. 44.
Douglass, Gay, and Remond concluded their tour in Philadelphia, and attended the December 4, 1843, Decennial Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society.96

The "Hundred Conventions" was lauded as a "magnificent movement" by the board of managers of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. "We doubt," they declared, "whether there has ever been in the history of the cause, so great an amount of wholesome agitation produced at so small an expense or accomplished in so short a time."97 Despite the fact that a meager "$450 had been collected on the tour," the Society decided at its annual meeting in January, 1844, to continue experimentation on a somewhat smaller scale.98 Massachusetts was to be privileged with its own one-hundred conventions and Douglass, White, and Pillsbury served as agents, canvassing the central counties of the state. The trio did hold a few meetings in New Hampshire and were listened to by capacity crowds. One reporter from the (Concord) Herald of Freedom said that Frederick "made a masterly and most impressive speech... and left the platform at the close of his address with more real dignity and eloquent majesty" than that particular correspondent had ever before witnessed.99

96Liberator, December 15, 1843.
97Ibid., February 2, 9, p. 2, 1844; National Anti-Slavery Standard, February 1, 3, 15, 1844, p. 3.
98Ibid., February 2, 9, 16, 23, March 1, 8, 1844; Anti-Slavery Standard, February 15, 1844.
99Foner, loc. cit; citing (Concord) Herald of Freedom, February 16, 25, 1844; Quarles; op. cit., p. 54.
As the captain of his ship, Frederick's new problem centered upon himself. His problem had become that of "too much, too soon," and many of his abolitionist friends feared Frederick's usefulness would be obscured through his sophistication and articulation.

Frederick had been cautioned as early as 1841 by his friend Stephen S. Foster, to stop and take account of himself. Foster warned the yearling that continuance along a fast current would lead people to believe that he had never been in bondage.100 Collins had also advised him to "be yourself and tell your story." because it was "Better to have a little of the plantation manner of speech than not; it is not best that you seem too learned."101

However, it was too late to reconvert the headstrong orator as Douglass by the mid-forties, had definitely acquired exceptional skill as an orator. "His delivery was excellent and he possessed a natural melodic voice that was strong and clear."102 Many of the abolitionists envied and despised the alarming progress of Frederick in the field of abolitionism. The warnings of his associates soon became reality, and he began to hear many Yankees say "He's never been a slave."103

A Philadelphia correspondent's letter to the Liberator

100Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, op. cit., p. 362.

101Douglass, op. cit.


103Douglass, op. cit., p. 363.
remarked that many people who heard Frederick speak, could not associate the colored lecturer with the cruelties of the slave system. "How a man, only six years out of bondage ... could speak with such eloquence—with such precision of language and power of thought—they were utterly at a loss to devise."104

Realizing that his abolitionist career was jeopardized by such articles, Frederick stated "I was induced to write out the leading facts connected with my experiences in slavery, giving names, places, and dates—... giving everyone the power to ascertain the truth or falsehood of my story of being a fugitive slave."105 For his efforts, Frederick received little consolation from Garrison who seemed too enveloped with his recently acquired standard of "No Union with Slaveholders," which appeared in the August 25, 1844, edition of the Liberator.

Wendell Phillips read Frederick's manuscript but ludicrously advised him to fling it into the fire.106

Undaunted, Frederick allowed his "Narrative" to be sold on the market in 1845, and it immediately became a best seller. In a few short years, it was widely read in Europe, and was eventually "translated into French and German."107 His book revealed a readable prose style, simple and direct, and its

104Liberator, August 30, 1844, p. 3.
105Douglass, loc. cit.
106Douglass, op. cit., p. 364.
107Foner, op. cit., pp. 59-60; Quarles op. cit., p. 34; citing words of Douglass, loc. cit.
sensitive descriptions moved the most unsympathetic reader." The Lynn Pioneer complimented the book "as the most thrilling which the American Press ever issued, and the most important. If it does not open the eyes of this people, they must surely be petrified into eternal sleep." The praises continued as the Practical Christian claimed the book would prove a valuable auxiliary to the cause of abolitionism. . . combined with the burning eloquence of its author." A candid review in the New York Tribune declared that "as a Narrative they had never read one more simple, true, coherent, and warm with genuine feeling." Frederick's book was an open testimony to his identity and he feared that his master would plot to recapture him. Earlier, in 1845, Frederick had written a letter to Elizabeth Pease revealing Douglass' intentions "to voyage to England, upon completion of his book." The exact reason for Frederick's decision comes directly from his Life and Times, as he recalled, "I had become painfully alive to the liability which surrounded me, which might at any moment scatter all my proud hopes and return me to a doom worse than death."  

103Liberator, March 14, May 16, 23, 30, June 6, 20, 1845.
109Ibid., May 30, 1845 citing Lynn (Massachusetts) Pioneer.
110Ibid., June 6, 1845 citing the Practical Christian.
111Ibid., June 20, 1845 citing The New York Tribune, June 14, 1845.
112Quarles citing letter of Wendell Phillips to Elizabeth Pease, February 24, 1845, Anti-Slavery Letter, op. cit., p. 35.
113Douglass, op. cit., p. 236.
Even at the risk of life itself, Frederick refused to leave at first, because he feared for the safety and welfare of his beloved family. His wife Anna, had given birth to Frederick, Junior, on March 3, 1842, and Charles Remond, on October 24, 1844, and Lewis Henry and Rosetta were only five and six years old respectively. It was evident in his letter to Maria Weston Chapman in September of 1843, that Frederick was in financial difficulty. He asked Maria to provide his wife with $25 or $30 for household affairs because he had none to send her.

Douglass overcame his reluctance to leave because of renewed confidence of personal promotion of his book in England. He also made provisions whereby all proceeds from his book sales in America at 50 cents per copy, would be given to Anna. This would "offset the money Frederick would normally earn" on the American lecturing circuit. With the aid of some friends and bolstered by the early success of his autobiography, Frederick began preparations for his tour. Before he left, Frederick had $600 in his possession. Of that amount, $250 was supposedly donated by benefactors. However, Frederick clarified that supposition in a letter to Maria W. Chapman, dated March

114 Holland, op. cit., p. 36.
115 Frederick Douglass to Maria Weston Chapman, September 10, 1843, MSS. Garrison.
116 Roper, op. cit., p. 61; Quarles, op. cit., p. 36, see Reference Notes of both sources.
28, 1846, and stated that he had received but $60 from his friends.\textsuperscript{117} Letters of introduction written for Frederick by Wendell Phillips and Maria W. Chapman to English sympathizers exclaimed that Frederick was "a most remarkable Negro who was highly esteemed by them."\textsuperscript{118} Before Frederick left, he was well known to many Negroes of the South, and the Negro editor of the Philadelphia Elevator remarked that "while in Maryland, he had interviewed many," who had fond memories of their friend and leader.\textsuperscript{119}

Frederick continued his activities on the abolition circuit throughout July and early August of 1845. In response to a letter from his friend, Anna W. Weston, Frederick consented to speak in Weymouth, Massachusetts, provided time allowed him to do so. Frederick's reply read as follows, "I will comply with your request, and if you please, you may announce through the Liberator that I will lecture in Weymouth, Hingham, Kingston, and Duxbury between August seventh through tenth."\textsuperscript{120} Douglass mentioned in that same letter that he expected to leave for England, on August 15, 1845.\textsuperscript{121}

\textsuperscript{117}Frederick Douglass to Maria Weston Chapman, March 29, 1846, (MSS. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts)

\textsuperscript{118}Foner, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 62; Quarles, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{119}Foner, \textit{loc. cit.}; citing the Philadelphia Elevator as reprinted in the \textit{British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter, vol. VI, no. 25, December 10, 1845.}

\textsuperscript{120}Frederick Douglass to Anna W. Weston, July 1, 1845 MSS. Garrison.

\textsuperscript{121}\textit{Tbid.}
Wendell Phillips himself, could not possibly have fathomed the tremendous international reputation Frederick would build when he advised the Negro leader to "Be yourself, and you will succeed." The Negro "Ship of State" made final arrangements to embark for Liverpool. Unchartered waters beckoned him.
CHAPTER III

CHARTING THE COURSE TOWARD RACIAL FREEDOM

"We the residents of Lynn extend our heartfelt wishes for the successful voyage of Frederick Douglass and James N. Buffum."¹

This was the official good-bye from the citizens of Lynn, Massachusetts, to Douglass at a gathering, Friday evening, August 15, 1845. The reader, Henry Clapp Jr. continued; "We are especially desirous that Frederick Douglass, who came to this town a fugitive from slavery, should bear with him to the shores of the Old World, our unanimous testimony...of deep respect with which he is now regarded by every friend of Liberty throughout our borders."² The following morning, Frederick embarked for Liverpool on the Cunard steamer, Cambria, accompanied by the Hutchinsons; Judson, John, Asa, Abby, and Buffum.³

The Liberator of August 22, 1845, added a comment regarding Frederick and his supporters and wished that "Heaven give them a speedy and prosperous passage and grant them a safe return home in the course of the next year." The eleven day journey aboard the Cambria engendered experiences that Frederick remembered throughout his life. Though the steamship line was English

¹Liberator, August 22, 1845, p. 5.
²Ibid.
³Ibid.
owned, Frederick could not secure first class passage, and was an "object of curiosity" in the ship's steerage.\textsuperscript{4} It was not difficult for Frederick to overlook the gawky mannerisms of many passengers as he had become accustomed to many types of personal humiliations. The interest afforded by Frederick's presence enabled him to mingle among his audiences, sell copies of his Narrative, and plead the cause of abolition. The black oddity suddenly became the most popular passenger on the ship. Within a week's time, passengers flocked into Frederick's dirty quarters to see and converse with him. The restrictions on Frederick were removed by Captain Judkins and the black orator was welcomed and honored throughout most of the steamer.\textsuperscript{5} Judkins invited Frederick onto the Quarterdeck to deliver a lecture concerning slavery. Several slaveholders from Georgia and South Carolina took offense at the Captain's gesture and tension arose as Douglass lectured the night before the steamer was to dock in Liverpool. He was constantly interrupted by catcalls and shouts of "down with the lying nigger." In his response, Frederick offered documentary proof which aroused even stronger resentment. Frederick escaped bodily harm by the efforts of Captain Judkins who knocked down one southerner who

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., September 26, 1845; National Anti-Slavery Standard, November 27, 1845, p. 5; Frederick Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (Bartford: Park Publishing Company, 1893), pp. 237-238.

\textsuperscript{5}Douglass, Life and Times, loc. cit.
had made an advance upon Douglass. The shouts of "throw the nigger overboard" ceased when Judkins threatened to place the entire lot of troublemakers in irons and encouraged Douglass to "go on pitch into them like bricks."

The steamer arrived in Liverpool, Thursday, August 28, 1845, and the outraged young southerners, unwittingly announced and aroused extreme interest in Frederick by issuing grievances to a Liverpool newspaper. Attempting to justify their conduct, the rabble-rousers awakened a national interest in Frederick and heaped humiliation upon themselves on that occasion. After three days in a Liverpool hotel, Buffum and the Hutchinsons parted company with Douglass and journeyed to Ireland. Frederick by this time had drawn the attention of Richard D. Webb, a local agent for the National Anti-Slavery Standard and was invited to spend some time at his home. Webb later arranged the printing of 2,000 copies of Frederick's Narrative and payment was not to be due until the entire edition was sold.

Douglass was surprised to learn how well his reputation had preceded him throughout the British Isles and compared their

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6 National Anti-Slavery Standard, op. cit., November 27, 1845; Liberator, September 26, 1845, p. 3.
7 National Anti-Slavery Standard, loc. cit.
knowledge of his activities to those of New England. His Narrative was especially significant for the British public was sincerely interested in the antislavery cause. The curtain had fallen on their own West Indies problem and emancipation there was considered a truly significant breakthrough. Many of the more prominent figures in public life in Great Britain were abolitionists and their interests centered upon the universal issue of slavery. Douglass realized that he was fortunate to be among such a responsive public.

The black orator journeyed to Ireland in mid-September, engendered tremendous responses and on September 16, 1845, wrote to William Lloyd Garrison to relate his accomplishments. "Our success here is greater than I had anticipated. We have held four glorious antislavery meetings...two in Royal Exchange and two in the Friend's Meeting House— all crowded to overflowing." Frederick was extremely flattered that so many great English statesmen expressed an avid interest in him. Although the country was encountering a great political struggle, the antislavery problem received significant attention. Debates were taking place on the subject of dissolving the union between England and Ireland as well as for the repeal of the Corn Laws. The black abolitionist was stirred and inspired by the debates in which such men as Richard Cobden, Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, Daniel O'Connell and Lord John Russell

9Garrison, October 10, 1845, p. 3.
took part. The British Isles would give Frederick the inspiration that would change his total outlook on the abolitionist movement. He viewed the adept English and Irish politicians with amazement and searched his soul for some type of explanation. For Garrisonian abolitionists, politics had been taboo, but Frederick's conscience indicated that political abolitionism could prove effective because people could be influenced by political parties. Politicians had swayed people towards a particular platform before and the possibility of Douglass supporting an antislavery platform began to form. Frederick's mind juggled the ideas of political abolitionism and his thoughts were nurtured daily by convincing dogma of some of the most outstanding politicians in the British Isles. Frederick moved towards international acclaim but his most valuable benefit were the subtle introduction into British politics.

Frederick veered from his usual antislavery theme and became involved in various domestic questions. On his first day in Dublin, Frederick spoke at a temperance gathering and later delivered several temperance addresses in the city. In late September 1845, Frederick returned to his abolitionist concern, spoke at a huge meeting at Convention Hall in Dublin and shared honors with the famed "Irish Liberator," Daniel O'Connell.10 Frederick sat enthralled by O'Connell's speech and commented that "until I heard him, I had thought that the story of his

10Ibid., October 24, 1845, p. 3.
oratory and power were greatly exaggerated (sic)." 11 O'Connell as quoted in an article from the Dublin Evening Post, exclaimed that he was neither ashamed nor fearful of criticism because of his particular stand on American slavery and vowed to be "the enemy of the system and the institution." 12 Frederick was never to forget the expressive face of the red-headed O'Connell, "whose eloquence flowed down on vast assemblies like a summer thunder-shower upon a dusty road." 13

Frederick developed great rapport with his Dublin audiences and received many favorable reports from the local newspapers. James Houghton of the Dublin Freeman's Journal wrote a complimentary article describing Frederick's presence at the Colbridge Temperance Meeting. He praised his manliness and courage for breaking out of bondage and compared Frederick to a "fine looking man, possessed of a full flow of natural eloquence, which must make him a popular orator before any audience." Houghton quoted Frederick during the meeting; "the Negro said... he was not accustomed to such kind treatment from white men." 14 The Dublin Evening Packet described Frederick as "a robust man, above the middle size, and has a very pleasing expression of countenance." 15

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12 Liberator, p. 3, op. cit., citing the Dublin Evening Post.


15 Liberator, October 17, 1845, p. 2, citing Dublin Evening Packet, September 11, 1845.
Frederick spoke for one hour and twenty-five minutes at the Iend's Meeting House and the Evening Packet reported: "Frederick's speech was truly eloquent and his language and style indicated a cultivated mind." The audience experienced a brilliant effort and considered the Negro orator a valuable asset to abolitionism. After apologizing to his listeners for lack of formal education, Frederick continued his lecture. He artfully defined the cause and stressed the importance of expansion along peaceful principles. His humanistic reasoning regarding the atrocities of his international problem was firmly implanted upon the minds of all who attended.

After five informative weeks in Dublin, Frederick traveled to Cork and Lent's audiences were usually large and even the "suffering poor," said the Cork Examiner, "thronged to listen to exposures of the American slave system by one who has in his own person suffered under its iniquities." Another issue of the Cork Examiner detailed Frederick's speech at an Anti-Slavery Breakfast.

Mr. Douglass rose in compliance with the wishes of the company and proceeded to address them with the ease and grace of a gentleman of nature and society. Evidently from his color and conformation, descended from parents of different race, his appearance is singularly pleasing and agreeable. The hue of his face and hands is rather a yellow brown or bronze, while there is little if any in his features of.

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16. Liberator, loc. cit.
17. Ibid.
that peculiar prominence of lower face, thickness of lips and flatness of nose, which peculiarly characterize the true Negro type. His voice is well toned and musical, his selection of language most happy, and his manner is easy and graceful. He said that it afforded him great pleasure to meet the ladies and gentlemen by whom he was surrounded...and would state in simple terms the objects and aim of his visit...19

Frederick briefly mentioned his Narrative and stressed that even though he had reached a free state he was not yet free, for even the northern states of the Union conceded to the slave states the right of coming on their soil and apprehending runaway slaves wherever they find them.20 The Cork Examiner complimented the Negro orator:

We are highly gratified to find that another anti-slavery meeting will be held...and the people will have the opportunity of listening to a man who is as amiable and interesting in private and social life, as he is original and eminent in his capacity as a lecturer. As a public denouncer on slavery in his own country, he has been long known to the friends of freedom here.21

Frederick had come to Ireland as an abolitionist; but because of his humanitarian tendencies, he expressed his views on their internal problems. He strongly felt that many of their problems were primarily due to excessive drinking habits. Douglass ignored the potato famine that was gripping the country, concentrated his efforts on abolition and combined his efforts

19 Liberator, November 7, 1845, p. 2, citing the Cork Examiner October 15, 1845.

20 Liberator, loc. cit.

21 Ibid., November 28, 1845, p. 1, citing the Cork Examiner, October 27, 1845.
th sound reasons for practicing temperance. The Negro orator, though in the company of many influential people, did not neglect to sympathize with the poverty-stricken working class because he too had experienced destitution while in slavery.

In the short time he spent in Ireland, Frederick engendered great respect because the people were aware of his compassion for their plight. In a letter to Garrison, Douglass expressed his happiness because he could attend meetings in Ireland without experiencing prejudice because of his dark presence. "No one seemed to feel himself contaminated by contact with me," said Frederick, and he was convinced through past experiences that "it would be quite difficult to get the same number of persons together in any of our New England cities without some democratic nose growing deformed at my approach."

Frederick was introduced to Father Mathew, the temperance leader in Ireland, and attended various soirees with him. Douglass was impressed with the dedication of Father Mathew and remarked that "his whole soul appeared to be wrapt up in the temperance cause. He seldom takes a meal without being interrupted by someone to take the pledge." The Negro abolitionist took the pledge himself while at Father Mathew's residence and remarked that he was "the fifth of the last five of Father Mathew's 5,487,495 temperance children."

23 Liberator, November 23, 1845, loc. cit.
24 Ibid.
Douglas had the opportunity to lecture at many antislavery trees dedicated to him. At Saint Patrick’s Temperance Hall, Douglass “elicited the unbounded applause of the audience.”

A letter to the Liberator, Ralph Varian expressed the feelings of the Cork citizenry. “Now that Frederick Douglass is departing our city,” said Varian, “he goes with the hearty good wishes for his success and the warm personal attachment of a large circle of friends, who have spent many happy hours in his company and can never forget the pleasure of his intercourse with them.”

At his last meeting in Cork, Frederick expressed his appreciation for the kindness he had received. “The sentiments of gratitude expressed by the meetings,” said the Negro abolitionist, “are in perfect union with my own. Never was I held in greater obligation to the press and proprietors of public buildings... I express my sincere gratitude for it in behalf of the bondsmen.”

In closing, Frederick explained the alleged slavery expansion motive behind the recent move to annex Texas. “The consequence of making the Catholic religion a necessary quality to settle in Texas, afforded opportunity for hypocrisy. Yet America does have the elements of becoming a great and glorious nation but I am not going to say anything in her favor. I am an outlaw there and it is time to bid you farewell.”

25 Ibd., December 12, 1845, citing Spirit of Old Ireland, (Cork), November 10, 1845.

26 Liberator, loc. cit.


28 Ibd., p. 2.
Frederick moved into northern Ireland and enjoyed continued access there. After spending less than two weeks in Belfast, a early December, Douglass requested fifty additional copies of his *Narrative* from Richard D. Webb. In one of many letters to the *Liberator*, Frederick remarked disdainfully that the Belfast people "drink wine and pray." His oratorical prowess was praised continually in the papers. The *Belfast Northern Whig* quoted Frederick on numerous occasions. "Justice and no fellowship with injustice, that liberty could have no love for slavery; and therefore no countenance should be given to those who united with slaveholders." The *Belfast Banner of Ulster* carried a complimentary summary of Frederick's address at the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society Meeting, at Independence Chapel on Donegall Street. The responsive audience it reported, applauded loudly after Frederick completed his lecture on the remembrances of slavery.

Frederick left Belfast in mid-December, stopped in Liverpool on his way to Birmingham, and "spent some pleasant hours with the Hutchinsons." Upon reaching Birmingham,


31. *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, February 5, 1846, p. 2; citing the *Belfast Northern Whig*.


Frederick accepted the house invitation of Joseph Sturge, founder of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. 34 Douglass remained only a week and returned to Belfast shortly before Christmas. Upon learning from Webb "that his family was well," 35 Frederick's thoughts centered about returning home as soon as possible. Even the warmest receptions, such as the January 6, 1846, breakfast held in his honor could not erase from his mind the thoughts of returning to America. That particular breakfast was presided over by a member of parliament. The Belfast Commercial Chronicle commented that Douglass upon receiving a beautiful pocket Bible, "splendidly bound in gold and clasped," from the Belfast Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, was visibly moved. 36 Addressing the gathering, the gable-named orator said:

It would be useless for me to attempt to conceal my embarrassment...I have never been more at a loss for language to fulfill that duty than on the present thrilling occasion. (applause)...I accept thankfully this Bible; and while it shall have the best place in my house, I trust, also, to give its precepts a place in my heart. 37

Frederick thanked them again and bid them all farewell.


35 Liberator, December 22, 1845, p. 2.

36 Ibid., February 27, 1846, p. 1, citing the Belfast Commercial Chronicle.

37 Liberator, loc. cit., citing the Belfast Commercial Chronicle.
On January 1, 1846, Frederick prepared to leave Belfast and wrote a letter to William Lloyd Garrison from the Victoria Hotel. Although Frederick had enjoyed apparent success, strong undertones of homesickness were prevalent throughout the letter. 38 Sydney Howard Gay, appropriately caught the irony of Frederick's letter in the columns of the New York Tribune.

There are passages in the letter which for genuine eloquence, would do honor to any writer of the English language, however eminent; while it is worthy of study as a transcript of the feelings of one to whom his native land denies a home, except on conditions which involve the sacrifice of his inalienable rights and the loss of happiness which 'Freedom' can only confer. It seems almost incredible that such a letter should have been written by a man who has graduated in no institution save that 'peculiar' one known as Anti-Slavery. How many of the white proponents of colored suffrage can write as well? 39

An astute London inquirer correspondent asserted that "a rich treat was theirs who heard the entire course" of Frederick's Belfast tour. 40 After more than fifty speeches in Ireland, Douglass began arrangements for a tour into troubled Scotland. The London Inquirer writer was correct in assuming that Frederick, "is resolved, I understand, while touring Scotland, to embrace every opportunity, while there, to expose the Free Churches as apologists of slavery." 41 Having been in Ireland for nearly four months, Frederick turned to Scotland on January 10, 1846.

38 Ibid., January 30, 1846, p. 3.
40 Ibid., February 27, 1846, p. 2.
41 Liberator, loc. cit., citing the London Inquirer.
The spirit of revolt filled the Scottish air, as the recently established Free Church of Scotland had made demands. The movement culminated in 1634, with Dr. Thomas Chalmers forming the Free Church with the assistance of 470 other ministers. These dissenters split from the established church for they believed the congregation had the right to select its own ministers. The Church of Scotland received valuable support from the antislavery bodies of Great Britain and the United States because the newly formed Free Church had supported the doctrines of American slavocracy. These abolitionists began a full-scale onslaught in the General Assembly in 1846, led by George Thompson, the British Abolitionist, who received aid from Garrison, Douglass, Buffum and Henry G. Wright.

Douglass and Thompson moved brilliantly during their 1846 campaign against the famed theologian, preacher and philanthropist, Dr. Chalmers. They were critical of Chalmers' efforts to involve the South in a money-making venture back in 1844. Chalmers had sent a deputation to the United States to raise

42 Charles Taddell Chesnutt, Frederick Douglass (Boston: Small, Maynard and Company, 1899), pp. 52-53.

43 George Shepperdson, "Notes and Documents—Thomas Chalmers, The Free Church of Scotland," The Journal of Southern History, 17: 257-258, 520-523, July, 1931; See also George Shepperdson, "Frederick Douglass and Scotland," The Journal of Negro History, 38: 307-321, July, 1953. "George looks at Douglass strongest and ablest ally, during the 1846-47 tour but because Frederick broke away from the Garrisonian faction in the 1850's, his friend would make his later journey to Scotland, in 1860, less than enviable. Garrison had a strong backing in the important Glasgow Emancipation Society, and the group looked disfavorably on Douglass, in 1860, because he no longer supported the Garrisonian doctrine which stated that the American Constitution was a pro-slavery document.
funds for the struggling Free Church of Scotland. He nurtured southern support by condemning the exclusion of slaveholders from church fellowship in America. By carefully avoiding the abolitionists, the Chalmers envoy managed to collect 3,000 pounds from various slaveholders, and returned to Scotland in 1846. A large sum had been donated by one particular Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina, where a white man had been recently sentenced to death for attempting to help a woman he loved escape from slavery.

Frederick along with Thompson and other members of the Church of Scotland, admonished the Chalmers faction for accepting southern "blood contributions." The chant of "Send Back the Money" rang clear and banners waved to the slogan of "we want no money from slaveholders." Douglass exclaimed, "we shall continue to deal blows upon them—crying out disgorge—disgorge—disgorge your horrid plunder, and to this the great mass of people here have cried, Amen, Amen." Frederick attended many meetings that were concerned with the struggle of the churches in Scotland. The Negro orator was especially gratified to


45Holland, loc. cit.


47Frederick Douglass to Francis Jackson, January 29, 1846, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison and Others; See also Douglass to Webb, January 10, 1846, loc. cit.
have been present at an assembly in Cannon Mills. At that particular gathering, Thompson cleverly perplexed the efforts of Doctors Robert Smith Candlish and William Cunningham, who attempted to justify the association of Scotland's Free Church with slaveholders in America. Thompson called out in "a clear sonorous but rebuking voice," said Frederick. The effect of the interruption was as incredible "as if a granite wall had [been] suddenly flung up against the advancing current."48

The audience was appalled by the audacity as well as the fitness of the rebuke. The speaker "went on from habit but the effect had taken its course."49

Although Douglass had been surrounded and escorted by many people of wealth and nobility, he was aware of the poverty and discrimination that existed in Scotland among the lower class of people. While in Montrose, Scotland, he wrote a letter to Garrison expressing his cognizance of the destitution and clearly illustrated his humanitarian characteristic. Douglass wrote:

It is the glory of the Liberator that in it, the oppressed of every class, color and clime, may have their wrongs set forth and their rights boldly vindicated . . . I am not only an American slave, but a man, and as such, am bound to use my powers for the welfare of the whole human brotherhood. I am not going through this land with my eyes shut, ears stopped or heart steeled. I am seeking to hear, see and feel, all that may be heard, seen and felt; and neither the attentions I am receiving here, nor my connections I hold to my brethren in bonds, shall

48Douglass, loc. cit.
49Ibid.
prevent my disclosing the results of my observation. I believe that the sooner the wrongs of the whole human family are made known, the sooner those wrongs will be reached. 50

Frederick continued his tour of Scotland with mixed emotions as he learned that his former master had taken another step to insure his recapture should he return to America. The Pennsylvania Freeman had carried an article stating that ownership rights to one Frederick Douglass had been "transferred from Thomas Auld to his brother Hugh." 51 To add to that problem, Auld vowed that "should he (Frederick) return to this country, he would spare no pains or expense in order to regain possession and...place him into the cotton fields of the South." 52 Douglass was concerned with this new information, but his personal problems did not prevent him from attending scheduled meetings. Buffum accompanied Frederick, and the duo continued to expose the inconsistencies of Scotland's Free Church. The (Scotland) Arbroath Guide commented that while Douglass toured their city, he delivered one of the "most powerful, forceful and eloquent addresses ever heard at Abbe Church." 53

The success which Frederick had engendered in Scotland was not enjoyed by the Negro abolitionist because his sincerity for the Garrisonian cause had been questioned by Maria Weston

50Liberator, March 27, 1846, pp. 2-5.

51Ibid., March 6, 1846, p. 3, citing the Pennsylvania Freeman.

52Ibid.

Chapman, leader of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. This particular incident would have an important bearing on his future relations with the Garrisonian Abolitionist. Mrs. Chapman wrote a letter to Richard D. Webb advising him to watch Frederick because there was fear that he might be won over to the Anti-Garrisonian wing of the English Anti-Slavery Movement. The editor of the (Boston) Liberty Bell received a tongue lashing from Frederick, who in a letter admonished her for lack of faith in his integrity.54 "If you wish to drive me from the Anti-Slavery Society," he wrote, "put me under overseership, and the work is done. Set someone to watch over me for evil and let them be so simple as to inform me of their office, and the last blow is struck."55

Douglass' success was so great in Scotland that his time was almost entirely consumed with writing speeches and holding meetings. Frederick could not write to the Liberator as often as he would have preferred and so Buffum maintained correspondence with the homeland. While visiting Bowling Bay, Scotland, Buffum informed Garrison of their progress in the Country. He remarked that their three month tour of Scotland had been gratifying and meetings held in such places as Perth, Dundee, Arbroath, Montrose, and Aberdeen were successful. "Many of our meetings have been

54 Frederick Douglass to Maria Weston Chapman, March 29, 1846 and Douglass to Richard D. Webb, March 29, 1846, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison and Others.

55 Douglass to Chapman, loc. cit.
crowded to suffocation," said Buffum, "although we have had the largest places that could be procured." The constant pressure of meetings decreased a short time later and Frederick wrote Garrison and said that the antislavery agitation in Scotland reminded him of a boiling pot. Frederick also wrote a letter to Horace Greeley on April 15, 1846, thanking him for his sincere interest in the cause of the Negro.

At the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Tuesday, May 12, 1846, in New York City, resolutions were drawn up "entirely approving the course of Douglass, Buffum and Wright, in uniting the tried friends of the slave in Scotland, in their exertions to unmask and bring to shame the pro-slavery conduct of the Delegates of the Free Church while in the United States and of the hypocritical inconsistency of those who sustain and defend it at home." Frederick was pleased to learn that the response to his efforts were favorable. The American Anti-Slavery Society hoped that the combined efforts of Douglass and the abolitionists of Scotland would be enough to have the "Blood-Stained Money Sent Back." The society realized that "by this act, they will give to the slaveholders, and their religious allies..."
at the North, the rebuke and the testimony which they fear the most." However, the Free Church of Scotland held onto the "Blood-Stained Money," but Frederick's efforts were not wasted. He had been able to plead the cause, implant slavery's outrages upon the minds of thousand's and develop his reputation and oratorical distinctions. His verbal effectiveness and sincerity were lauded in every town and although harrassed by various troublemakers, the truth of his statements were cherished in the minds and hearts of the Scots.

At Edinburgh, Frederick was invited by the English abolitionist, George Thompson, to speak in London at a series of conventions carried out under the auspices of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. This group had severed relations with the Garrisonian faction six years before. Frederick ascertained that his associates would look disfavorably upon such action but felt that it was his duty "to speak in any meeting where freedom of speech is allowed and where I may do anything toward exposing the bloody system of slavery." He did inform Mrs. Chapman that although he did plan to lecture for the British Society, no conclusions as to the acceptability of their doctrines had formulated in his mind.

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60 Liberator, loc. cit.
61 Foner, op. cit., p. 66.
62 Frederick Douglass to Maria Weston Chapman, August 18, 1846, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison and Others.
63 Ibid.
Frederick arrived in London, May 18, 1846, and was quickly ushered into a meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. George Thompson wrote on May 23, 1846, that "the society had planned a year's labor for Frederick in these past five days." On Monday, Frederick poured forth at the Anti-Slavery Meeting. On Tuesday, Frederick attended the Peace Conference, Wednesday the Suffrage extension meeting, a Thursday Temperance gathering and a reception Friday where over 2,500 listened to him for three hours." But the attention and interest that Frederick had drawn in England, did not erase his desire to return to his family and a solution to the problem was suggested at the Finsbury Chapel Meeting in Moorsfield.

George A. Alexander and Joseph Sturge suggested that rather than force Douglass to run the risk of recapture, the group should raise funds to bring Frederick's family to England. The two gentlemen were sincere and donated twenty pounds sterling at the meeting. Frederick had had similar thoughts and told Thompson, in late May, that he would remain in England no longer than August unless united with his family. After delivering a

\[\text{Holland, op. cit., p. 130.}\]
\[\text{Foner, op. cit., p. 66, citing a Letter from George Thompson to Henry C. Wright, May 23, 1846, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison and Others.}\]
\[\text{National Anti-Slavery Standard, June 18, 1846, p. 3.}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]
devastating attack on slavery at Finsbury Chapel. 68 Douglass wrote and explained to Garrison that "the gesture," on the part of Alexander and Sturge, "was entirely unexpected to me." 69

If Frederick removed himself permanently from the American Anti-Slavery scene, many of the abolitionist papers would flounder and probably fold. Douglass was a tremendous drawing-card for the American abolitionist newspapers because they were composed of a large number of Negroes, interested in their "leader." Negro interest in all abolitionist newspapers was geared to articles that referred to their hopeful redeemer, Frederick Douglass. Realizing that Frederick would be useless to them as an English citizen, and being fully aware of the seriousness of the situation, the National Anti-Slavery Standard placed the following statement in a June issue.

We trust that Frederick Douglass will have manliness and self-denial enough to reject any such overtures. His race and "his" country need him here, and we hope that no temptation of personal ease and comfort will induce him to forsake them permanently." 70

Frederick undoubtedly warded off temptation on many occasions to accept citizenship, fame and probable fortune, in a country that would in all probability offer such possessions to him. What had "his" country, as the National Anti-Slavery

68 Liberator, July 3, 1846, p. 3, citing the London Universe.
70 National Anti-Slavery Standard, June 18, 1846, loc. cit.
Standard ironically stated, ever done for him except scar his back, starve his family and constantly harass and threaten his life. That was the "Sweet Land of Liberty," that Frederick was admonished not to forsake. Because of the fact that he was the abolitionist movement now, in the sense of a "Negro Savior," Frederick had become a necessary entity for the American press and antislavery movement. Frederick's sincerity, ability, and indefatigable perseverance had drawn and would continue to draw many Negroes and whites into radical, political and religious phases of abolitionism. Many Garrisonian Abolitionists feared that the large lion-maned head of Douglass would bulge out of proportion owing to the alluring English offers. Their fears were unwarranted for Frederick realized that his place was surely in America with his enslaved black brethren.

In a letter to the editor of the Belfast Ireland Protestant Journal, Douglass expressed his thoughts and skillfully defended an attack by the pro-slavery American paper, the Boston Traveler. The journal commented that in all probability, Frederick would not return to America for he had no freedom. The correspondent also implied that Douglass was amused at the course of events in Scotland rather than being genuinely concerned with American abolitionism. The Negro orator declaimed that if the writer considered unmasking the slave-holding and woman-whipping Churches of America on his part fantasy, then he would plead guilty to the charge. Frederick concluded by stating that no inducement could be offered strong enough to make him forsake his country.
Whether slave or a freedman," said Douglass, "America is my home, and there I mean to spend and be spent in the course of my outraged fellow-countrymen."71

Frederick continued his efforts throughout England and exposed the daily atrocities of American slavery as a true abolitionist champion. Although not a citizen, Douglass considered himself an American, and concentrated his efforts of labor towards that goal of equality and freedom. Garrison was also apprehensive as to Frederick's ultimate decision, and under the assumed reason of bolstering the cause, made plans to join his prized orator in England to insure his return to America. On July 15, 1846, after a farewell party by the colored population of Boston, Garrison sailed for England. He arrived in Liverpool on July 31, 1846, and was accompanied by Thompson to London. Frederick and Garrison met each other on the fourth of August and exchanged cordialities.72 Douglass was extremely happy as Garrison had brought good news about his family and best wishes from the colored people of Boston.

The World Temperance Convention opened on August 4, 1846, at Covent Garden Theatre in London, and Garrison and Douglass were invited. E. N. Kirk, a clergyman from Boston, Massachusetts,

71Liberator, August 28, 1846, p. 2, citing a letter from Frederick Douglass to the Belfast Ireland Protestant Journal dated July 23, 1846, Victoria Hotel, Belfast.

72Holland, op. cit., p. 133.
threw inflammatory remarks in Garrison's direction but the editor of the Liberator was refused time to defend himself as he was not an official delegate. Douglass, never at a loss for words, was granted a short fifteen minute rebuttal. He entered the discussion by questioning the American delegates who so eloquently praised their temperance societies. If these societies were so tolerant, "why were there over three million [slaves]," said Frederick, "who could not join them." Douglass was especially critical of one Samuel Hanson Cox, a New School Presbyterian clergyman, but the chairman, seeking to avoid any violent outbreaks, wisely informed Frederick that time had elapsed and the Negro orator returned to his seat amidst cries of "Go on!" The Liberator aptly phrased Douglass' lecturing prowess.

Frederick Douglass is no common man...the force and freedom with which he expressed himself is most remarkable. His language is plain and to the purpose. His manner, though not deficient in energy is quiet and subdued and yet there are occasional tones in his voice not unlike the growl of the lion, which "hints at something dangerous" and would seem to indicate that he is a man not to be trampled on with impunity.

Aroused and infuriated, Cox placed a stinging letter in the New School Presbyterian journal, The New York Evangelist, branding Douglass as a "colored abolition agitator who must have been well paid" to disrupt the Temperance Conference with such...


74 National Anti-Slavery Standard, October 1, 1846, p. 3, citing the Bristol Mercury.
atrocities. Frederick returned a terse letter to Cox from Edinburgh in October and artfully sliced Cox's remarks into oblivion. His verbal skirmish with Cox had revealed that apathy to the slave was flourishing in areas outside the southern citadel. The pro-slavery clergy did not want the slave system exposed in the north for fear of arousing antislavery sympathy. These pro-slavery forces combined with various newspapers and journals in a vigorous effort to silence the brilliance of the eloquent Negro.

Many publications in the United States appealed and often demanded that the British reject the Negro lecturer. The National Anti-Slavery Standard printed an article from the racist New York Daily Advertiser. It was as follows.

The slaves of the South would be very indignant at the conduct of their representative in Old England could they be made acquainted with his tantrums. There is scarcely a darkey on a South Carolina rice plantation, or in a Louisiana sugar house, but what, amid all his degradation would scorn the acts of Frederick Douglass. The man is lowering in the eyes of English courtesy and intelligence, the character of our slave population though perhaps ignorance, rudeness, fanaticism and an unthinking hatred of America may loudly cheer him on.

If ignorance, rudeness, and fanaticism were given human ability to applaud, they most assuredly would, to recognize the

75Liberator, November 27, 1846, p. 1.
76Ibid., citing Letter of Frederick Douglass to Samuel Henson Cox, October 30, 1846; National Anti-Slavery Standard, December 3, 1846, p. 2.
brilliant eloquence and methodical accuracy of Frederick's reply to many of the stern criticisms he received. His efforts to remove the stain of slavery from American soil are succinctly expressed in a letter from Douglass to Horace Greeley. Frederick said that many people in Europe had looked to America as the true representative of freedom but slavery had clouded that image. As an American, Frederick attempted to restore the United States to its former position as an example of freedom and justice for all mankind. "I am earnestly and anxiously laboring to wipe off this foul blot from the otherwise fair fame of the American people," said Douglass, "that they may accomplish in behalf of human freedom that which their exalted position among the nations of the earth amply fits them to do."78

Douglass was enjoying the company of Garrison, who proceeded onward by abolitionist zeal, organized an Anti-Slavery League for all England. Garrison calmly ignored the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and at the first meeting on August 17, 1846, described Henry C. Wright's speech as a "scorcher."79 Douglass was also given the opportunity to speak and Garrison claimed it was "one of his best efforts," and probably the best that England ever heard.80 Frederick continued his tour with Garrison and


79 Pomer, op. cit., p. 71 citing Letter from William Lloyd Garrison to his wife August 18, 1846 (MSS Garrison, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts).

80 Ibid.
found time to write to the Lynn [Massachusetts] Anti-Slavery Sewing Circle on August 18, 1846. In the letter, the orator expressed his profound belief in the sacred cause of abolition, hatred of Texas annexation, and the horrors of poverty he had witnessed on his present tour.81 Frederick moved into Northern England and Scotland and on September 25, he spoke at Sunderland, in Durham County, with Mayor Robert Brown presiding.82 The Durham County Herald reported that "We have rarely listened to an orator so gifted by nature and never to a man who more thoroughly threw his whole heart into the work in which he is engaged."83

Frederick then journeyed into Glasgow, Parsley, Edinburgh, and Dundee as an agent for the Scottish Anti-Slavery Society and returned to Liverpool on October 16 to rejoin Garrison. Through pure coincidence, Frederick looked out of his window one morning while breakfasting and noticed a former slave who had been in Baltimore with him. The happy reunion lasted several hours and they relived their experiences and compared notes on the taste of freedom since escaping.84 Douglass remained front page.


82 Liberator, November 15, 1846, p. 1.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid., December 25, 1846, p. 1, citing related circumstance from Edinburgh Scotsman, October 24, 1846.
material for many newspapers and the Scotsman, Liverpool Times, London Nonconformist, Bristol Mercury, and the Durham Herald were a few that held him in high esteem.85

Garrison sailed for America in early November, 1846; and Frederick's homesick conscience followed closely behind. He had made many lasting friendships but chose to return home. He sorely missed his family and realized that his place was in America, where he could labor diligently for the freedom of the Negro race. In a manner which had become his trademark, Frederick told a London audience:

I glory in the conflict, that I may hereafter exult in the victory. I know a victory is certain. I go, turning my back upon the ease, comfort and respectability which I might maintain here, ignorant as I am. Still, I will go back, for the sake of my brethren. I go to suffer with them; to lift up my voice in their behalf, to speak and write in their vindication; and struggle in their ranks for that which shall yet be achieved by the power of truth and of principle for that oppressed people.86

Frederick's plans to return home were visible as early as July, 1846, as he wrote to his friend William A. White asking for advice as to the possibility of returning home in the fall.87 Frederick had decided by late summer to return home and wrote

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85See columns of Liberator, October 15, 22, November 15, 20, 27, December 4, 11, 18, 25, 1846 citing English newspapers.


87Foner, op. cit., p. 73, pp. 181-184 citing Letter of Frederick Douglass to William A. White July 30, 1846, Edinburgh, Scotland. (RIS Frederick Douglass, Frederick Douglass Memorial Home, Anacostia Heights, D.C.); Garrison collection.
his wife, Anna, telling her to expect him on November 20, 1846. Garrison and Thompson realized that Frederick could still do much for the cause and upon their insistent urging persuaded Douglass to remain six months longer in the British Isles. Many other English Abolitionists ascertained that the black orator was effective because "he is constantly greeted with rapturous applause wherever he goes and ... hopefully will remain here at least until next summer." 89

Frederick's compensation for his extended tour was enveloped in a plan by his Newcastle friends, Ellen and Anna Richardson. In December, they procured his freedom by raising $710.96 and forwarded that amount to Hugh Auld, who held Frederick's ownership papers. 90 The manumission paper read as follows:

To all whom it may concern: By it known, that I, Hugh Auld, of the city of Baltimore, in Baltimore County, in the State of Maryland, for divers good causes and considerations, me thereunto moving, have released from slavery, liberated, manumitted, and set free, and by these presents do hereby release from slavery, liberate, manumit, and set free, my Negro man, named Frederick Bailey, otherwise called Douglass, being of the age of twenty-eight years, or thereabouts, and able to work and gain a sufficient livelihood and maintenance; and him the said Negro man, named Frederick Bailey, otherwise called Frederick Douglass, I do declare to be henceforth free, manumitted and discharged from all manner of servitude to me, my executors and administrators forever. In witness whereof, I the said Hugh Auld, have hereunto set my hand and seal, the fifth of December, in the year one thousand eight hundred.

88 Frederick Douglass to Anna Douglass, M.D. Garrison Collection.


and forty-six.  

The Trans-Atlantic Mission stated that: "The case was not managed by her (Anna Richardson) with much sagacity but the motives which led her to procure the ransom were exceedingly pure and benevolent." Criticism from various journals and newspapers came hard and fast. The Boston Chronicle was critical of Douglass for the editorial staff felt that by purchasing his freedom, he had acknowledged the southern right to ownership of slaves. The Chronicle editorial remarked, "the slaveholders had at last gained an advantage over him. (Douglass) He has been guilty of the indiscretion and weakness of permitting himself to be bought." Garrison of the Liberator replied that "we neither assent to the logic nor like the spirit of these remarks of the editor of the Boston Chronicle." Other newspapers were often critical of Douglass and the Hartford (Connecticut) Charter Oak, organ of the Connecticut Liberty Party, remarked that "the act of buying a little ticket with 'Free' written on it, at such an enormous price is worse than folly, it is mischievous, and virtually an acknowledgement of the traffic or of the freedmen's inability to protect themselves

92 Liberator, January 15, 1847, p. 2, citing the Trans-Atlantic Mission no. II.
93 Ibid., January 8, 1847, p. 2, citing the Boston Chronicle.
94 Liberator, loc. cit.
in their rights." The *Liberator* carried more critical remarks from the *Pennsylvania Freeman* and (Ohio) *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, a Garrisonian journal. The Lancaster County, Pennsylvania *Gazette* continued the onslaught by "maintaining that no compensation should be given to slaveholders because it would be a surrender of the great fundamental principle that man cannot hold property in man—because slavery is a crime and is not an article to be sold."  

Garrison, in defense of the Negro abolitionist, retorted that "In view of all the circumstances of the case, we are glad that Frederick Douglass is now legally free and may return to the bosom of his family, without the horrible liability of being apprehended as a fugitive slave and carried back to torture and chains." In a later issue of the *Liberator*, Garrison strengthened his acceptance theory of Frederick's decision and declared "we deny that purchasing the freedom of a slave is necessarily an implied acknowledgement of the master's right to property in human beings." As a lawyer personified, Frederick strategically incorporated slavery into a brilliant defense and vindicated himself from iniquity. The following excerpt from Frederick's letter to Henry C. Wright clearly demonstrates his


courtroom logic. Frederick was surprised that Wright was against the transaction. For himself, Frederick said:

Viewing it in the light of a ransom or as money extorted from a robber and regarding my liberty of more value than one hundred and fifty pounds sterling, I could not see in it, either a violation of the law of morality or economy... I shall be Frederick Douglass still, and once a slave still. I shall neither be made to forget nor cease to feel the wrongs of my enslaved fellow countrymen. My knowledge of slavery will be the same, and my hatred of it will be the same.100

The controversy of Frederick's decision provided excellent copy for the abolitionist and slave oriented publications. For three months, the columns of many papers were splashed with articles diagnosing the reasoning of Frederick's decision. Freedom definitely invigorated the spirit of Douglass, and he continued his tour of the British countryside. However, by February 9, 1847, the eighteen month tour had taken a toll of the orator's health. Just sixteen days later in Sheffield, Frederick appeared thoroughly worn out but refused to cancel the engagement.101 He was under severe strain but pleaded eloquently. His efforts were graciously applauded by the large gathering. Recovery came in the following weeks and his lecturing schedule was so extremely tight that more than thirty invitations had to be canceled.102

100This: January 29, p. 2; National Anti-Slavery Standard, February 4, 1847, p. 2, citing Letter of Frederick Douglass to Henry C. Wright, December 22, 1846, from no. 22 St. Ann's Square, Manchester, England.

101Liberator, April 30, 1847, p. 3; Holland, op. cit., p. 140.

102Holland, loc. cit.
Frederick's dreams of home would soon become reality as he made final preparations in late March to return to America. His last speech was given to the English public on March 30, 1847, at London Tavern, and Frederick expressed his gratitude and assured the audience that many fond remembrances were enclosed in his heart. "The oppressed Negro people would know how England felt about slavery," said Douglass, "and it would give them patience under their sorrows and hope of a future emancipation. I will endeavor to have daguerreotyped upon my heart the sea of upturned faces and portray the scene to my brethren when I reach America."\[103\]

A few days later Frederick was again reminded of the cruel realities that awaited him in America. Upon arriving in Liverpool, Frederick was informed that his first-class ticket purchased in London would not be honored on the steamship Cambria.\[104\] The Cunard agent, Mr. Charles McIver, advised Frederick to take a second class berth, because Mr. Foord, the London agent had mistakenly sold him a filled berth.\[105\] Although realizing he was being discriminated against, Frederick was apprehensive about being left on a Liverpool dock and booked passage. That same day, April 3, 1847, he wrote bitterly to the editor of the

\[103\] *Liberator*, April 30; \[104\], pp. 1, giving Farewell Speech; \[105\] *Ibid.*


ondon Times explaining the circumstances. Frederick retorted:

I take up my pen to lay before you a few facts respecting an unjust proscription to which I find myself subjected on board the steamship Cambria, to sail from this port at ten o'clock tomorrow morning for Boston, United States. . . I have traveled in this country nineteen months and have always enjoyed equal rights and privileges with other passengers, and it was not until I turned my face toward America that I met with anything like proscription on account of my color.\textsuperscript{106}

The British press raised their banner: "British Bow to an American Prejudice," "Shameful Violation of the Rights of Man," Pro-Slavery "Persecution in England," "Disgraceful Prejudice Against a Man of Color," "England Ashamed," "We called upon the Whole Nation," cried Howett's Journal, "to resent the disgrace to the English name."\textsuperscript{107} The London Times editorialized that:

It is one of the most inexcusable aggravations of the gross injustice of the case we have been alluding to, that the ship in which Mr. Douglass had paid for the berth, and was not allowed to occupy on account of his color. The breach of the contract entered into with him seems to us as dishonorable, as the prejudice against him is ignorant and contemptible.\textsuperscript{108}

An apology in the form of an open letter to the London Times was sent directly from Mr. S. Cunard, who expressed his sincere apology and guaranteed that "nothing of the kind will

\textsuperscript{106}\textsuperscript{106}Ibid., on cit., pp. 233-234, citing Letter of Frederick Douglass to the Editor of the London Times, April 3, 1847, Brown's Temperence Hotel, Liverpool—placed in London Times, April 6, 1847.

\textsuperscript{107}\textsuperscript{107}Ibid., p. 74, citing Howett's Journal Vol I. 1874, p. 225; \textit{Illustrator}, April 30, May 14, 1847.

\textsuperscript{108}\textsuperscript{108}National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 13, 1847, p. 1, citing the London Times, April 3, 1847.
again take place in the steamship with which I am connected."109 Frederick was given the stateroom on board the Cambria but the sixteen day cruise, beginning on the fourth of April was dreary, lonesome, and uncomfortable because he was not allowed to leave his cabin, nor associate or place himself in view of the other passengers.110 Frederick wrote of his experiences, stating that his quarters were more preferred than any of the others; and he was respected by all officers on board. The servants attended him graciously, but the "Negro Vanguard" expressed the ironic truth of the situation.

It may be asked, then, why do I complain? The answer is, that my position was one of coercion, when it ought to have been that of option. The difference is as wide as that of freedom and slavery, and the man who cannot see the one, cannot see the other.111

Garrison upon learning that Frederick had embarked said "he (Frederick) will be warmly welcomed by the abolitionists and doubtless, more kindly regarded by people generally, in consequence of the generous and honorable reception given him in England."112 Garrison was soon to realize the tremendous scope of the statement regarding later repercussions. It was true that Frederick had gained an international reputation, experience,

109Liberator, May 14, 1847; Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 262.

110Ibid., April 30, 1847, p. 2, Douglass Life and Times, loc. cit.

111Ibid.

112Conor, op. cit., p. 74, citing Letter from William Lloyd Garrison to Elizabeth Pease, April 1, 1847, Garrison Collection.
envy and even personal freedom; but the editor of the *Liberator* failed, at that time, to recognize the change that had evolved within the very soul of his black apprentice. Frederick was now a craftsman in his own right, and upon returning home, would begin a new and even bolder chapter in his abolitionist career. To be free and feel free was a great source of strength to both Frederick and his friends, but no one at that time visualized the inner workings of his mind with respect to the detestable discrimination of slavery. Booker T. Washington paints an extremely clear portrait of the revitalized orator.

...He had not only a bracing sense of security against the dangers of capture and return to slavery, but he gained wonderfully in mental experiences. The two years served him educationally and inspirationally. During that time he had met and mingled freely with greatness who were dealing with even greater problems. Emancipation had acquired a broader meaning for him as a consequence of his visit. In America, he had not been able to free himself from the conviction that emancipation, confused as it was with all the interests of daily life, was a sectional or at most a national issue. Looking back, ... upon his own life. ... he was able to realize more fully than before, the truth of what Garrison had taught. Slavery was a worldly question, not only of national or sectional expediency, but of fundamental human right.113

Frederick would remain in the "Garrisonian fold" only a few more months. Although his newly formed ideas would be met with stern criticism, he would always remain respectful towards Garrison, his "Liberator." -- Frederick Douglass had developed amazingly and was filled with grandiose ideas of abolition.

a much wider spectrum. In a few short years, Frederick would no longer accept "Garrisonianism" as the only means to an end and would flare off into the infinite universe of political abolitionism. His English friends had encouraged his idea of editing a Negro newspaper and donated twenty-five hundred dollars to help in the worthwhile project.114 The Negro captain had set a new course for the "Negro Ship of State." From his bridge, Frederick gazed out into the heavens and set his eyes upon the brilliance of the North Star.

114 Douglass, Life and Times, loc. cit.
CHAPTER IV

HUMANITARIAN GROWING PAINS

Frederick returned home a free man; yet, the realization that freedom was worth only as much as the piece of paper verifying the transaction, disheartened the weary traveler. The Cambria docked in Boston, Massachusetts, April 29, 1847, 1 but the Negro orator seemed oblivious to the surroundings as he stepped down onto American soil. Personal freedom but partially satisfied the soul that longed for universal freedom for all enslaved peoples. Realizing that the abolitionist journey ahead would be long and challenging, Frederick quickly set his thoughts upon the new course that had been implanted in him during his recent tour. The past nineteen months had been exhilarating for Douglass. Douglass was not yet thirty years of age; but he had created a sensation almost everywhere in the British Isles. The Britshers found their attention riveted upon him and were "moved by his readiness to wit, irony, inventive or pathos." 2 The irony of that situation was all too clear to Frederick, for he realized that respect abroad would not free his brethren nor enable him to sit, stand, talk, or dine with a large portion of American citizenry. Yet, Frederick

1Liberator, April 23, 1847, p. 2.
was far from discouraged, for the publicity had placed his name higher in the hearts and minds of many white and blacks, who prayed for, and encouraged his gallant efforts. The name Douglass had become almost a revered term by all who were in chains or prayed for the complete elimination of the slave system. "The name was whispered in cabins and in tobacco and rice fields. A tall black girl, dragging logs through an eastern marsh heard the name and resolved to run away." 3 She became Sojourner Truth, of Underground Railroad fame, the fearless agent who continually journeyed into the "Deep South," organized bands of slaves and led them to freedom. Although few were to receive as much praise as Sojourner, the example is indicative of the tremendous effect that Frederick developed within the spirit of his Negro brethren. Fully aware of his respect and image among the Negro bondsmen, Frederick continually examined his program to insure improvement and continued success. The dream of complete emancipation that had been nurtured during Frederick's early life had begun to take shape; and freedom, although distant, was visible on the horizon.

Various receptions were held in his honor, and Frederick acknowledged them all even though he attended but a few. On April 23, 1847, a gratifying meeting was held in Lynn, Massachusetts, at Lyceum Hall, at which time Frederick was congratulated upon his safe arrival and assured that their respect and

gratitude would always accompany him. 4 Ten days later, Frederick was welcomed to Boston, at the Belknap Church by the Negro people, assisted by various white friends. 5 "I was much embarrassed," said Frederick, "at finding myself so warmly greeted by my brethren in Boston, and although I spoke about my labors across the sea, no words could express the gratitude I held for my gracious hosts." 6 The Negro people of New York City followed, with a reception at Zion's Church. 7 Frederick dominated the meeting in a speech, which was considered "most eloquent and appropriate" by all who were fortunate to hear him. 8 On May 25, his friends in New Bedford welcomed and lauded the abolitionist for his decision to leave "the valuable and social inducements held out to him by the people of Great Britain, for the purpose of returning to America, to again identify himself with the suffering slave, and with those who are laboring against great obstacles . . . ." 9

During the second week of May, Frederick was welcomed at the Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New

5Ibid., May 27, 1847, p. 1.
6Liberator, loc. cit.
8National Anti-Slavery Standard, loc. cit. May 20, 1847.
York and gave his most important address since returning from England. This May 11 speech at the Broadway Tabernacle, overshadowed Garrison and stunned many who had gathered for the annual event. Frederick launched an attack upon slavery calling its existence in America "demoralizing, impious, atheistical and the enslaver of more than three million of my brethren." Continuing, he remarked:

"many of my own kindred, my own brothers . . . and sisters . . . are now clanking the chains of slavery . . . and to seek its immediate extinction in this and every other country . . . is the right and duty of all nations by all proper instrumentalities."

Frederick was adamant in his decision to overthrow the constitution of the United States at this meeting for he was literally blinded by the desire to remove the "foul curse" of slavery. He would retract those statements in less than four years and thereby alienate himself from the Garrisonian movement.

The welcoming committees and various ceremonies had barely concluded when Frederick turned his attention towards final preparation of beginning a new and hopefully successful Negro newspaper. Various articles revealing Frederick's plan were placed in the columns of the Liberator. Many people felt a definite need to put Douglass in control of a printing press because it would act not only as a "weapon of defense but also

10 Ibid., May 21, 1847, p. 2; National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 20, 1847, p. 2.
11 Liberator, loc. cit.
12 Ibid.
for one of victory."\textsuperscript{13} The same edition of the \textit{Liberator} quoted an article from the \textit{People's Journal} that an "Albion Press for a Frederick Douglass Fund has begun in England," with a goal of procuring for him a press and type.\textsuperscript{14} The idea was originated by an "esteemed lady" of Newcastle on-Tyne, the very same who had ransomed Douglass. A testimonial fund was quickly raised after Frederick remarked that such a paper, if properly managed, "would be a telling fact against the American doctrine of natural inferiority, and the inveterate prejudice which so universally prevails in this country against the colored race."\textsuperscript{15}

Exhilarated over the opportunity, Frederick informed William Lloyd Garrison and other associates of the possibility of venturing into such a project. The Negro orator conveyed their bitter reactions. "I found them very earnestly opposed," said Douglass, "because they said the paper was not needed and would definitely impair my usefulness as a lecturer."\textsuperscript{16} Frederick realized that the rapport he had with audiences accounted for a great deal of his success, but he wanted at least an opportunity to demonstrate his literary ability. Garrison was firmly against such an undertaking by Douglass and pointed out the failures of other Negro newspapers. He was unwilling to consent

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, June 25, 1847, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Liberator}, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{15}\textit{National Anti-Slavery Standard}, July 8, 1847, p. 2.; \textit{Liberator}, July 9, 1847, citing letter of Frederick Douglass to the \textit{Boston Daily Whig}; \textit{The North Star}, December 22, 1846.

to such a project not because he felt that Frederick would not succeed, but mainly for fear of losing his valuable antislavery agent. It was an established fact that Negro papers had enjoyed little success prior to 1847. In 1827, John B. Russwurm's Freedom's Journal lasted only two months and even the title change of The Rights of All could not prevent its failure. In 1837, Phillip Bell, began The Weekly Advocate under the editorship of Samuel Cornish and in March, 1937, the New York paper was renamed The Colored American. The distinguished scholar and physician, Dr. James McCune Smith helped Cornish until the newspaper dropped publication in 1841. In 1842, Stephen Myers established The Elevator in Albany, New York, and was closely followed by The National Watchman in Troy by William G. Allen and Henry B. Garnet's short-lived Clarion. In 1843, New York City was blessed with another paper called The People's Press, edited by Thomas Hamilton and John Dias. Martin Delany established The Pittsburgh Mystery, in the same year. David Ruggles, beloved friend of Frederick Douglass, enjoyed limited circulation between 1838-1841 with his Genius of Freedom. In January, 1847,
William Hodges established *The Ram's Horn* in New York and that journal barely survived a year.23

Frederick, aware that the Negro newspapers had enjoyed very limited success, would not be dismayed. He realized that the circulation of those papers was quite limited, and none had fully qualified staffs. Financial assistance was definitely needed to keep any Negro paper afloat for subscription rates although minimal, could not attract the poor Negro. In a short time, Frederick secured the professional assistance needed as well as adequate financial backing from Gerrit Smith. In sympathy with the cause, Smith was a most generous benefactor to the abolitionists; and for more than thirty years this "prominent landowner of diversified reform interests" wrote checks to aid the movement.24

The literary ability of Douglass was unquestioned, and his letters from abroad had drawn the attention of many leading newspaper men. Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune* and Thurlow Weed of the *Albany Evening Journal* were confident that Frederick possessed the necessary qualities to be a success in the field of journalism.25 However, Wendell Phillips shared Garrison's belief and was sure that such an undertaking would ruin Frederick "pecuniarily" in three years.26 Garrison did

23Ibid.


26Wendell Phillips to Elizabeth Pease, August 29, 1847, (HSS. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison and Others, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts).
give credit to Frederick's literary ability but stated that, "The land is full of wrecks of such experiments." Continuing he stated, "... with such powers of oratory, and so few lecturers in the field ... it seems to us ... that it would be no gain but rather a loss, to the anti-slavery cause, should Frederick decide to devote full time to editing a newspaper."27 The Liberator carried a letter from Douglass expressing both "surprise and regret," that his design to begin a newspaper had been so thoroughly condemned as "an unwise and unnecessary venture."28 Thus, Frederick temporarily abandoned his plan to erect a newspaper and remarked that at this time there were enough papers in the field "to sufficiently accomplish the good which I sought."29 Many people who favored Frederick's proposal to begin a newspaper, criticized Garrison for he had combined editing and lecturing but refused the same privilege to Frederick. Douglass was unwilling to criticize Garrison as his entrance onto the anti-slavery scene had been cushioned by "The Liberator" from Boston. So, amidst the moans of disheartened followers, Frederick shelved his dream for a few months and traveled west with Garrison "to carry the torch of conscience into the dark places of the west."30 The Western Anti-Slavery Society had requested that Garrison address the annual convention at New

27Liberator, July 23, 1847, p. 3.
28Ibid.
29Ibid., July 9, 1847, p. 1.
30Foner, Vol I, op. cit., p. 78.
me, Ohio, and his acceptance, enabled the group to further the cause while journeying through various towns in New York and Pennsylvania. Morristown, Pennsylvania was a fine starting point and although Garrison, Sidney B. Gay, Robert Purvis and Lucretia Mott were graciously received, Douglass was "the lion of the occasion." The abolitionist company left by train for Harrisburg, and Frederick was outraged and unceremoniously ejected from his seat by a local drunken lawyer. The group arranged a meeting in the Harrisburg courthouse. After Garrison's speech was well-received, a mob took over the occasion and set off firecrackers, threw cayenne pepper, hurled stones and many other objects in an attempt to scuttle the Negro's oration. The Cleveland Plain Dealer remarked that "several volleys of unmerchitable eggs were poured through the windows, filling the room with a disgusting and stifling stench while he [Frederick] calls 'slavery's choice incense.'" Garrison chastized the gathering during the affray and remarked that if this type of conduct was indicative of Harrisburg's hospitality, their tour of the city would be shortened extensively. During the tour, Frederick was offered a weekly column in the National Anti-Slavery Standard by the American Anti-Slavery Society in hopes of permanently

31Ibid., August 13, 1847, p. 3.

32Ibid., September 3, 10, 1847, p. 2.


34Cleveland Plain Dealer, August 30, 1847, p. 3; National Anti-Slavery Standard, August 19, 1947, p. 3.
iverting his personal editorial intentions. Upon his reluctant acceptance, the Liberator of August 20, stated "a most welcome announcement" to all friends of that paper and wished him success in all labors and responsibilities that would fall upon him.

Frederick's powerful voice could normally be heard in the farthest corner of the meeting halls. The combination of his brilliant oratory and masculine appearance seemed to quell the most obnoxious audiences who wondered at the magnificence of his bearing. His well-proportioned frame moved gracefully across the platform. To look at him, anyone would believe he had been born a prince rather than a slave. "His impressive features blended smoothly with his mulatto complexion and his brown, mildly animated eyes fit well on his strikingly large head." 35

After an unsuccessful visit to New Brighton, the group left Pennsylvania and made their way into Ohio. After arriving at Youngstown by boat, the entourage traveled by stage to New Lyne and were present for the opening convention of the Western Anti-Slavery Society on August 18. 36 The powerful Garrisonian sponsored journal, the Anti-Slavery Bugle, had smoothed the way for the abolitionists. In late August, the National Anti-Slavery Standard reported that although many of Frederick's English friends were disappointed over his recent decision, a testimonial was raised in the amount of two thousand dollars. 37 The


37Ibid., August 26, 1847, p. 2; citing a Letter from the London People's Journal, July 24, 1847.
money was to be handled by a board of trustees of Frederick's choosing for any future plans he might hold. Frederick's hopes for his own newspaper were instantaneously revived.

The Ohio meetings were extremely encouraging for this area was the stronghold of Theodore Weld, and the Tappans who had tried to take over the parent organization from the Garrisonians in the early 1840's. The meetings were attended by respectable audiences, and Frederick was well pleased with their responses. Thus, there was an indication that Garrison's influence was still trenchant in the Western Reserve which according to the Cleveland Plain Dealer, was "the favorite stomping ground of the fanatical disunionists of the east" where crowds were sure to gather to hear their ravings. The Anti-Slavery Eagle commented that "Frederick had made one of his best efforts at New York, showing up the wicked position of the American church and clergy." People came from far distant communities to see and hear the leaders of the American Anti-Slavery Society and one Negro farmer traveled three hundred miles on horseback to be present.

Six days later the abolitionists arrived in Oberlin, Ohio.

While enroute, the group had held meetings in Painesville,

38 Cleveland Plain Dealer, August 25, 1847, p. 2; see reprints in Liberator, September 10, 1847; National Anti-Slavery Standard, September 9, 1847.


40 Ibid.

41 Liberator, September 10, 1847, loc. cit.
Twinsburg, Pitchfield and Munson, and the Cleveland Plain Dealer commented that Frederick's speech there "brooded like the black stormcloud over the capes upon the future." On August 26, the group attended the graduating exercises of the Oberlin College class in theology. Oberlin lived up to its famous antislavery reputation in practice and principle. Two graduates spoke disparagingly of "comeouterism," the Garrisonian sponsored theory that all sects and parties were corrupted by slavery. The students were sternly denounced by Charles G. Finney, a member of the faculty. Many years later, Frederick vividly remembered his pleasant experiences while answering a letter of invitation to Oberlin's Semi-Centennial celebration from William G. Frost Esq. Frederick as usual had been "helping the cause of humanity," and trying to lift his people into just consideration. The famed humanitarian expressed his thanks, wished the faculty "continued testimony and examples against all known evils" and added; "I should greatly like to look into the faces and shake the hands of the noble veterans of Oberlin College who have through so many years done heroic and effective work for justice, freedom, and civilization."
Following their Oberlin visit, the abolitionists passed through Richfield, Medina, Massillon and Leesburg on their way to Salem, addressing large audiences along the way. The Anti-Slavery Bugle trumpeted that over five thousand people welcomed the abolitionists to Salem, Ohio, in what seemed to be "the largest antislavery gathering ever convened in the county." A unfavorable report issued forth from the columns of the Homestead Journal Register stating that "while they [Garrisonians] refuse fellowship with Southern slaveholders and a slaveholding government, they seem to think it no crime to cooperate with speculators, land monopolizers and commercial robbers and receive aid from them to carry out their operations." The Homestead Journal supported farmer's interests and was critical only from the standpoint of the Garrisonian association with the interest groups that held farmers' mortgages. The journal was aware of the righteousness of the cause, but could not justify Garrisonian efforts of associating with their enemies to attain antislavery goals.

The group continued through Ohio and arrived at Cleveland. The meetings there were the last which Garrison and Douglass attended as friends. Their arrival had been pre-announced in the columns of the Cleveland Plain Dealer as "the Menagerie

47 Anti-Slavery Bugle, September 10, 1847.
49 Cleveland Plain Dealer, September 11, 1847, p. 3.
is coming." The article held malicious undertones, and Douglass criticized the paper. The article stated that Garrison, Douglass and Foster (and we expect 'Satan' also) are to be here ... we hope the trio will be let alone 'severely' here. Successful meetings were held in Cleveland and Frederick told one audience that he had found "nothing mean, narrow, or churlish about a true Buckeye." The Cleveland True Democrat remarked that:

Garrison is a pleasant, clear, forcible, and logical speaker. He carries his point by real sledge-hammer argument. Douglass is more eloquent. He moves upon the passions of his audiences and handles with a master's skill the weapons of the orator.

Frederick was not one to leave a stone unturned. His experience with prejudice and rioting mobs had been so numerous that it was second nature for him to sting any one who would try to crush his anti-slavery "lives." According to the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Frederick chastized the paper for a relatively recent article printed in their columns regarding the group of abolitionists when during a meeting Frederick properly introduced a resolution that contained all his bitterness boiled down to a quaint essence.

It [The resolution] held so many coleric or caloric words, that it fairly smoked in the hands of its producer. Of course, it was an extinguisher for the Plain Dealer and had it passed, we [Plain Dealer] should have been blown out like the light of a candle. The motion failed ... as those who read it found nothing-except it actually

50Ibid., September 7, 1847, p. 3.
51Ibid.
52Cleveland True Democrat, September 23, 1847, p. 2.
"recommending a mob" but advised against it.53

After several successful meetings in the Tabernacle in Cleveland, Garrison, caught in a rain storm, fell ill.54 Frederick was reluctant to leave Garrison, but the feverish leader advised him to continue the scheduled engagements.55 Douglass travelled to Buffalo to visit Charles L. Remond. The planned meetings there were poorly attended as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were in town. "The sympathizers in Buffalo," he wrote to Sidney H. Gay, "were more engaged in the interests of the heathen of the South Sea Islands than in the heathen of our own Southern States."56 Moving on to Rochester, he remarked that at least here the "meetings were stirring and interesting."57 The audiences missed Garrison, whose condition had become so serious that Frederick reproached himself "for ever leaving him at all."58 Douglass continued his tour of northern New York but was troubled, not only by Garrison's condition, but also from his renewed editorial aspirations. Various papers issued forth bold proclamations that

53Cleveland Plain Dealer, September 13, 1847, p. 2.
54Ibid., September 11, 1847, p. 2; National Anti-Slavery Standard, October 7, 1847, p. 2.
55Frederick Douglass to Sidney H. Gay, September 26, 1847 as printed in the National Anti-Slavery Standard, Ibid.
56Ibid.
57Ibid.
58Ibid.
Frederick had decided to "open shop" in Cleveland, Ohio. 59

Some may place the blame on the rain, others on a variety of subjects and motives; but the rupture between Garrison and Douglass was agitated and enlarged by the illness of the white abolitionist in Cleveland who had failed to remember that Samuel J. May had written to him expressing Douglass' concern over his illness. May had stated that "Frederick was very much trouble [sic] that he did not get any tidings from you when he reached Syracuse . . . his countenance fell and his heart failed him when he learned the extent of your illness." 60 Garrison in turn, wrote to his wife expressing wonder as to why Frederick had not written to him "to enlighten himself as to my condition." 61

Douglass had never lost touch with the inner desires of his spirit, but his unwavering devotion to Garrison clouded the images of his mind. He realized that discrimination had not decreased but had increased and what better examples could be had than some of the cities that were scanned during the recent Western Reserve tour. Writing to an English friend on November 1, Frederick remarked, "I had not decided against the publication

59 National Anti-Slavery Standard, September 30, 1847, p. 2; Miles National Register, October 16, 1847, p. 1.

60 Samuel J. May to William Lloyd Garrison, October 8, 1847, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

f a paper one month, before I became satisfied that I had made a mistake and each subsequent month's experience has confirmed me in the conviction." 62 Douglass attempted to explain his feelings to Garrison but the "wizard" became angered with his "apprentice." Frederick confused many abolitionists papers and in late November moved his family to Rochester, New York, because that city had previously demonstrated sympathy to the cause. The prophesy that Frederick's paper would begin in Cleveland never developed. 63

Frederick stated that "from motives of peace, instead of issuing my paper in Boston, among my New England friends, I came to Rochester . . . where the circulation of my paper could not interfere with the local circulation of the Liberator and National Anti-Slavery Standard. 64 Frederick named his paper the North Star, and with the generous testimony of two thousand one hundred and seventy-five dollars from his English associates, the first edition was circulated on December 3, 1847. "I shall enter my duties," said Douglass, "with a full sense of my accountability to God, the slave and to all the dear friends who had aided me in the undertaking." 65 Frederick's paper supported the rights of bondsmen and within a short time would develop

62 Frederick Douglass to J.D. Carr, November 1, 1847, reprinted in National Anti-Slavery Standard, January 27, 1848; Frederick Douglass, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (Connecticut: Park Publishing Company, 1381), p. 317.

63 Liberator, October 1, 1847, p. 2.

64 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, op. cit. p. 395.

65 Douglass to J.D. Carr, loc. cit.
a political temperament that would totally split his bond with
the former "wizard."

The first copy of The North Star stated that the columns
would attack slavery in all its forms; advocate Universal
Emancipation; ... promote the moral and intellectual improve­
ment of the colored people; and hasten freedom ... for our
Enslaved Fellow Countrymen." The heading of the paper pro­
claimed: "Right is of No Sex--Truth is of No Color--God is the
Father of Us All, and We are All Brethren." Subscription rates
were two dollars annually, but problems soon developed in
securing enough of them to sustain the circulation. The Liberator
complimented The North Star as being "a large and handsome sheet,
exceedingly well printed and put together." Even Garrison
extended his "sincere good wishes and hoped the fruits of his
(Frederick's) labors in this ... untried field would be full
of promises and harvest." The paper soon became a powerful
force and indicated that "the Negro was too much of a man to be
held a chattel." The brilliance of The North Star spread
quickly and was considered "to have been conducted on a higher
plane than any of the other Negro papers and among the finest in

67 Ibid.
68 Liberator, December 17, 1847, p. 2.
69 Ibid., see also January 7, 23, 1848.
70 Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 317.
the entire country.\textsuperscript{71} Circulation rose to a high of three thousand, included many whites, and was more powerful than all previous Negro papers, including The Colored Man's Journal and The Anglo African, both operating in New York at that time.\textsuperscript{72} The Salem (Ohio) Homestead Journal found no fault with the topographical appearance or size of the sheet but criticized Garrison and Douglass as irrational and ignorant, "and questioned the source of money for the paper."\textsuperscript{73} The New York Herald was critical of The North Star and advised the people of Rochester to throw Frederick's printing press into the lake.

Frederick had the able assistance of Martin Delany, the former editor of the Pittsburgh Mystery, but even with this talented leadership, the paper almost folded on numerous occasions. His promise to keep The North Star Alive was enough to cause him to destroy his own personal health. The trips he made to secure funds and increase circulation placed an extreme burden on the editor and when the sixty-dollar-a-week publication expense arrived early in 1848, Frederick seemed heartbroken. Expressing his feelings on January 12 to Martin Delany, Frederick said, "Subscribers come in slowly, and I am doing all I can by

\textsuperscript{71}Arthur G. Lindsay, "The Economic Condition of the Negroes of New York Prior to 1861," The Journal of Negro History, 6: 190-199, April 1921.


\textsuperscript{73}Liberator, January 7, 1848, p. 1; citing Salem (Ohio) Homestead Journal.
lecturing and letters to keep our heads above the water."74 However, Frederick was proud of his printing establishment, which was the first ever owned by a Negro in the United States.75 At a cost of one thousand dollars, Frederick was "able to purchase all the necessary equipment for printing,"76 and according to the owner the material was the finest that could be obtained in this country.77 In fairness to Frederick, and aside from a slight flirtation with the remnants of the Liberty Party, The North Star was predominantly a one-man show. Even when he did support various political parties, his words rang forth from the columns and were not prostituted by some salaried campaigner.

Problems arose along with success, and the editor was forced to mortgage his home in late April, 1843, to keep the paper in circulation. In early May, Frederick implored friends and readers that "in order to sustain the paper, we are under necessity of calling upon you for immediate pecuniary aid, in confident hope that you will come to our assistance."78 Frederick was angered and dismayed because he had not received any noticable support from the important faction of Boston

74 Foner, op. cit., p. 85, citing Frederick Douglass to Martin R. Delany, January 12, 1848, HSS. Frederick Douglass Frederick Douglass Memorial Home, Anacostia, D. C.

75 The North Star, January 14, 1848, p. 3.

76 National Anti-Slavery Standard, January 27, 1843.

77 Ibid.

78 The North Star, May 5, 1848, p. 2.
abolitionists. It seemed that what little support he might have received was lost because The North Star did not denounce all abolitionists who were not Garrisonians. To add to these woes, the political abolitionists refused to ally themselves with The North Star in the early stages as the paper still leaned towards Garrisonian principles. The fact that by May, 1848, only one out of every five subscribers to The North Star was black poured more salt into Frederick's wounds. Provoked, Frederick editorialized "that a well conducted press in the hands of colored men is essential to the progress and elevation of the colored man, or they [pro-slavery advocates] will regard you as one merely seeking a living at public expense, to get along without work."

79 Frederick had not been strong enough to spend half of the first publication year lecturing, there is little doubt that the paper would have folded. Even with his lectures, and helpful benefactors, and a mortgaged home, The North Star was in debt for over one hundred dollars. Despite the rigors of publishing and the fear of closure for debt, Frederick continued his lecturing, with all the brilliance he could muster and castigated the Southern slaveholders. On January 17, 1848, at the Printers Festival in Rochester, New York, Douglass complimented the members of the Rochester Press as "Promoters of knowledge, lovers of liberty, foes of ignorance, and aspiress of prejudice," and asked that they continue to give to the world "noble examples by

79 Ibid., April 27, 1849, p. 2.
free and intelligent union of black and white."  

In March, Frederick spoke in New York City, denouncing the New York papers for calling him a scoundrel and stigmatizing the whole country "as a slave-hunting community." His tone and manner became indignant, and he resounded, "I would welcome the cause, whether it be an act of Heaven or a thunderball from Hell, which should break into pieces and shatter this union of states." Frederick found time to attend the Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society on May 9 and criticized religion as "the problem which breeds slavery," and chastized the northern people because they "had done nothing to loosen the yoke that bound the slaves." His speech cleared the air for many Negroes who might have thought that the "busy editor" was too wound up in his columns to position himself on the anti-slavery battlefront. On May 29, Frederick made an appearance at the New England Anti-Slavery Society Convention and spoke on the evils of slavery. He expressed the hope that there "would be

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80 National Anti-Slavery Standard, January 27, 1848, citing Rochester Democrat.
81 See columns of Liberator, February 11, 18, 25, March 3, 10, 17, 1843.
82 Liberator, March 17, 1848, p. 1.
83 Ibid., citing The Springfield Republican
84 Ibid., May 26, 1848, p. 2.
85 Ibid., June 2, 1848, p. 2.
lack of discussion, especially at a time when there was so
much love of freedom and hatred of slavery."86

In mid-June, Frederick attended the Liberty Party Conven-
on in Buffalo, New York, and was satisfied that their resolu-
tions affirmed that slaveholders can have no rights. The
urging of the resolution as passed at the Buffalo Convention
eminded Frederick of the similar one passed at last month's
American Anti-Slavery Meeting in New York. Frederick wrote that
the address to the free colored at the Buffalo Convention "was
most interesting . . . because it not only gave us credit for
our merits" but also rebuked Negro indifference to the antislavery
cause and pointed out its shortcomings.87 The convention ended
after New York's Gerrit Smith had been nominated as the presi-
dential candidate of the Liberty Party with Charles Foote of
Michigan as a running mate. Frederick's Garrisonian beliefs
still were firm as he closed an editorial: "Our attendance at
the convention, while doing much to remove prejudice from our
mind respecting some of the prominent men engaged in it, had
also deepened our conviction that the only true ground for
American abolitionism is 'No Union With Slaveholders.'"88 To
enlighten the readers of The North Star as to the platform of the
Liberty Party, an article was quoted from the Cincinnati Herald
explaining how that party was mainly interested in making "the

86The North Star, June 16, 1843, p. 2.
87Ibid., June 30, 1843, p. 2.
88Ibid.
slavery issue paramount over others," abolishing it under the
cational and state jurisdiction, through the Federal Constitu-
tion.\textsuperscript{89} The Liberty Party was supported in the columns of the
ational Era of Washington, \textit{Emancipator} of Boston, \textit{Herald} of
adelphia and many others across the country.\textsuperscript{90} Though
arious members of the Liberty Party might differ among themselves,
they all agreed that the government can and should abolish
slavery "in all places where it has exclusive jurisdiction and
discourage it elsewhere by example, recommendation and every
legitimate means."\textsuperscript{91}

The editor of \textit{The North Star} had learned a valuable lesson
from the \textit{Cincinnati Herald}. The paper pointed out that the
arrisonians were "children" of the antislavery movement that
existed prior to 1839 and while they denounced the Constitution
as iniquitous, dishonorable, a covenant with death and agreement
with hell, they perform "no practical measures to effect their
object."\textsuperscript{92} Frederick realized the seeming truth in those state-
ments as Garrison's band did not vote nor arm and merely con-
ined themselves to denunciations of slavery and its abettors.
Scathing denunciation did little more than arouse emotion and
keep papers in circulation. The \textit{Liberator}, \textit{National Anti-Slavery
Standard}, and three or four other papers fitted such a description.

\textsuperscript{89}Ibid., citing the \textit{Cincinnati Herald}.

\textsuperscript{90}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{91}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{92}Ibid.
Overworked, as usual, Frederick became ill in late June and informed his readers that he had been suffering with enlarged and frequently inflamed tonsils for over a year. He interrupted his public schedule and had his tonsils removed, only to suffer terribly from the ordeal. But he assured his readers that he would soon discharge his editorial duties again.

Frederick took his stand in the Women's Rights Movement soon after his arrival in Rochester, and in July, 1848, attended the first organized convention at Seneca Falls. Always mindful of the fact that he owed his freedom to the efforts of the opposite sex and remembering the sturdy women in Massachusetts who aided the cause, Frederick saw fit to plead their cause. He remembered Maria W. Chapman and Lydia Maria Child who had so capably edited the National Anti-Slavery Standard. He was also mindful of the Grimke sisters, who did much to further the anti-slavery movement. He had rarely made a tour without being complimented by the hospitality of some women who were anxious to further the cause. It was in such a tone that Frederick headlined The North Star with "Right is of no Sex." Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, a Quaker reformer, Mary McClintock, and Martha G. Wright called the Seneca Falls meeting to adopt a "Declaration of Sentiments." Of the thirty-two men who ran the

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93Ibid., June 30, 1848, p. 3.
94Ibid.
risk of being branded "Aunt Nancy Men" or hermaphrodites, Douglass was the only one prominent in the deliberations.\textsuperscript{96} He was the only man who supported the resolution of Mrs. Stanton, that "women should vote."\textsuperscript{97} Frederick stated that "it was the duty of the women of this country to secure for themselves the sacred right of elective franchise."\textsuperscript{98} Continuing along the same lines Frederick retorted that the "only true basis of right was the capacity of individuals."\textsuperscript{99} Frederick favored the movement and stated that the proceedings "were characterized by marked ability and dignity" and the Negro abolitionist editor bade the movement his "humble Godspeed."\textsuperscript{100}

Frederick had not forgotten his editorial duties and throughout continually tried to invigorate the antislavery tempo. He verbally thrashed John C. Calhoun as that "master of slavery, who is evidently conscious that his game is almost up—that his race is run;" and that his once potent voice has quite lost its power in American affairs.\textsuperscript{101} In the same issue, Frederick ripped into the Northern Whigs and Democrats who "were standing proof of the subserviency of the North to the slave

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{96}Ibid.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{97}Ibid.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{98}The North Star, July 26, 1848, p. 2.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{99}Ibid., August 11, 1848, p. 2.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{100}The North Star, July 28, 1848, loc. cit.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{101}Ibid., July 7, 1848, p. 2.}
power . . ." as well as Taylor, the slaveholding Whig president, who refuted all that the Northern Whig Journals proposed. 102

Frederick had received various letters of encouragement from Gerrit Smith who retorted, "What a land is this when the poor and weak are obliged to congregate themselves to stave off the man-stealers. 'You will perhaps say—what a Constitution, cursed this land, . . . I would rather say, 'what a people' cursed this land.'" 103 The words of Smith blamed the people; who, "even if the Constitution had been dropped from heaven" would have interpreted the document as justification for slavery. Those words spread bold new ideas into the mind of Douglass. His friendship with Smith increased greatly and the mutual respect they had for each other helped chart Frederick's new route to emancipation.

Frederick was aware of all facets of the abolition movement, and knew that many of his brethren had to be reminded of their own individual responsibilities. He strove to inform them that whether slave or free, it was their country and what they did to better themselves in it, would determine the position of future generations. The orator's tongue could lash out fiercely to his own brethren. His speech on "What Are The Colored Doing For Themselves," was an example of this:

What we, the colored people want, is character, and this nobody can give us. It is a thing we must get for ourselves. We must labor for it.

102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
It is gained by hard toil. Neither the sympathy nor the generosity of our friends can give it to us. It is attainable—yes, through God, it is attainable. "There is Gold in the earth, but we must dig it, so with character. It is attainable; but we must attain it, and attain it each for himself. I cannot for you, and you cannot for me." 104

Frederick realized that the apathy and lack of incentive, in a large measure, was the problem of his people. The word freedom sounded good, but many Negro slaves were content to let "Freedom" happen.

Douglass was one of the more than 40,000 who gathered in Buffalo, that hot August, for the Free Soil Convention. 105 There were many Whigs and Abolitionists in attendance who favored Free Soil principles and over 465 delegates from eighteen states directed the proceedings. 106 Frederick was repeatedly called for but because his throat had not fully healed, his comments were of a limited nature. 107 Upon the conclusion of the meeting, Frederick described the events as "a vast and variegated assemblage of forces organized to resist the growing and aggressive demands of slavery and the slave power." 108

104 Ibid., July 14, 1843, p. 2.
107 National Anti-Slavery Standard, August 17, 1843, p. 3.
_Avery Stariclard correspondent caught the tone of the meeting as he said that "a great deal of high anti-slavery thought and deep feeling were expressed by many of the speakers."\textsuperscript{109}

Frederick went to Cleveland, Ohio, in early September, 1848, to attend a colored national convention and became an important member of the Negro Convention Movement. The \textit{Cleveland Plain Dealer} surmised that this particular convention probably met to ratify the Buffalo nomination of the Liberty Party.\textsuperscript{110}

The convention assembled and elected Douglass its president.\textsuperscript{111} Frederick planned and delivered an excellent speech that was well received by the gathering.\textsuperscript{112} He was especially gratified because the delegates represented a huge cross section of the free Negro population. As a result of the favorable impression he received from the Cleveland convention, Douglass came out for the Free Soil movement in his paper; stating the ideal of Free-Soil, Free Men, Free Labor and "Free-Speech."\textsuperscript{113} Frederick did not forget the feminine counterparts and his motion to include "women" as delegates was seconded, and carried "with three cheers for women's rights.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{109}\textit{National Anti-Slavery Standard}; August 17, loc. cit.

\textsuperscript{110}\textit{Cleveland Plain Dealer}, September 4, 1848, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{111}\textit{Ibid.}, September 6, 1848, p. 2; \textit{Liberator}, October 20, 27, 1848; \textit{The North Star}, September 22, 29, 1848, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{112}\textit{Ibid.}.

\textsuperscript{113}\textit{The North Star}, August 18, 1848, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{114}\textit{Ibid.}, September 19, 1848, p. 2; \textit{Liberator}, October 20, 1848 p. 2; Report of Proceedings of Colored National Convention Held at Cleveland, Ohio, Wednesday, September 6, 1848.
Frederick drew nationwide acclaim for his splendid efforts and Gerrit Smith ventured an opinion that "his talents and dignity would adorn the Presidency of the Nation." The Cleveland True Democrat in fending an attack upon the Negro orator by the Cleveland Plain Dealer stated: "Frederick Douglass is a man, who if divided into fifty parts would make fifty better than the editor of the Plain Dealer." Forever true to the abolitionist cause, Frederick was the dramatic force that rejuvenated the Negro Convention Movement in 1851 when many of his brethren feared the dreaded Fugitive Slave Law. Frederick had added more canvass to the sails of his abolitionist ship, because he not only acted as a strong influence for abolitionism in the North, but his tremendous bearing had become a "leavening force" among free Negroes and slaves in the South.

Frederick was still plagued by discrimination and related his experience while traveling from Rochester to Buffalo. After holding his ground, Frederick, in response to being called "Nigger" facetiously remarked that he was "only half-Negro" and "My dear father was as white as yourself, so if you cannot condescend to reply properly to my Negro blood, reply to the European blood." While touring through up-state New York.

115 Foner, p. 20, cit., Vol. II. p. 26, citing Letter of Gerrit Smith to Charles B. Ray; November 12, 1843; see Gerrit Smith Papers.
116 Cleveland True Democrat, September 11, 1843, p. 2.
118 The North Star, September 18, 1848, p. 2.
and speaking at conventions, Frederick wrote to Thomas Auld, his former master, on September 3, 1843. The date was quite significant because it signified the first anniversary of Frederick's emancipation. He stressed the significance of his escape and praised the cause to which he was dedicated.\(^{119}\)

In late September, Frederick's "Address to the Colored People" appeared in *The North Star* and emphasized the importance of acquiring skill in various trades, through education.\(^{120}\) Frederick resounded, "Let us say what is necessary to be done, is honorable to do... Never refuse to act with a white society or institution because it is white, or a black one, because it is black... But act with all without distinction of color... for by so doing, we shall find opportunities for removing prejudices and establishing the rights of all races."\(^{121}\) The thoughts behind such idealistic words found their way into many Negro hearts. However, the dormant attitudes of many Northerners allowed the problem to remain deeply imbedded in the slave holding south. To arouse the feelings of the apathetic North, Frederick placed a brilliant article in *The North Star* entitled "The Blood of the Slave on the Skirts of the Northern People."\(^{122}\)

\(^{119}\)Frederick Douglass to Thomas Auld, September 3, 1843, as cited in *The North Star*, September 8, 1843, p. 2; *Liberator*, September 22, 1843, p. 1.

\(^{120}\) *The North Star*, September 29, 1843, pp. 1-2.

\(^{121}\)Ibid.

\(^{122}\)Ibid., November 17, 1843, p. 1.
Through sympathetic tones such as a "victim of your [northern] power and oppression, humbly craves your attention," Frederick artfully questioned the logic of not considering "man-stealing" a crime. Developing religious undertones, Frederick remarked "... consider the enormity of your [slave] conduct and seek forgiveness at the hands of a merciful creator. Repent of this wickedness and bring forth fruit meet [sic] for repentance, by delivering the despoiled out of the hands of the despoiler." 123

Frederick spent a large part of November touring Massachusetts and even attended the annual meeting of the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society in an attempt to swing voters towards the "Free Soil Ticket." 124 His efforts were futile and the Whig, Zachary Taylor, carried the state. The problem as Frederick saw it, went back six years when the Democratic Party, then known as the Free Suffrage Party, adopted a constitution that restricted colored voters. The Whigs, or Law and Order Party, defeated that constitution during the Garrisonian sponsored "One Hundred Conventions." The Whigs then adopted another constitution with no color restrictions and had definitely gained control of the Negro vote. 125 Douglas spent the remainder of the year in Rochester, pleading for subscriptions to sustain the newspaper. 126 He remarked that the paper "could not survive on sympathy,"

123Ibid.
124Ibid., November 24, 1843, p. 2.
125Ibid.
126Ibid., December 8, 15, 22, 1843, p. 1.
and more awareness of events necessitated increased support.\textsuperscript{127} The Negro editor reminded his readers that the paper was originated to "strike at slavery until the wolfish, bloody, starved ravenous system is leveled with the dust", but to accomplish the goal, the paper had to remain in circulation.\textsuperscript{128}

Frederick was elated to learn that the Negro women of Philadelphia had held an antislavery fair and raised one hundred dollars for \textit{The North Star}. It was not so much the money that pleased Douglass as his knowledge of "the esteem in which \textit{The North Star} is held by those who feel the crushing weight of American oppression."\textsuperscript{129} Frederick was aware of the respect and trust in which he was held by many Lady's Anti-Slavery Society Fair. He made it a point to publish reports of their proceedings and apologized when his paper lacked space to incorporate such articles.\textsuperscript{130}

Frederick was indebted to the ladies, and had it not been for the efforts of Julia Griffiths, \textit{The North Star} would probably have lost its brilliance and faded into oblivion. Miss Griffiths had become acquainted with Frederick in England, and helped raise the money used to start his paper. She furnished him with a "valuable collection of books, pamphlets, tracts and

\textsuperscript{127}Ibid., December 22, 1848, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{128}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{129}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{130}Ibid.
131 Journeying to America in 1848, Miss Griffiths came a valuable assistant in building up The North Star. Frederick was indebted to her and spoke highly of Julia on many occasions, crediting her with the increased circulation of The North Star, in a letter to Gerrit Smith. 132 Her ability to organize The North Star's financial problems, enabled Frederick to pay off the mortgage on his home by March 18, 1853. Frederick wrote to Smith in 1851 that "The North Star sustains itself, and the art of my family. It has just reached a living point." 133

Frederick continued his lecture tours in 1849 and constantly reminded his black brethren of their own responsibilities. The North Star shared this good in the form of another stimulating article entitled "A Few Words To Our Own People." "Let us unite firmly to do all that in us lies to improve our condition," said Douglass, "because only by uniting our wills...can we keep pace with American Civilization," and prevent those 'wheels' from rushing us. 134 Frederick still respected Garrison and complimented his Liberator as the "glorious old storm-beaten pioneer" which had begun its nineteenth volume. 135 Despite Frederick's

131 National Anti-Slavery Standard, January 13, 1848, p. 3; 132 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith May 1, 1851, (HSS. Gerrit Smith Papers, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York)

133 The North Star, March 15, April 12, May 30, December 5, 1850.

134 Ibid., January 19, 1849, p. 2.

135 Ibid.
attempt to remain a friend of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery leader, no assistance came, nor was any support demonstrated from the Garrisonian publications.

Various colonization schemes, relating to the Negro, sprang up during the late forties and continued up through the Civil War. Douglass opposed these ideas of forced colonization with the same fervor that embroiled his antislavery feelings, and his 1849 opinion on the subject was to remain constant through many storms. "Our minds are made up," said Frederick, "to live here if we can, or die here if we must; so every attempt to remove us, will be, as it ought to be, labor lost."136

Although Frederick remained constant in his detestation of colonization and slavery, the turn of the year found shades of the "new" Douglass appearing. For in early January, 1849, in a letter to C. H. Chase, that maybe there were a variety of roads, all leading to the destruction of the slave power. He wrote Chase regarding the "character" of the Constitution:

At a January Convention, Chase resolved that "the Constitution of the United States, if strictly construed according to its readings, is antislavery in all of its provisions."137 The word "all" had been added by Douglass. He apologized for not answering the letter sooner but refused to debate because he still maintained that the original framers of the document and the Supreme Court, have made it a pro-slavery instrument and as

136Ibid., January 26, 1849, p. 2.
137Ibid., February 9, 1849, p. 3.
such, Frederick could not bring himself to vote under or swear to support it.\(^{138}\) In March, Frederick tore into the Constitution in what was to be one of his final public denouncements of the document. He branded the Constitution as "a compact demanding immediate disannulment, and one which, with our view of its wicked requirements, we can never enter."\(^{139}\) His fiery attack on the Constitution had again fanned the smouldering flames, and his many friends requested that he once again take to the speaker's platform. Frederick departed, promising to inform his readers of his whereabouts.\(^{140}\) The North Star carried Frederick's message. "In sixteen days, we have traveled at an average of twelve miles a day," made twenty speeches and secured the same amount of subscriptions for the paper.\(^{141}\) Frederick's tour included Avon, Connecticut, Ithaca, Ohio, and New York, Canandaigua, West Bloomfield, Branchport, Hopewell and Rushville, all in New York.\(^{142}\) Although their success was limited in places such as Pen Yan, Plattsburgh and Bath, New York, where one Methodist minister cried out, "I do not believe that God Almighty, ever made niggers to teach white persons," Frederick was confident that progress had been made.\(^{143}\)

\(^{138}\)Ibid.  
\(^{139}\)Ibid., March 16, 1849, p. 2.  
\(^{140}\)Ibid., February 16, 1849, p. 2.  
\(^{141}\)Ibid., March 9, 1849, p. 2.  
\(^{142}\)Ibid.  
\(^{143}\)Ibid.
Returning to Rochester, Frederick took time to evaluate the merits of the Free Soil Party. He credited the movement with arousing northern hostility towards the cruel system of slavery but felt that the movement "left the public mind in a more difficult state to deal with" than he had previously observed.144 Frederick felt that his "burdens were increased" and realized that old issues must be pressed upon the public mind to insure future success.145 Even with an extremely busy schedule, Frederick realized the necessity of answering Gerrit Smith's letter as to "a fatal admission on his part to admit that the constitution when standing alone is not a proslavery instrument."146 Frederick clarified his statement by saying that there has been nothing demonstrated to him yet that could possibly change his attitude towards the pro-slavery constitution because the people who operated it "were unwilling to construe the document properly." Frederick wrote continually to Smith and informed him that the Eastern Abolitionists were curtailing his paper's circulation because they had branded it useless and unnecessary to the cause.147

Frederick moved throughout New York and the surrounding

144Ibid., March 25, 1849, p. 2.
145Ibid.
146See The North Star, March 25, 1849 Letter of Gerrit Smith to Frederick Douglass; also March 30, 1849, Frederick's letter to Gerrit Smith.
147Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, March 30, 1849, Rochester Gerrit Smith Papers.
areas in April, procured subscriptions and praised various members of his race for work in the cause of freedom. Frederick's "Tribute for the Negro" speech criticized the "harshness of heart and blindness of mind of many whites," and challenged the nation to recognize the capabilities of the Negro race. The Negro abolitionist made speaking appearances in Brooklyn, New York, Newark, New Jersey, and was accompanied by another Negro Garrisonian, Charles I. Remond, who seemingly had begun to resent Frederick's overshadowing influence. Frederick commented that most of the meetings "were soul cheering." He attended the Great Anti-Colonization Meeting of the Colored Citizens of New York and was praised in the Ray's Horn for visiting the city. Even with Frederick's ability and poise, New York was too big for prejudice to be completely absent. Upon the conclusion of "a most imposing and impressive" American Anti-Slavery Society meeting, Frederick penned an editorial condemning the "Color-phobia in New York." The continued evils of slavery boiled Frederick's blood. The Liberator placed horrible articles in its columns exposing numerous atrocities. They spoke of runaway Negro women who had been branded and "could be recognized

148 National Anti-Slavery Standard, April 12, 1849, p. 2; The North Star, April 7, 1849, p. 2.
149 Ibid., April 19, 1849; The North Star, April 27, 1849, p. 2.
150 Ibid., May 5, 1849, p. 2.
152 Ibid., May 18, 25, 1849, p. 2; Liberator, May 13, 1849, p. 2.
by distinct marks on their cheeks." One slave owner offered a twenty dollar reward for a black woman "who could be distinguished by the letter I, burned on the left side of her face." The notice was signed by a Micajah Ricks.

Frederick and Charles L. Remond held a series of conventions for the Garrisonian antislavery cause, in Ohio and Michigan, during July and August and were scheduled to spend some time in Cincinnati. The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer remarked that Douglass never arrived for his "Emancipation Day" address, and expressed disappointment that the "great champion" did not meet the Negroes who had assembled at the Baker Street Church. Frederick was forced to miss the festivities owing to an illness that struck him in late July.

On August 10, The North Star's editorial column declared "The Union of the Oppressed for the Sake of Freedom," and explained the development of the National League. Frederick had come to realize that it was necessary for the Negroes of the free states to support the National League because it was established to organize and develop plans for the upliftment of

154 Ibid.
156 The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, August 2, 1849, p. 2.
157 Ibid., August 3, 1849, p. 2.
158 The North Star, July 20, 1849, p. 2.
159 Ibid., August 10, 1849, p. 2.
their race. The Anti-Slavery Bugle hoped that Frederick's efforts in the National League would promote better understanding among races.160

In celebration of his second year of freedom, Frederick wrote another letter to his former master Thomas Auld and hoped that he too would identify himself with the holy cause of freedom.161 Moving south into Pennsylvania, he severely criticized the mobocratic spirit that existed in the pro-slavery city of Philadelphia.162 Here he pleaded for support of the National League and stated that the "success of the movement would depend entirely upon the Negro people themselves."163 Frederick praised the efforts of the Massachusetts Spy, the Boston Republican and the Free Soil Party construction in Massachusetts, but continued to repudiate the pro-slavery guaranties of the Constitution.164 On the road again, Frederick attended the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society meeting in late November and the Providence Mirror remarked that Frederick's presence made the agenda "one of the most interesting here in years."165

160Ibid., August 24, 1849, p. 2; citing the Anti-Slavery Bugle.
161Liberator, September 14, 1849, p. 2; The North Star, September 7, 1849, p. 2.
162The North Star, October 19, 1849, p. 2.
163Ibid., October 26, 1949, p. 2.
164Ibid., November 2, 1849, p. 2.
165Liberator, November 23, 1849, p. 2; citing Providence [Rhode Island] Mirror.
Frederick led many to believe that his mind could not be changed regarding his convictions of the problems between free and slave states. In 1849, Frederick believed that he could "welcome the news tomorrow, should it come," that the slaves had risen in the South.

He felt that the sable arms that had beautified the South for so long, should now spread death and destruction there. His opinion had begun to change as early as his visit with John Brown in 1847. After learning of the slave rebellion plan, Frederick's thoughts became tinged with the color of Brown's strong impressions. Frederick began to experiment in politics also, but, he made a mistake in choice. The Liberty Party's veins had grown so anemic by 1848, that the transfusions of the tariff, public lands, and the Mexican War, could not bring it back to health.166

Frederick would later flirt with the Free Soil Party; but their platform although pertinent, was not strong enough to win over the country. He found politics a necessary but strange continent, and was soon lost in it. In 1848, it was just a question of too many parties. Even though Frederick leaned towards the Liberty Party, his only vivid memory of the proceedings was the hatred he felt for the winner, Zachary Taylor, a slaveholding Whig.

What had suddenly become clear to Frederick was that the "ship of states" had sprung a leak. He began to search the "hull" and located the festering problems of sectional issues. Sectionalism had recently been vitalized by the Mexican War and it rode the nation like "a fire-breathing hag."167

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north, and rightly so, because little if any opposition challenged them. However, the ambitious scheme of Southerners to multiply their political power was temporarily blocked by problems of the Western boundary of Texas, the territories of Utah, and New Mexico. The scene was set for undoubtedly the most gallant attempt on the part of politicians to prevent a conflagration. The efforts were made in earnest, but many believed they could only hope to temporarily avert the final struggle. The problems were numerous as Congress met in December, 1849, and it took more than sixty ballots to elect the new Speaker of the House. The debate was opened by Henry Clay, who realized the importance of gaining time. Clay presented his plan skillfully. To mollify the North, he proposed that California should be free, Texas would forgo her claim to an extended western boundary, and slave-trade would be abolished in the District of Columbia. For the South, Clay denied the right of Congress to control the slave trade within and between states and proposed that New Mexico and Utah become territories under the restriction of the Wilmot Proviso. It took little reasoning to understand the Wilmot Proviso section because, the determination of whether or not to extend slavery would be left up to the residents. The worst usually comes last, and this occasion did not prove the exception. A harsher Fugitive Slave Law was demanded. "Mr. South Carolina," John C. Calhoun defined his position more clearly and stated that unless the South's terms were accepted, the South would secede.

On March 7, 1850, Daniel Webster made what is considered.
his best speech in "support of the South." Webster had always been a northern champion, but spoke "not as a northern man but as an American—for the preservation of the Union." The debates lasted long into the summer, but the outcome was far from acceptable to the abolitionists. It was evident by the strained emotions that no compromise could stand the successive waves of fury, sectional interest and pride. The frustration of the future reality dawned upon the entire nation as the compromise more than satisfied the slave-minded south. Though the full political implications of the compromise seemed lost to him, Frederick reacted as a true abolitionist. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Law was a stunning blow. Frederick was critical of Calhoun and especially so of Webster. He dubbed Webster's speech as "not one for the occasion" and the hatred of the bill in Frederick's mind was extremely clear in his writings. He retorted, "Well done, Daniel! You have done the work, and it is proper to ask for the pay—why should you be denied the thirty pieces of silver?"

The Fugitive Slave Bill cut deeply into the heart of the Underground Railroad. The punishments were severe for infractions of the law and any slight offense could subject the culprit to a five thousand dollar fine. Fear struck many.


171 The North Star, March 15, 1850, p. 2.

a veteran abolitionist, but Frederick was undaunted and continued helping fugitives. In 1873, Frederick explained the route which had become so familiar to him during his residence in Rochester. "The fugitives were received by William Still in Philadelphia, sent by him to David Ruggles in New York, then to Stephen A. Dayes at Albany; thence to J. W. Loguen in Syracuse and to me in Rochester and finally to Hiram Wilson and St. Catherine's, Canada West."173

There were other terms of the Fugitive Slave Law, that were equally stringent and cynical. They all aimed at revenge and at the same time sought to make enforcement easy and attractive. Senator James Mason of Virginia, who framed the bill reasoned that the righteousness of the "moral North" could be penalized or bought out of existence. The law set up a system of rewards for the capture of fugitive slaves. It stipulated a penalty of one thousand dollars against any United States Marshall who refused or neglected to arrest an alleged fugitive when called upon to do so. Runaways could be arrested without warrant and taken before a judge, who required only a sworn statement claiming ownership as proof. The fugitive was usually destined to spend the rest of his life in chains, because he was not allowed to testify in his own behalf or have a trial by jury. Negroes in the North who had been free all their lives, felt insecure and many left their "sweet land of liberty."

173Ibid., pp. 125-126 citing letter of Frederick Douglass, March 27, 1893 (NLS. Frederick Douglass, Cedar Hill, Anacostia, D.C.)
The effects of the law were deep and horrifying. Much of the economic stability, striven for so patiently against great odds, and represented in homes, jobs, and families, were lost. Whole settlements of Negroes fled. Three days after the bill had been signed, many colored people left Boston and "the pastor of the colored Baptist Church in Rochester" fled with all parishioners except one, into Canada. Abolitionists feared for their personal safety and Samuel Ringgold Ward and Henry Highland Garnet were only two of many who sought freedom on foreign soil. Frederick was very concerned over the loss of the two men because each had done his share in the cause for freedom. Douglass hurled a barrage of remarks at many who supported the infamous law. Man-stealing continued and Bishop Holland of the African Methodist Church moaned, "we are whipped... and we might as well retreat in order." Douglass, as expected, did the opposite and many of his friends considered him foolhardy. Indeed, perhaps he was, because he went on with unfailing energy, speaking at meetings, denouncing the Fugitive Slave Law and its supporters and continually pumping courage into the veins of his disheartened brethren. Frederick harbored many fugitives, and had eleven in his home one evening

175Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 286.
176Redding, op. cit., p. 119.
177See The North Star, March 15, 23, 30, April 5, 12, 19, 26, 1850, concerning problems of race.
with John Brown speaking to them. 178

Douglass' own safety was not certain even had he foregone his Underground Railroad activities. He explained that his freedom was of doubtful validity since it had been made under the circumstances that left the owner no choice. For some time, friends guarded his home in Rochester fearing the dreaded "nigger-catchers."

Months passed and the excesses of the slave hunters awakened the North's old scale of human values. Yankee stubbornness and pride and something even more metaphysical took over. "Even some northerners who were by habit or from self-interest cold or lukewarm in their antislavery sentiments, felt the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 was an infringement upon their liberty or conscience." 179 Douglass' efforts were invaluable among this period because his utterances "breathed out fiery indignations" on behalf of his enslaved race. 180 The South had unwittingly defeated its own purpose by trying to get the North to wash its "dirty linen." The struggle also widened Frederick's abolitionist outlook and the formal split with Garrison would soon take place.

Frederick continued lecturing throughout 1850 but always took time to organize articles for his paper. In April, Frederick criticized the speech made by William H. Seward because

178 Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., pp. 519-524.
179 Redding, op. cit., pp. 119-120.
180 Chesmutt, op. cit., p. 75.
content had supported "the anti-slavery aspects of the institution." Frederick resounded, "Slavery is as opposite Freedom as Heaven is to Hell," and each section would see by what they felt was necessary to maintain themselves. He continued and exclaimed "...the Constitution being at war with self, cannot be lived up to, and what we cannot do, we ought it to swear to do."181 Frederick's inflamed tongue lashed out; his own colored brethren in Rochester on various occasions because some had abandoned their principles and accepted prejudice in public facilities.182 Frederick encountered another round of prejudice in the person of Captain Isaiah Rynders at the Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York City, May 7, 1850.183 Rynders had attempted to prevent Douglass from speaking and later insisted that the Negro race was enslaved but not slandered. The argument became heated; and Rynders declared, "You [Frederick] are not even a black man, you are a half brother; you are only half a Negro; Douglass lashed back, "yes, he is correct... I am indeed only half a Negro and half white, which makes me a half brother to Mr. Rynders."184 Frederick's pun was well taken by the audience, but a newspaper friend of Rynders placed a disparaging statement about Frederick in a local paper. Bennett's Herald called Douglass and friends

181The North Star, April 5, 1850, p. 2.
183Liberator, May 24, 1850, p. 2.
"Garrison's band of nigger minstrels wondering into the Tabernacle on Broadway."185 Before leaving, Frederick was unmercifully beaten, on the Battery in New York, by ruffians who disliked the idea of his accompanying two white ladies.186

Frederick spent some time in Ohio in early July and while there wrote to Ralph W. Emerson. Having read his recent work entitled "Representative Man," Frederick asked if Emerson could forward a copy of it to him.187 The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer mentioned that "the legitimate champion" of the abolitionists, Frederick Douglass, had made a speech on July 5, to his black brethren in College Hall.188 Frederick wrote to The North Star and reminisced about his journey into Ohio during the One Hundred Conventions in 1843. He remembered the advice he had received from his associates, who were against his entering Cincinnati. They feared that "he might be spirited into the Kentucky side of the Ohio River and be doomed to slavery."189 While in Cincinnati, Frederick held five meetings, and remarked that all the engagements at College Hall and Walnut Hill were

185 Liberatore, loc. cit.
186 The North Star, May 30, 1850, p. 2; Liberator, July 5, 1850, p. 4.
187 Frederick Douglass to Ralph W. Emerson, July 5, 1850, (NPS. Charles Sumner Letterbooks Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts).
188 The Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, July 6, 1850, p. 2.
189 The North Star, July 13, 1850, p. 2; Liberator, August 2, 1850, p. 1.
"numerosely attended." 190

Frederick's feelings and condition are evident in a personal letter to O. Dennet during early August of 1850. Douglass apologized for not writing earlier and was grateful for the invitation on July 22, to lecture in Portland, Massachusetts. He assured Dennet that "should circumstances call me to Boston this winter," he would be honored to lecture should the vacancy reopen. 191 "I have been much from home of late and labored very hard—and as a consequence," Douglass said, "I am greatly worn but still my spirit is bright and my courage invincible. With the truth and the right on our side, victory is certain." 192 Frederick was also gratified and encouraged when he learned that his support had not expired in England, and he thanked the editor of the London Times for the recent article in its columns criticizing the ruffians who mobbed him in New York in late May. 193

Throughout the closing months of 1850, The North Star's columns blazed anew against the outrages of the Fugitive Slave Law. 194 Speaking out against Clay's "Union-saving" compromise, Frederick declared, "there is no peace yet—nor can there be this side of repentance." 195 Writing from Boston on October 15,

190 Ibid.

191 Frederick Douglass to O. Dennet, August 9, 1850, Charles Sumner Letterbooks.

192 Ibid.

193 National Anti-Slavery Standard, August 15, 1850, p. 3.

194 See columns of The North Star, October, November, December, 1850.

195 Ibid., October 24, 1850, p. 2.
the Negro editor was impressed that "the whole North presents a scene of agitation such as has never before existed."196 All the Boston newspapers were filled with the "subject of injustice, cruelty and villany of this horrid kidnapping law."197 Douglass was also encouraged by the news that many families who had fled across the Canadian border had returned. Letters from various crusaders found their way to Frederick's desk and upheld his position; while cursing President Millard Fillmore for "unchaining the tiger" by signing the bill on September 18, 1850.198 Frederick continually blasted the law and added the new note of it suspending the constitutional right of Habeas Corpus. The New York Express caught Frederick's stinging rhetoric. "It is cruel, monstrous, infernal, and the Northern mind revolts at it and would do so though every line had been copied from the Constitution."199

The Rhode Island State Anti-Slavery Society was honored by Frederick's presence in November and said that "there could be no union between abolitionists and slaveholders."200 Frederick advocated forcible resistance at the meetings because although the leading statesmen had attempted to quell agitation, it was

196Ibid.
197Ibid.
198Ibid., citing Letter of W. P. Newman to Frederick Douglass.
199Ibid., October 31, 1850, p. 2.
quite impossible "to harmonize the antagonistic elements of white and black freedom." 201 Frederick's seemingly permanent stand on forcible resistance, was a far cry from his moral suasion attitude at the National Negro Convention, held at Troy, New York, in 1843. Douglass' remarks at that meeting were directed towards Henry Highland Garnet, the Negro pastor of the Liberty Street Negro Presbyterian Church, who had strongly advocated active resistance against slaveholders. 202 Frederick returned to Rochester and delivered lectures on American Slavery at Corinthian Hall on December first and eighth. He delved into the power of the detestable institution and used various examples to show how the system exerted its force. 203 Douglass vividly pointed out that slavery and its evils were not confined to the southern states and the northerners should all become aware of this factor. 204

Douglass began reexamining his "ship of state" and pondered over his new friendships. His closest confidant was Gerrit Smith, who had become both mentor and patron of Douglass. He generously supported Frederick's paper and was instrumental in merging it

201 Ibid.


203 The North Star; December 5, 12, 1850, p. 2.

204 Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, op. cit., Appendix; Foner, op. cit., pp. 153-149; Lecture on American Slavery, Delivered at Corinthian Hall, (Rochester, New York: Buffalo, 1851); See also Arthur A. Schomburg Collection, Frederick Douglass, Lecture at Corinthian Hall, (Rochester, New York: George Reese and Company's Power Press, 1851), Vol. 2.
ither the Liberty Party Paper. 205 Frederick had visited Smith's residence in Petersboro, New York, in 1848, and had come to realize after a time, that there were advantages in political abolitionism. Douglass, at the time, recalled Garrison's remarks that:

Convictions are the final end we seek... but even you dare not put your convictions against the slaveholders property. Slaveholders are not concerned or bothered about cheering crowds North of the Ohio River. They can now laugh, but would not do so long if the cheering crowds go march to the ballot box. Convictions need votes to back them up. 206

Frederick recalled the bitterness he felt after the election of Taylor, "that slaveholding Whig" without an opinion. Douglass had blatantly declared, "the cry of disunion shall be more fearlessly proclaimed till slavery is abolished, the Union dissolved, or the sun of this guilty nation goes down in blood". 207

He ascertained that while working in the Union, Taylor had strong political backing and was able to win the election. Frederick contemplated that his brethren too, might be successful in their efforts toward emancipation, if they procured a strong political group to wave their grievances. The dawn of political abolitionism came for the Negro editor when he realized that men such as Smith, Horace Mann; Simon Chaso, Charles Sumner, William Seward and Josiah Giddings were helping spread the ideals of

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206 Graham, op. cit., p. 165.

207 Holland, op. cit., pp. 176-177.
The *North Star* and not his former tutor, Garrison. With these men turning the whole force of the Constitution against slavery, the Negro race would surely have the opportunity to at least loosen the tightening bonds. The year 1851, marked the end of Frederick's acceptance of Garrisonian ideology.

On January 2, Frederick wrote a letter of thanks to Smith for the donation he had received and revealed tones of discontentment with the present state of abolitionism. The non-voting, non-political, non-union with slaveholders theory of Garrison was warping the hull of Frederick's "ship of state" and a new coat of varnish and pine-tar would be necessary to preserve its usefulness. The American Anti-Slavery Society held its eighteenth annual meeting in Syracuse, New York, and Frederick planned to overhaul his ship at that dock. Many people sensed the stillness in the air and quietly awaited the upcoming storm.

The simple truth was that the "air" of Central New York had filled Frederick's abolitionist sails. He found that he could no longer justify Garrison's viewpoint that the Constitution was a pro-slavery document. Douglass had become convinced that the preamble to the Constitution—that the government had been formed to establish a more perfect union, to promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty—governed the meaning of the document. The constitution was thus, by its avowed purpose, antislavery. Frederick further reasoned

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203 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, January 21, May 1, 1851, Rochester, Gerrit Smith Papers.
that slavery was not, nor could not become legalized, and the federal government could eradicate the ignoble system. Frederick now felt that political action to insure a happy ending was warranted and necessary.

The Syracuse meeting began with a resolution submitted by Edmund Quincy. He moved that the Anti-Slavery Bugle, the Pennsylvania Freeman, the National Anti-Slavery Standard and The North Star receive the recommendation of the society.209 The storm broke when Samuel J. May suggested that the Liberty Party Paper be added to the list. Garrison stormed in and vigorously opposed the motion along grounds that the journal did not follow the line of "No Union With Slaveholders" and held that the Constitution was an antislavery document.210 A new resolution was adopted in turn, stating that "no paper should be endorsed which did not assume the Constitution to be a pro-slavery document."211 Douglass then shed some added light on the scene and stated that he was "desirous of explaining his position."212 Not wanting to receive any commendation that would refute his new position, Frederick stated that:

I had arrived at the firm conviction that the Constitution, construed in the light of well-established rules of legal interpretation, might

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209 The North Star, May 15, 1851, p. 2; National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 15, 1851, pp. 2-3; Liberator, May 23, 1851, p. 2.

210 Ibid.

211 Ibid.

212 National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 29, 1851, p. 2.
be made consistent in its details with the noble purposes of its preamble, and in the future I will insist that the Constitution be wielded in behalf of emancipation.213

Frederick's attitude had not changed suddenly and he impressed upon the gathering that only after a careful study of the writings of Lysander Spooner, Gerrit Smith, and William Goodell had his opinion reversed in relation to his outlook on political action.214 He strongly felt that every American citizen, "whose conscience permits him to do so, should utilize political and moral power to bury slavery."215

Shocked and partially dazed, Garrison cried out, "There is roguery somewhere" and moved that The North Star be struck from the list.216 The breach had now become permanent but Garrison would continue to scorn Frederick's decision, and many more derogatory statements flowed from Garrison's pen after The North Star merged with the Liberty Party Paper in late June, 1851. Frederick made it clear to Smith that "before I could have had the slightest hope of affecting the union of papers which we now contemplate, I distinctly assured you of the change in my opinion which I have now publicly avowed."217 Frederick

214 Ibid.
215 Ibid.
216 Ibid.; see also Frederick Douglass' Paper, December 9, 1853.
217 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, May 21, 1851, Rochester, Gerrit Smith Papers.
had not kept his decision a secret but felt his first public announcement should be to the entire society. The North Star officially became Frederick Douglass' Paper on June 26, 1851. In the Liberator, Garrison sarcastically remarked that he wished the paper had a name. Frederick replied that he "may have caught a little of the spirit of our friend Garrison, whom we once heard announce himself to be a Garrisonian Abolitionist." Douglass asserted that he saw no more incongruity in naming his paper after himself than "we do in calling a certain book which we value highly--'Garrison's Thoughts On Colonization.'"213

For almost a year, the conflict between the two abolitionists lay dormant. Frederick was a fine editor and deserved the respect that he had been receiving. There had been those dissatisfiers, who felt that he could be incapable as an editor, but his actions erased their wishful thinking. Frederick stated that "because many people felt that a fugitive slave could not write the English language with such propriety and correctness ... he would drop the initials that had been affixed on the editorials and assume fully, the right and dignity of an editor, a Mr. Editor if you please."219

213Frederick Douglass' Paper, June 26, 1851, p. 2.
219Ibid.
CHAPTER V

INTO THE EYE OF A HURRICANE

Frederick had always been sincerely devoted to the abolition cause and was totally aware of the increasing necessity for continued agitation in the decade preceding the war between the states. His own abolitionist spectrum had developed to such an extent that at times he became a man possessed. His affiliation with the political abolitionists increased his consciousness for freedom, and he began various tours to arouse that same desire in the hearts and minds of his brethren. The columns of Frederick Douglass' Paper and his various speeches reveal him to have been "a thinker who understood the many dimensions, ambiguities, and subtleties inherent in the antebellum American idea of freedom."¹ Twenty-five years before, Frederick would not have been able to even recognize what the term freedom stood for; but opportunities presented themselves to him, and the young Negro slave began to make his mark on the "white-man's" country. As Douglass described it, liberty was a concept with three complementary and perhaps contradictory dimensions. First of all, freedom was a gift from God, a natural right even more essential to a truly human existence.

than happiness or property. Man's right to liberty was self-evident: "It existed," Douglass eloquently declaimed, "in the very idea of man's creation. Even though ignorant and vicious men might attempt to deny the Negro this "right of all rights," they would ultimately fail because God had decreed otherwise. "There is a law," Douglass asserted, "above all earthly statutes written on the heart, and by that law, unchangeable and eternal, no man can be or hold a slave." With these thoughts continually shining in Douglass' heart, the Negro humanitarian moved forward in the cause for his brethren.

Frederick's schedule during June 1851, was extremely tight because he had to stabilize the merging of his paper with the Liberty Party Paper. On June 11, Douglass wrote a letter to S. E. Sewall, Wendell Phillips and Theodore Parker, telling this committee that he was thankful for the invitation to attend a gathering in honor of his English friend George Thompson but could not accept. Thompson had been touring the northern states in an attempt to stir up more antislavery sentiments among the people. Douglass idolized Thompson's humanitarian


spirit while in England and regretted that he could not be in Boston for that engagement. In the letter Frederick expressed his sincere feelings for Thompson:

In common with all the Sable Sons of America, I owe George Thompson, a mighty debt of gratitude, respect and love. His labors in behalf of my afflicted, enslaved and slandered people, have been productive of good, to an extent, which eternity alone can fully disclose. George Thompson came to this country a free man and was not compelled to adopt any given course. Many of them seem doomed by virtue of their very organization to a limited and contracted sphere of action...but George Thompson does not belong to this class...long before he came to this country...his splendid genius rendered him before the whole civilized world, a light of surpassing highness and a gem greatly to be coveted...Honor him who is an honor to humanity. 4

In late July, 1851, a new trend of thinking could be discerned in the columns of Douglass' paper. He was now agitating for political cohesiveness. The Negro Editor remarked that "the present disjointed and scattered condition of our antislavery forces, under the names of "Free Soilers, Free Democrats and Seward Whigs, as well as the dictatorial exacting and defiant tone of Southern slaveholders, imperatively demands a union of all antislavery voters in one party, known the country over as the uncompromising antislavery party of the land." 5 As the standard of "All Rights For All" graced the front page of Frederick's newspaper, many people who thought the combination with the Liberty Party Forum...would contaminate the antislavery ideals, discontinued their scandalous remarks. Douglass' vivid

4Frederick Douglass to Sewall, Phillips, and Parker, Ibid.
5Frederick Douglass' Paper, July 31, 1851, p. 2.
expressions drew a clear line for all the abolitionists. He
blatantly expostulated, "Let the timid doubt, let the bold deny,
let the disputations controvert," but we venture the assertion
that at no time in the history of the antislavery movement was
our cause more potential, nor the abolitionists more courted
at the North and respected and feared at the South, than when
the Liberty Party was strongly united. 6 Frederick felt sure
that had that party remained firm by maintaining their organi-
ization, the horrible compromises of the thirty-first Congress
"would never have emanated from the brain of that most seductive
foe of human freedom, Henry Clay." 7

It is a puzzling fact how Frederick could express himself
in such vivid terms while editorializing and public speaking.
This black man, with very little education, was able to communi-
cate with such effective force that many felt he had special training
through private tutors, and was brought upon the antislavery
scene to act as an example of northern benevolence. Though
many pro-slavery advocates endeavored to detract from Frederick's
antislavery effectiveness, they were usually unsuccessful.
Frederick had experienced the cruelties of slavery and was
instilled with a strong desire to improve his condition. He
had developed a strong desire to learn because his ability would
be a strong defense against the charge of inferiority.
Frederick and other abolitionists were aware of the fact that
prejudice and lack of opportunity were the chief factors that kept the Negro race in an inferior position. Thus, lack of formal education in Frederick's life was not the decisive factor. The pent-up emotions and hatred engendered by the slave system truly inspired the young Negro to read and improve himself and assume a responsible position in white society. His speeches and brilliant editorial comments are proof that man, when motivated by a cause, will produce and pave the way for a better future. Douglass was truly a case in point because, since early childhood, his actions were directed towards freedom and equalization of opportunity for all his black brethren.

As a political abolitionist, Frederick began to sail closer to the port of freedom and continually justified his position with all who sought to discredit him. He was now as vehement in his support of the Constitution, as he had previously been against it. "Custom has made the language of the Constitution applicable to slaves," said Douglass, "then we say—let custom make the language of the Constitution inapplicable to slaves."8

The Negro humanitarian traveled to Buffalo in September to attend the National Liberty Party Convention. Douglass was appointed to the National Committee and to the Committee on Nominations.9 During the proceedings, W. W. Anderson, a representative from Jamaica, made a speech advising the free colored

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8Ibid.
9Ibid., September 25, 1851, p. 2.
to emigrate to the West Indies. Douglass was vehement in his rejection of such a proposal and replied in a masterly manner, giving various reasons why these people should remain in the land of their nativity. The resolutions made at the Liberty Party Convention included condemnation of the Fugitive Slave Law and the American Colonization Society. There was also strong support for continuing measures to disengage the federal government from the service of slavery. Douglass said that the delegates were adamant in their stand that "black men should never leave this country until all brethren in bonds are permitted to leave and moreover, that neither he nor they shall then leave it except when they shall please, and for where they shall please." In order to distinguish themselves from the Democratic Party, "who were no better than its equally unprincipled, pro-slavery, and profligate rival, the Whig Party, the Liberty Party Convention reformers, resolved to call themselves "The Democratic League." Even in the fall elections, Frederick assured antislavery voters that there was "no way in which the cause of the slave can be better promoted than by voting the Liberty Party ticket."13

In the meantime, the Free Soilers had not given up hope

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10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid.
13 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, May 15, 1851, ( MS Gerrit Smith Papers, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York)
of winning Douglass to their cause. At the Whig convention in Rochester in October, 1851, those who held to free soil doctrines proposed Douglass as representative for the Second Assembly District in the State Legislature and secured twenty-two votes on the first ballot for their candidate. Although their efforts proved to be in vain, the journalists made it clear that if the "Free Soilers had been in a majority," Douglass would have secured the nomination.14

Douglass, however, did not respond to any offers from the Free Soil Party. Even when a number of Liberty Party members prepared early in 1852 to enter the Presidential campaign under the Free Soil Party banner, he continued his support of the independent Liberty Party. "I think we ought to stand by and maintain the Liberty Party with all its great principles and purposes," he wrote to Smith on February 19, 1852.15 Early in April, Frederick carried an editorial in his paper, Headlined, "Stand by the Liberty Party."16 He reminded the political abolitionists who were flirting with the Free Soilers that the aim of the Free Soil Party was "to denationalize and sectionalize and not to abolish slavery," whereas the Liberty Party, whether followed "by many or few," would continue to call for the

14Frederick Douglass' Paper, October 30, 1851, citing the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.

15Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, February 19, 1852, Gerrit Smith Papers.

16Frederick Douglass' Paper, April 3, 1852, p. 2.
eradication of slavery everywhere. As for himself, he could not see "how a less comprehensive or less elevated platform can be occupied by those who would radically oppose slavery at the ballot box." 

In 1852, Frederick thanked the Rochester Women's Anti-Slavery Society for their contribution to his paper. He expressed appreciation that they did not withdraw their support in a sectarian spirit, because he was a 'Liberty Party man' and had decided to give his vote to that party rather than the Free Soil party. Frederick had a special obligation to Miss Julia Griffiths, the society secretary, for the able management of his paper. In 1854, Douglass was "referring to all those who had helped to sustain the paper during the year and for the past three years, we are indebted to none more than...Julia Griffiths." Frederick helped Julia in 1852-1853 when she was publishing a book to aid Douglass' paper. It was entitled "Autographs for Freedom" and had articles in it from many well-known personalities. William Wells Brown, Horace Greeley, Gerrit Smith, Horace Mann were only a few of the cultivated minds who had articles in the book. Such preachers and philosophers as Theodore Parker, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry Ward Beecher wrote short essays as a contribution for the abolitionist cause.

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17bid.
18bid.
20Frederick Douglass' Paper, January 9, 1854.
Women reformers placed their work into the book and included such notables as Harriet Beecher Stowe. Beyond his own contribution entitled "The Heroic Slave," Frederick wrote a letter to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow on June 16, 1852, requesting him to change his mind and write a small article on slavery for Julia Griffiths' book. Douglass explained to Longfellow that "My friend [Miss Griffiths] seems to think that my 'Fugitive Slave-ship' will go a great way towards obtaining the desired treasure."

If my dear Sir, you can but favor us with twenty lines, the favor will be highly prized." Longfellow did not make a literary contribution to Miss Griffiths' publication.

The Negro humanitarian performed many activities as a reformer, but his political aspirations were to become the dominant factor in the move towards abolitionism. In April, Frederick attended an anti-slavery convention in Cincinnati; and he revealed himself to be a true representative of the black race. "He came forward and was enthusiastically greeted," said The Cincinnati Gazette, "...a man of fine personal appearance, and one of the most expressive countenances, that one may see in the largest bodies of men." Frederick traveled to New York for the Annual Meeting of

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21Frederick Douglass to Henry W. Longfellow, June 16, 1852 (Yale Charles Sumner Letterbooks, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts)

22Julia Griffiths, Autographs For Freedom (Rochester: Wanzer Beardsley and Company, 1854), See Table of Contents.

23Frederick Douglass' Paper, May 6, 1852, p. 2, citing The Cincinnati Gazette, April 27, 1852.
the American Anti-Slavery Society, held in Rochester, on May 11. Douglass was made one of the managers but was criticized for his conclusions regarding the Constitution. In his own defense, he attacked Charles L. Remond, "in a spirit of the bitterest personality, charging him with the most dishonorable motives for the course he had pursued towards him during those meetings." Frederick felt that the proceedings of the meeting were directed against him and angrily retorted, "I contend that I have a right to cooperate with anybody, with everybody, for the overthrow of slavery in this country, whether auxiliary or not auxiliary to the American Anti-Slavery Society." During the third day of the convention, Frederick excused himself for he had learned that officers had arrived in Rochester to arrest three Negroes as fugitive slaves. He went immediately to the commissioner's office and prevented their success.

The break with Garrison had helped to widen Frederick's outlook regarding the cause; and in following this vein, he realized that mere trust in the Liberty Party would not free his brethren. The narrow-minded Garrisonian program of non-voting and constitutional hatred was a constant reminder to Frederick. He vowed to utilize all political means that would be beneficial for the abolition of slavery. Thus, "Captain

24Ibid., May 20, 1852, p. 2.
26Frederick Douglass' Paper; loc. cit.
27Liberator, May 21, 1852, p. 2.
Douglass began a course which would lead him into the ranks of the Free Soil Party. As he noted the busy preparations of the Free Soilers for the national campaign and the enthusiasm evoked by this growing mass movement, he clearly visualized the futility of the isolationist view he had been advocating. Recalling his original position that it was the duty of the abolitionists to lead the Free Soilers, he wrote to Gerrit Smith on July 15, 1852, that it was their political responsibility to attend the approaching Pittsburgh convention of the Free Soil Party. The gathering could be "made to occupy such a position as the Liberty Party may properly vote for its candidates." The masses who would be present in Pittsburgh were far ahead of their leaders, and were quite prepared to support a program in advance of "mere Free Soil," but Smith would be needed to bring up the issues around which the delegates would rally.

Douglass was soon to enlist in the ranks of the Free Soil Party and although imbued with thoughts as to his place in the party, he never strayed from his original aim—the abolition of slavery. Rochester heard him again on July 5, 1852, when he spoke as to the meaning of Independence Day for his brethren. There could be no better day for Frederick to hang the idea of American Independence in effigy. To him the fourth more than

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28Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, July 15, 1852, Gerrit Smith Papers.

29Ibid.

30Ibid.
any other day in the year, revealed the gross injustice and cruelty to which the slave had been the constant victim. Frederick resounded:

To him the [slave] your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity, your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, ...your shouts of liberty and equality...are to him, [sic] a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour.31

Mindful of his continual struggle against the oppression of slavery, Frederick made plans to attend the Pittsburgh Convention of the Free Soil Party. Enroute, he stopped in Ithaca, New York, at a county antislavery meeting. Here he reminded the gathering that the position of the great national pro-slavery parties warranted strict adhesion to antislavery principles in the coming election.32 Then on August 11, 1852, two thousand persons crowded into the Masonic Hall in Pittsburgh to open the second national convention of the Free Soil Party. Douglass and Smith sat in the New York section. Realizing the importance of the Negro’s presence, Lewis Tappan nominated Frederick as a secretary of the convention.33 Douglass was elected by acclamation and took his seat "amid loud applause."34

31Frederick Douglass: Paper...July 9, 1852, p. 2; Oration delivered in Corinthian Hall, Rochester, by Frederick Douglass, July 5, 1852.
32Ibid., July 30, 1852, p. 2.
33National Anti-Slavery Standard, August 19, 1852, p. 3.
34Frederick Douglass: Paper, August 20, 1852, p. 2.
As a Negro delegate, Frederick encountered no difficulties, and it was apparent that the delegates of 1852 "were far more ready to welcome to their platform, the man of sable hue." 35 Hardly had the next speaker started to address the delegates, when loud calls for Douglass filled the hall and overpowered the speaker. Taken by surprise, Frederick moved towards the platform amidst loud cheering. Even though he had not planned an address, he launched into what various reporters described as "an aggressive speech." 36 "The object of this Convention is to organize a party," said Frederick, "not merely for the present, but a party identified with eternal principles and therefore permanent." 37 The Negro orator exclaimed that he had come to the convention "not so much a Free Soiler as others," but added that he was for "exterminating slavery everywhere, not only in California but in New Orleans." 38 He let it be known that in making their party platform, "nothing could be gained by a timid feeling." 39 His impatience with his old party was manifested when he declared that "had the old Liberty Party continued true to its principles, we should never have seen such a hell-born enactment as the


37 Frederick Douglass' Paper, loc. cit; Foner, Thid; Wesley, op. cit.; p. 64.

38 Wesley, loc. cit.

39 Thid.
Fugitive Slave Law." Douglass literally raised the roof of the Masonic Hall when he thundered about the atrocities of the "slave-catchers law." He declaimed, "The only way to make the Fugitive Slave Law a dead letter is to make half a dozen or more dead kidnappers... that would cool the ardor of Southern gentlemen, and keep their rapacity in check." In closing Douglass retorted, "slavery is such a piracy that it is known neither to law nor gospel—it is neither human nor divine, a monstrosity that cannot be legalized but must be destroyed."

Frederick realized that the Liberty Party was strong in New York State; and he continued in its ranks, but followed the Free Soil Party on a National basis. He stated that he supported the Free Soil Party as long as its liberal principles were sustained, but various editorials in his paper showed his support for the Liberty Party. Frederick informed his readers that he had been favorably impressed with both the spirit of the meeting and the candidates selected at the Free Soil Convention. He urged the Liberty Party Convention, about to assemble at Canastota, New York, to endorse John P. Hale of New Hampshire and George W. Julian of Indiana as fine representatives for the cause. Problems quickly arose at the Liberty Party Convention as an opposition movement arose that demanded the selection of

40Frederick Douglass' Paper, loc. cit.
41Ibid.
42Ibid.
43See Columns of Frederick Douglass' Paper, March, April, May, June, 1852.
Presidential candidates from the Liberty Party. Outvoted, the
faction opposing the endorsement of the Free Soil nominations
withdrew and selected William Goodell and Charles C. Foote as
their candidates.

Douglass was critical of the seceders. He was convinced
that it would be unwise for the Liberty Party to "arrest itself
against Free Soilery." He did not feel that supporting Hale
and Julian was a sacrifice of basic principles. What was
"morally right" was "not, at all times, politically possible,"
said Frederick, but: "our rule of political action is this: the
voter ought to see to it that his vote shall secure the highest
good possible, at the same time that it does no harm." The
masthead of Douglass' journal carried the names of Hale and
Julian inscribed on an American flag, but the editor's main
concern in the autumn of 1852 was in the campaign for representa-
tive from the twenty-second congressional district of New York.
His friend and mentor, Gerrit Smith, had been nominated for the
office on September 1, in Buffalo, at the Liberty Party or Free
Democratic Party Convention. Douglass campaigned actively
for his friend even though he felt that Smith would not be elected
because he was too far in advance of the people and of the age.

While in Smith's district, Douglass "spoke in eighty meetings in
about forty days" and was thankful that his old disease of the

44 Ibid., September 10, 1852, p. 2.
45 Ibid.
46 Wesley, op. cit., p. 65.
throat had passed him by that autumn.47 Frederick became optimistic when he heard people say that they were "going to vote for Gerrit Smith." Writing to Smith on October 21, Douglass was still unsure of Smith's chances and said the comments were probably "too good to be true."48

While campaigning for Smith, Frederick spoke out against the Whigs and the Democrats, arguing that their platforms were very similar and both indicated that the Compromise of 1850, including the Fugitive Slave Law and all other existing slave laws, should be eternal.49 Continuing, Frederick said that other parties and the Liberty Party could prove beneficial because "they look those disgraceful and cruel parties sternly in the face and traverse every proposition of their creed and platforms on the matter of slavery. They insist they will agitate the question of slavery, disobey the laws and mandates, and drive it out of the country."50 But the bubble burst! In the elections of 1852, the Free Soil vote was less than that of 1848; and the Liberty Party support was barely noticeable. Franklin Pierce, a Democrat, had won the Presidential election; but Frederick's sadness was partially offset for Smith had been elected to Congress by a two to one majority.51 Frederick was elated and expressed his joy in a

47Frederick Douglass' Paper, October 29, 1852.
48Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, October 21, 1852, Gerrit Smith Papers.
49Frederick Douglass' Paper, October 29, 1852, loc. cit.
50Ibid.
51Ibid., November 5, 1852, p. 2.
letter to Samuel J. May on November 10, 1852. "What an era," Douglass exclaimed, "but this grand event will be comparatively lost unless the agitation is kept up." The champion of Negro rights felt confident that "with men and money we [probably meaning the Liberty Party] could carry this state [New York] for freedom in 1856." Frederick wrote to his friend Smith to personally congratulate him. "Your election marks an era in the history of the antislavery struggle." He was especially grateful for the fact that Smith went to Congress "a free man," and not by the grace of a party caucus, bestowed as a reward for party services; not by concealment, bargain or compromise.

Douglass placed his sincerest hopes in Smith's career in Congress. In August, 1853, four months before the session convened, he wrote to his former campaigner to make sure the parliamentary rules of Congress so as "to defy all the mantraps which they will surely set for your feet." Smith proved an unhappy member of Congress and did not remain long in Washington. He was ill at ease in the time consuming procedures of the House.

52Frederick Douglass to Samuel J. May, November 10, 1852, Theodore Tilton Letters.

53Ibid., See also Carter G. Woodson, ed., The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1830-1860. (Washington, 1926), p. 653.

54Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, November 6, 1852, Gerrit Smith Papers.

55Ibid.

56Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, August 13, 1853, Gerrit Smith Papers.
and apparently did not heed Frederick's advice about learning parliamentary procedure. With the Legislative routine submerging his individualism, Smith resigned his seat on August 7, 1854, after joining in the attack against the recently introduced Kansas–Nebraska Act. In a letter to the *New York Tribune*, Smith said that the "pressure of my far too extensive business" had forced him to resign.57 Frederick was disheartened but accepted Smith's decision.58

The conflict between Douglass and Garrison had subsided for almost a year after the 1851 American Anti-Slavery Society Convention. However, Garrison had sharpened his tools of reprisal while Frederick was endeavoring himself to the Free Soil Party; and he began another series of attacks on Douglass. At the 1852 meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society, held in Rochester, May 11-13, Douglass was again made an object of scorn. It was clearly evident that Garrison and his clan would not allow Frederick any peace, because he had changed his abolitionist opinion. Garrison continued his stand on calling for the dissolution of the Union and charged that "never had any political Constitution in this country taken the colored race as equal to the white."59 Douglass artfully defended his position on the Union and was slashed by Wendell Phillips, Charles L. Remond and other Garrisonians who regarded him as their foe. In a letter

58 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, August 22, 1854, Gerrit Smith Papers.
59 *Liberator*, May 21, 1852, p. 2.
to Gerrit Smith, Frederick outlined the charges made against him at the convention. He charged that the Garrisonians attacked him on four grounds: first, that he had changed his opinion about the Constitution, second, that he had joined an antislavery organization not affiliated with the American Anti-Slavery Society, third, that his weekly paper was a political party organ rather than an abolitionist weekly, and fourth, that he had thrown insults in the direction of George Thompson.60 Douglass answered the charges and was skillful enough to convince the membership of his righteousness for he was elected to the board of managers.61 On September 2, 1853, Frederick wrote to Charles Sumner and aired some of his grievances. Douglass explained how thoroughly critical Garrison had been in his criticism of his newspaper venture and abandonment of the non-voting theory.62 In the letter to Sumner, Frederick made it clear that Garrison felt there "was no need of such a paper and that the Standard and Liberator were quite sufficient."63 In a sorrowful tone, the Negro editor closed the letter to Sumner by saying: "they might leave [sic] given me a fair opportunity to try my hand without their volunteer disparagements. They might have allowed my friends to ascertain for themselves, how far I was capable of

60Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, May 15, 1852 Gerrit Smith Papers.

61Liberator, May 21, 1852, loc. cit.

62Frederick Douglass to Charles Sumner, September 2, 1853, Charles Sumner Letterbooks.

63Ibid.
serving the antislavery cause with my pen." 64

Tension mounted and by 1853, the struggle led to many seemingly unwarranted personal attacks by Garrison. In reporting the 1853 convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society, Frederick bounced back and threw out the remark that Pillsbury, Henry C. Wright and Stephen S. Foster "had been induced to absent themselves on this occasion because their presence might give new force to the charge of infidelity, which is brought against the Anti-Slavery Society. 65 The remark went unanswered for two months; but at the celebration of West India Emancipation at Framingham, Massachusetts, Wendell Phillips publicly lashed out at Douglass because he had cast doubt upon the integrity of the American Anti-Slavery Society. 66 Frederick had arrived at Framingham during a storm, and even though wet, tired and hungry, skillfully denied the charges. He protested also that it was improper to turn a celebration of the first of August into a discussion of relations between himself and the Massachusetts Abolitionists. 67

Frederick felt the need to explain the Framingham incident and did so in a long editorial entitled "Something Personal." He stated that "in his paper, like Phillips on that platform, he

64Ibid.

65National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 19, 1853, p. 3.

66Frederick Douglass' Paper, August 12, 19, 1853, p. 2; Liberator, August 26, 1853, p. 1.

67Ibid.
felt a liberty to criticize the character of any antislavery effort or any antislavery society in existence; and also that he held his columns open to anyone who would think injustice had been done to any party.63 He closed his rejoinder with a quotation from the Apostles: "If it is possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men."69 Instead of peace, the entire Garrisonian press shelled the Negro humanitarian. "Douglass had torn off the mask and revealed himself as an ally of "the whole pro-slavery press and pulpit in the United States," went the general refrain in columns of various papers. He had become so clearly the victim of "the curse of worldly ambition" that he could only be regarded as a deadly foe of the entire antislavery cause.70

Garrison was too idealistic in his opinions of abolitionism and this opinion of his righteousness led him to assume that because his own motives were honest, those of his opponents were the reverse. It was this particular type of thought which tore asunder his friendship with Douglass. Frederick had reformist ideas rather than revolutionary ones, and Garrison would never accept them. The affray continued; and Garrison published extracts of Douglass' articles in his "Refuge of Oppression"

63Frederick Douglass' Pomer, August 19, 1855, loc. cit; Liberator, December 9, 1855.

69Ibid., Saint Paul to the Romans Chapter 12, Verse 18, King James Version—The Holy Bible.

70See columns of Liberator, September 2, 9, 16, November 18, 1855; National Anti-Slavery Standard, September 3, 10, 17, 24, 1855.
column in the Liberator, a place usually reserved for material from pro-slavery papers. After attacking Douglass' integrity and personal motives, Garrison trespassed into Frederick's family life. He remarked that "for several years past, he has had one of the worst advisers in his printing-office, whose influence over him has not only caused much unhappiness in his own household, but perniciously biased his own judgment." The vicious remarks were directed at Julia Griffiths who had so ably worked to keep The North Star in circulation. This was not the first attack on Miss Griffiths because the National Anti-Slavery Standard had already referred to her as "a Jezebel, whose capacity for making mischief between friends would be difficult to match." However, it was now a question of intimating that Frederick was having domestic problems. Miss Douglass sent a letter to Garrison to inform him that "It is not true, that the presence of a certain person in the office of Frederick Douglass caused unhappiness in his family." Garrison continued his assault and maintained that there were many witnesses in Rochester who would attest to his remarks. Garrison expressed sorrow later that he had raised the question of personal relations because he had not intended to imply anything immoral in such a charge. Frederick laid the entire struggle between

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71 Liberator, November 13, 1853.
72 National Anti-Slavery Standard, September 24, 1853, p. 2.
73 Liberator, December 2, 15, 1853, p. 2; citing Letter of Anna Douglass to William Lloyd Garrison, Rochester, November 21, 1853.
himself and Garrison in his December 9, 1853, issue of his paper. He carried six columns of denunciatory articles from the *Liberator*, *National Anti-Slavery Standard* and the *Pennsylvania Freeman*.74 Frederick devoted twelve columns for his personal remarks and defended his position. The split became permanent in 1853; and although Douglass and Garrison attended the annual meetings of the American Anti-Slavery Society, there is great speculation that they never spoke to one another again.75

Frederick was extremely aware of the fact that he owed his services to the Negro race and so throughout the turmoil with Garrison, continued to instruct and develop the spirits of his brethren. He had attended the first anniversary meeting in honor of the "*Jerry Rescue Mission*" in October of 1852 along with Gerrit Smith at Syracuse, New York.76 Jerry was a fugitive slave, who had been rescued one year previous and Douglass and Smith took a prominent part in the activities.77 Frederick began to lecture on the necessity of his brethren learning a trade to enable them to fit into society.78 His thoughts on education brought him into contact with Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her book "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*" had created quite a stir.

74*Frederick Douglass' Paper*, December 9, 1853, pp. 2-3; *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, December 24, 1853, pp. 1-4.


76*Frederick Douglass' Paper*, October 8, 15, 1852, p. 3.


78See *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, November 19, 1852, March 11, 1853, editorials on "*York*" and "*Learning Trades*".
throughout the Nation. On March 4, 1853, Frederick wrote an article in his paper explaining the wonderful visit he had recently spent with the Stowes and informed his readers that a plan for Negro development would soon be revealed. Frederick's visit was in response to a letter from Mrs. Stowe inquiring if Frederick would be interested in developing a colored Industrial or Trade School. In July of 1853, Douglass attended the National Colored Convention; and beyond the fact that rough plans were drawn up for an Industrial College, the Negro orator's speech regarding the claims of his brethren was inspiring. Frederick asserted that "the unrestricted right of suffrage and freedom, which is essential to the dignity of the white man, be extended to the colored race."79 "...as an extraordinary convention, perhaps the greatest held in the United States," said Frederick, "... and the talent, zeal and eloquence displayed took many by surprise."80 A National Council was set up at the Rochester Convention to provide able direction and assistance for projects. Mrs. Stowe had expressed a desire to assist in collecting funds for the Industrial College and the Negro people were confident that the project would be successful. But obstacles arose quickly and the project faltered. While touring England Mrs. Stowe was attacked severely by the pro-slavery press and some followers of Garrison. She was accused of receiving money for her private use. Douglass denounced the accusations as entirely

79*Frederick Douglass' Paper, July 15, 1853, p. 2.
80*Ibid.
groundless because the money was to be used for the establishment of the Industrial College. Mrs. Stowe discontinued her tour, and Douglass was placed in an awkward position with the colored of America as well as with friends abroad. 81

In early October, 1853, Frederick decided to attend the Colored People's Convention in Chicago. 82 He was instilled with great expectations, after the "Jerry Rescue" celebration in Syracuse on October 1, and felt he could continue the tour to invigorate the antislavery momentum that was building up in the North. He spoke at Warner Hall and the Chicago Daily Tribune reported that their correspondent could not gain entry to report on the proceedings. 83 The editor of the Chicago Daily Tribune was fortunate enough to hear another of Frederick's speeches on October 10, and made the following comments. "To say that Frederick's speech...was good would be too tame an expression to convey to the reader an idea of its real merits...Mr. Douglass is an eloquent man... exceedingly ready at repartee, always pleasant, often felicitous, ever an anon he indulges in the most apostrophes and rises to the very maximum of eloquence." 84


82 Chicago Daily Tribune, October 5, 1853, p. 3.

83 Ibid., October 8, 1853, p. 3.

84 Ibid., October 11, 1853, p. 2; National Anti-Slavery Standard, October 29, 1853, p. 2.
Douglass found Chicago in an antislavery mood and spoke again on October 20 and 21 at South Market Hall to large audiences.\textsuperscript{85} The Chicago Daily Tribune had mistakenly thought that Frederick would not be lecturing in Chicago on the twenty second of October but in Joliet.\textsuperscript{86} Douglass' speeches at South Market Hall, North Market Hall and the Plymouth Congregationalist Church were extensively covered by the Chicago Daily Tribune. One article stated that Frederick's speech "was one of the most forceful and eloquent ever heard by people in that city on the "pro-slavery character of the church in its Fellowship with Slaveholders."\textsuperscript{87} The correspondent felt that Frederick was no common man and "intellectually," stood as a giant alongside Stephen A. Douglas. "He has a heart," said the newspaperman, "which politicians generally do not possess" and he seemed confident that "those who have heard him once will not forget the pleasure they experienced in seeing and hearing, a blackman, who looks every inch a man, and who utters sentiments that would do honor to the soul-stirring eloquence and noble heart of a Patrick Henry."\textsuperscript{88} The October 26 issue of the Chicago Free West mentioned that Douglass had been in the city and

\textsuperscript{85}Ibid., October 20, 21, 1853, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{86}Ibid., October 22, 1853, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{87}Ibid., October 24, 1853, p. 3; Liberator, November 18, 1853, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{88}Ibid., October 24, 1853, p. 3.
visited Janesville, Wisconsin, and Aurora, Illinois, also. Frederick also stopped in Princeton, Illinois, and made a speech there on October 25, 1853. He skillfully attacked the "peculiar institution" by stating: "I think no name so well befits it as peculiar. It is peculiar in that it can only exist by destroying the rights of some, and abridging the rights of others." Frederick went home to Rochester in late October, pleased with his tour of Chicago and the surrounding areas. "During his stay," said the Chicago Tribune, "he obtained two hundred subscribers to his paper with the cash and his colored brethren raised about two hundred dollars for him besides." Frederick was soon to receive more encouraging news from the Chicago area following the December 26 meeting of the Colored Citizens of Chicago. They "lauded Douglass" and stood against the entire Garrisonian machine and considered him their "able champion and defender of the rights of the colored people of the United States,"...who in turn, "should give their interest and efforts to him as an editor and lecturer." Frederick could not have chosen a more appropriate time in which to engender an enlivened spirit in the North than the

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89 The [Chicago] Free Press, October 26, 1854, p. 2; See also The Western Citizen and Chicago Weekly, October 5, 1853, p. 3 for Douglass' scheduled tour of various towns and cities in Illinois throughout October.

90 Ibid., December 1, 1853, p. 1.

91 Chicago Daily Tribune, October 29, 1853, p. 3.

92 Ibid., December 28, 1853, p. 5; Frederick Douglass' Paper, January 13, 1854, p. 1.
early months of 1854. The south had prepared to launch a broadside attack against abolitionism. The Kansas-Nebraska Act came into port and challenged all to prevent its passage. The Negro editor warned his audiences in New Hampshire and Rhode Island in early January that they would "need to check the advances of slave power,—because, Nebraska is to be the battle field of American Freedom and every Free Soiler should be up and doing."\footnote{Frederick Douglass' Paper, January 17, 1854, p. 1.} The editorial of Frederick Douglass' Paper on February 24, entitled "The Nebraska Controversy—The True Issue," ripped into the proposed bill. "By this very compact," said Douglass, "the sacredness of which has become the burden of the speeches, petitions, addresses, resolutions, letters and editorials of the opponents of the Nebraska slavery extending bill, the largest, richest and most enervating portion of the National domain, is by the plainest inference given up to the slave system."\footnote{Ibid., February 24, 1854, p. 1.} Douglass was bitter as he remarked that the Missouri Compromise was useless—"our cause is not helped, but hindered by pleading such compromises.\footnote{Ibid.} Frederick along with other political abolitionists had realized the utter foolishness of the Missouri Compromise, and demonstrated to the people the urgent need for increased effort if slavery was to be abolished. The Negro vanguard told his readers that "the real issue to be made against slave power, and the one..."
which should never be lost sight of, is this: Slavery, like rape, robbery, piracy or murder, has no right to exist in any part of the world—that neither north or south of 36 degrees 30 minutes, shall it have a moment's repose, if we can help it."96

Frederick's editorial efforts for the following months of 1854 were directed against the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. In spite of splendid efforts by abolitionists, Douglass realized that the bill would be enacted into law. To Douglass, any bill that afforded the opportunity to extend slavery was pro-slavery! He wrote to Charles Sumner on February 27, and praised him for his speech against the bill. "All the friends of freedom, in every state, and of every color, may claim you, just now, as their representative....It is sad to think that after all the efforts of your Spartan band, this minor measure will pass."97 Frederick had not lost hope completely as he closed his note to Sumner by saying, "God dwells in eternity, and it may be time enough yet."98 Douglass felt confident that the effects of the passage of the bill would spell "Gallows for Slaveholders" because the mind of the North would be set in action to secure just retribution for their enslaved brethren.99

The Nebraska Bill passed by a large majority in the Senate, and Douglass surveyed the effects. He bitterly declared that

96Ibid.

97Frederick Douglass to Charles Sumner, February 27, 1854, Charles Sumner Letterbooks.

98Ibid.

"435,000 square miles of territory was offered to the slave power, to satiate, for the time being, its merciless ferocity, and its ever-grasping cupidity."100 Gerrit Smith was still active in Congress and in early April delivered a long moralistic speech against the Bill; but even though Douglass praised the effort "the nightiest and grandest ever before delivered in the House or Senate of this nation," the bill was finally enacted.101

Frederick said that the southerners were "intoxicated by their success in repealing the Missouri Compromise—in divesting the natural-born colored man of America citizenship and in harnessing both the Whig and Democratic parties to the car of war."102 He was confident that Kansas would "help the moral sentiment of the North," because, "it made the abolitionists aware of their goal, rekindled zeal, and stimulated the activity and strengthened faith of our old antislavery forces."103 Smith offered one thousand dollars per month to the cause while the conflict lasted.104

Douglass was gaining confidence in the spirit of the North, and the columns of his paper continued to unmask what Douglass

100Ibid., March 10, 1854, p. 3.
101Frederick Douglass, Life and Times, p. 304.
102Ibid., p. 305.
103Ibid.
called the new partner of slavery. He arranged his schedule so that he could attend the Anniversary Meeting of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society on May 10, 1854, in New York. He was happy to announce "that within a fortnight, not less than thirty passengers had passed through this city by the Underground Railroad on their way to Canada."105 Frederick praised the antislavery press and the antislavery men in Congress during the meeting for their noble efforts against the evils of slavery and gave special appreciation to Gerrit Smith.106 After a stirring ovation, he continued: "Political abolitionism is not a failure, any more than Christianity is a failure. It is now upward and onward. In my belief, the cause will roll on until freedom shall be entirely triumphant."107 Douglass adopted the motto of "Labor and Wait," and was confident in the entire proceedings.

The editor returned to his paper in Rochester and on May 26, placed an article in its columns entitled "The End of All Compromises With Slavery—Now and Forever." It was a call to battle. He aroused the feelings of the north by telling them "awake, arise...and let a great party of freedom be organized, on whose broad banner let it be inscribed, "All compromises with slavery ended—The abolition of slavery essential to the preservation of liberty."108 Frederick's popularity was no extensive

106Ibid.
that there was serious talk of his becoming Smith's successor in Congress. The *Louisville Daily Democrat* raised such a possibility and stated, "it is an experiment that will open the eyes of men in the free states... similar to a Negro marrying a white woman—a war against nature that would stagger the strongest prejudices that fanaticism can inspire in most men."109

The *Daily Standard* of Rochester felt that there was a great possibility that if Frederick was nominated he would be elected.110 But Douglass was not destined to hold political office and soon began a tour of the mid-west.

On July 12, 1854, Frederick attended the Western Reserve College commencement exercises in Ohio. He gave what was perhaps one of his best public speeches entitled "Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered." The *Cleveland Plain Dealer* remarked that "it was a novel and very fine address and during the course of delivery made an apparent impression upon the audience and was generally well received with decided expressions of approbation."111 He treated the subject "entirely disconnected from the politics of the day and spoke of the 'Negro' in a social point of view."112 In a passage regarding the supposition that colored people may ultimately die out, Douglass remarked:

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111 *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, July 14, 1854, p. 3.

The statistics of the country afford no encouragement for such a conjecture. The history of the Negro race proves them to be wonderfully adapted to all countries, all climates, all conditions... The poor bondman lifts a smiling face above the surface of a sea of agonies, hoping on, hoping ever. His tawny brother, the Indian, dies, under the flashing glance of the Anglo-Saxon. Not so the Negro; civilization cannot kill him. He accepts it, becomes part of it... All the facts in his history mark out for him a destiny united to America and Americans.113

The following week Douglass spoke along with Reverend A. G. Beman of Connecticut114 to the citizens of Cleveland, but was thoroughly disappointed at the National Council Meeting of the Negroes held that same week. Frederick had high hopes of a successful engagement with the Negroes of Cleveland but came away with mixed emotions. He said, "our hopes proved the worthlessness of our exertions, and how little confidence can be properly put in calculations based upon the disinterested patriotism of even an oppressed people."115 Douglass expressed hope that the next meeting in Cleveland would prove worthwhile to the efforts of the abolitionists.

Frederick returned to Rochester and became involved in an American political realignment. Many Democrats and Whigs were dissatisfied with their party's straddling the question of slavery and began looking for a new banner to wave. Douglass began to see that the abolitionists, Free Soilers and other

113 Holland, op. cit., p. 240-241.
114 Cleveland Plain Dealer, July 20, 1854, p. 3.
115 Frederick Douglass: papers, July 30, 1854, p. 2.
reformers were associating with these restless Whigs and Democrats. These groupings formed the nucleus of the Republican Party in the fall of 1854. The new party attracted much support, although some diehard Liberty Party members, felt that "the signs of the times forbid the dissolution" of their organization. Frederick was aware of the fact that a few Liberty Party advocates were still willing to fight the battle of freedom on the ground that "slavery cannot be legalized" anywhere on the earth and so did not abandon them. Speeches such as "Cur Position on The Republican Party," and various other articles in 1855 clarified his point of view. "I believe," said Douglass, "that the Republican Party is antislavery as far as it goes; but believing that it does not go far enough in the right direction, we earnestly invite its members to take a higher position, and make no concessions to the Slave Power..."116 In the early stages of the Republican Party, they wanted to restrict expansion of slavery but not exterminate it.117

In September, 1854, thirty men holding onto the Liberty Party principles, met in Syracuse and nominated William Goodell for Governor on a platform calling upon the federal government to abolish slavery. Frederick attended the convention and supported Goodell.118 In an attempt to bolster the Liberty Party aspirations of his New York friends, Douglass commenced

116Ibid., December 7, 1855, p. 2.
117Ibid., November 16, 1855, p. 2.
118Ibid., September 15, October 6, 1854, p. 2.
a tour of Illinois, in October, 1854. The Quincy Weekly Herald remarked that Douglass was employed by the Whigs and was their black abolition leader. The journal was probably correct in assuming that the abolitionist Whigs supported Frederick's ideas but there is no factual evidence that he was in their employment. Most of the criticism by the Quincy paper concerned a particular statement that Frederick had made in the fall of 1853. He had mentioned to the people of Chicago that he would "welcome the bolt, whether it came from Heaven or Hell, that shall dissolve the Union." The Quincy Weekly Herald remarked that "it seems the right of free speech is guaranteed in Chicago only to those who have black skins or black hearts." 121 Chicago himself, was not to receptive to Frederick on this particular tour. The Chicago Tribune of October 21, 1854, remarked that Frederick, after scorning the "white-Douglass," was not allowed to speak and luckily escaped without any harm to his person. 122 The Negro orator did make one successful speech in Chicago on October 30, 1854. One Kentucky gentleman tearfully told Douglass that

119 Ibid., October 20, 1854, p. 2; See also Wesley, "Participation of Negroes in Antislavery Political Parties," op. cit., p. 69.

120 The Quincy Weekly Herald, October 20, 1854, p. 1.

121 Ibid., September 18, 1854, p. 1.

122 National Anti-Slavery Standard, October 23, 1854, p. 2; citing Chicago Tribune.
although he had southern principles, he could not resist the conviction of the truth of Douglass' remarks. 123

During the early months of 1855, Douglass toured New York state extensively. He also made plans to lecture in Maine, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. 124 His efforts were well received and the Negro editor said that at no time in his experience as a public lecturer, had he been listened to with more decided marks of earnest attention and warm approval by an intelligent and discriminating public. 125 In early March, Frederick, ill from his extensive tour and under medical treatment, could not attend to his editorial duties. 126 Realizing the importance of an upcoming convention, Frederick apparently forgot his doctor's advice and made plans to attend the event in Springfield, New York. On March 27, 1855, Douglass wrote to Smith and assured him of his support. 127 Douglass' trusted friends and Liberty Party advocates included, Lewis Tappan, William Goodell, Gerrit Smith and James McCabe Smith. These stalwart men were desperately striving to maintain active Liberty Party support in New York, but the newly formed Radical abolitionists dominated the proceedings.

123 National Anti-Slavery Standard, December 9, 1854, p. 3.
124 Frederick Douglass' Paper, January 5, 12, 19, 26, February, 2, 9, 16, 23, 1855.
125 Ibid., February 23, 1855, p. 2.
126 Ibid., March 2, 1855, p. 2.
127 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, March 27, 1855, Gerrit Smith Papers; For added information see Theodore Clark Smith, The Liberty and Free Soil Parties in the Northwest. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1897), pp. 293-217.
The convention met on June 26-28, 1855, in Syracuse, and the Radical Abolitionists set forth their plan. There was little doubt that the Radical Abolitionists were former Liberty Party men with an expanded and invigorated program. Their purpose was to remove slavery from the territories and the states by political action. As their first revolutionary step, James McCune Smith, a Negro, was selected as chairman and presided with "ability, urbanity and impartiality." Douglass served on the Business Committee and helped draw up a "Declaration of Sentiments," an Exposition of the Constitutional Duty of the Federal Government to Abolish Slavery." The members declared slavery a crime and desired that the United States Government suppress it or else they would not call it a government but rather a conspiracy and an abstraction.

Douglass left the convention in high spirits and on August 14, 1855, wrote to Gerrit Smith informing him of his plan to tour New York to promote the "principles of freedom" that were laid down at the recent abolitionist convention. At the conclusion of his trip, Frederick attended another convention, held by a few radical Liberty Party men in Ithaca, New York. The strength of the Radical Abolitionists was

123New York Tribune, June 29, 1855, p. 3.
129Foner, op. cit., p. 61, citing proceedings of the Convention of Radical Abolitionists held at Syracuse, New York, June 26-28, 1855, (New York, 1855).
130Frederick Douglass' Paper, July 6, 1855, p. 3.
131Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, August 14, 1855, Gerrit Smith Papers.
evident, and the plan of developing a platform for the national election was eliminated. However, for his loyalty to the party, Frederick was nominated for the office of Secretary of State of New York, the first time that such an honor had come to an American Negro.\textsuperscript{132} Smith congratulated his good friend and was sure the publicity would ensure the success of Douglass' recently published second autobiography.\textsuperscript{133} The tension of political activeness increased, with but a lone exception, the October meeting called for by the Radical Abolitionists. A torrential rainstorm appeared at meeting time and but a handfull of supporters appeared, led by Douglass and Gerrit Smith. The attractions of the National Agricultural Fair, being held in Boston at the same time, seemed to offer more attractions to the rank and file.\textsuperscript{134} The small, dispirited mass passed no measures and never got around to making nominations.

The American political scene, with the exception of the victorious Democrats, during the early months of 1856 was a shambles. The Whig Party had all but disappeared, and the American or Know-Nothing Party was disintegrating over the slavery issue. Douglass glanced over the political spectrum and saw the increasing importance of the Republican Party. On February 22, 1856, the Republicans held their first National

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\item \textsuperscript{132}See Wesley, "Participation of Negroes in Antislavery Political Party," \textsuperscript{op. cit.}, p. 69.
\item \textsuperscript{133}\textit{Frederick Douglass' Paper}, August 15, 1855, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{134}\textit{Ibid.}, November 16, 1855, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
Convention in Pittsburgh. They planned to wait until June to name their choice of candidates but did draw up an "Address to the people of the United States." Douglass, along with the other Radical Abolitionists, was extremely disappointed. In the entire document, said Frederick, only the demand of freedom for Kansas reflected the influence of the anti-slavery forces in the Republican Party. "Nothing said of the Fugitive Slave Bill—Nothing said of Slavery in the District of Columbia—Nothing said of the slave trade between states nor anything of giving dignity of the Nation to Liberty." 135 Douglass saw but one argument that might influence abolitionists to follow the Republican Party. He felt that various abolitionists might deem it necessary to support a large party and sacrifice strong antislavery principles to ensure a victory in the election. 136 Douglass would not support such a stand and looked forward to the Radical Abolitionists Convention to be held on May 28 in Syracuse, New York, rather than the Republican Convention scheduled for June in Philadelphia. As if Frederick needed any more problems, his old 'tutor' Garrison, sarcastically wrote to Samuel J. May:

I see that Lewis Tappan, Douglass, James McCune Smith, Goodell and Smith have called a convention for the purpose of nominating candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the United States! Can anything more ludicrous than this be found inside or outside of the Utica Asylum? 137

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135 Ibid., April 25, 1856, p. 2.

136 Ibid.

137 William Lloyd Garrison to Samuel J. May, March 21, 1856 (HSS William Lloyd Garrison, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts)
Frederick had experienced many pitfalls in the throngs of abolitionism and was not about to allow a letter to deter him from his goal. He even canceled various speaking engagements in Ohio in order to be present at the Syracuse Convention. Frederick spoke to the gathering on the first day it convened and admitted that the temptation of joining the Republican Party had crossed his path. However, he concluded that "they [Republican Party] do not give a full recognition to the humanity of the Negro," because they sought to limit slavery only in Kansas and Nebraska. In a stirring finale, he reminded his listeners that "Liberty must cut the throat of slavery or have its own cut by slavery." "The speech of Frederick Douglass was alone worth the trouble of attendance," said the correspondent of the Cleveland Morning Leader. "When he speaks he moves his body slightly, but a terrible pride; an annihilating scorn lies in the motion of his head. At times he raises his voice until the windows tremble; indeed we have never seen such an evidence of the power of the human voice. But only rarely does he display its full compass; his great power lies in his enimitable and satirical play of features."

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138 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, April 16, 1856, Gerrit Smith Papers, Radical Abolitionist, [New York] Extra, June 2, 1856, p. 94.

139 Foner, op. cit., p. 82, citing Syracuse Daily Standard, May 29, 1856 and Radical Abolitionist, July, 1856.

140 Ibid.

141 Cleveland Morning Leader, August 12, 1856, p. 1.
The delegates nominated Gerrit Smith for the Presidency and the only reason Douglass did not become his running mate was an objection that they were both residents of New York.\textsuperscript{142} On May 30, 1856, the \textit{New York Times}, \textit{New York Tribune}, \textit{New York Evening Post}, \textit{Daily Pennsylvanian} and \textit{Philadelphia Daily News} reported that the convention had nominated Samuel McFarland as Vice-President.\textsuperscript{143} Frederick mentioned he would move to Ohio to avoid any objections but the nomination of McFarland held, even though it was apparent that Douglass was the convention's choice.\textsuperscript{144} The reports that Douglass was nominated by the convention are taken from the comments of the \textit{New York Herald} of June 21, 1856, which even though a month late, declared that Frederick was chosen as the Vice-Presidential nominee. The apparent mystery was cleared up when the names of Smith and McFarland appeared in the editorial column of \textit{Frederick Douglass' Paper}.\textsuperscript{145}

The Negro editor was confident that the remaining Liberty Party advocates would join forces with the Radical Abolitionists and become a trenchant political entity.\textsuperscript{146}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{142}Wesley, "Participation of Negroes in Antislavery Political Parties" \textit{cit.}, pp. 34-74.
\item \textsuperscript{143}Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{144}Ibid., citing James A. Woodburn's \textit{Political Parties and Problems in the United States}, (New York, 1924), p. 249.
\item \textsuperscript{145}\textit{Frederick Douglass' Paper}, August 3, 1856, p. 2; \textit{Liberator}, September 5, 1856.
\item \textsuperscript{146}\textit{Frederick Douglass' Paper}, June 10, 1856, quoted from \textit{Liberator}, September 5, 1856, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
Frederick had now run the abolitionist gamut. After abandoning the Garrisonians, he allied himself with the anti-slavery advocates of the Liberty and Free Soil Parties. Douglass felt that a stronger political platform was necessary to overthrow the slavocracy and next moved into the ranks of the Radical Abolitionists. However, he soon ascertained that National support was necessary for survival and so on August 15, 1856, Frederick withdrew the names of Smith and McFarland, the Radical Abolitionist candidates, and informed his readers that he proposed "to support with whatever influence available, John C. Fremont and William L. Dayton, the Republican Party candidates in the national election."147 But two months previous (June) he had strongly denounced the Republican Party as a "heterogeneous mass of political antagonists, a fusion of adjunct Whiggery, disaffected Democracy, and dentists; defeated and disappointed Native Americanism."148 Frederick was masterful in defense of his actions. Stating that even though the Republican Party did not go as far as he wished on the slavery question he saw no reason for withholding his support for its candidates. "A man was not justified in refusing to assist his fellow-men to accomplish a good thing simply because his fellows refuse to accomplish some other good things which they deem possible."149

147Ibid., Frederick Douglass' Paper, August 15, 1856, quoted from Liberator, September 5, 1856; Cincinnati Daily Enquirer, September 2, 1856, p. 4; Crawfordsville Indiana Review, October 4, 1856, p. 2.

148Ibid., June 10, 1856, loc. cit.

149 Ibid., August 15, 1856, quoted from Liberator, September 5, 1856.
To the disappointed Smith, Frederick wrote that he was supporting Fremont "as the best thing I can do now." In late September, Frederick was firmly convinced that Fremont would "not countenance slaveholding aggression." The Crawfordsville [Indiana] Review quoted Douglass as saying:

We know no law applicable to the progress and promulgation of radical abolition principles which would act less favorably towards our principles inside the party than outside of it... Time and argument will do more for its progress and its final adoption by the people than can be done for it in the present crisis by the few votes of the isolated radical abolitionists.

Besides the article entitled "A True View of Black Republicanism," the Crawfordsville Review criticized Douglass in a later issue entitled "Atrocious Sentiments of Black Republicanism."

James Buchanan carried the nation in 1856, but the strength that the Republicans had mustered demonstrated that they were a political force soon to be reckoned with across the nation. Frederick was bitter over the Democratic victory but realized that progress had been made. Writing to Smith on April 20, 1857, Douglass said, "We have turned Whigs and Democrats into Republicans and can turn Republicans into abolitionists."

Even so, Douglass' support of Fremont did not mean he

150. Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, August 31, 1856, Gerrit Smith Papers.

151. Frederick Douglass' Paper, September 29, 1856, p. 2.


153. Ibid., November 1, 1856, p. 2.

154. Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, April 20, 1857, Gerrit Smith Papers.
had become a member of the Republican Party, for like a repentent
sinner he wrote to Smith on December 16, 1856, that he was still
a Radical Abolitionist.155 The overall events of the election
were historic as Douglass' support of Fremont was used "as a
classic example of how the Republicans received valuable
endorsement."156

For a time Frederick tried to revive the Radical Abolitionist Party, but the Dred Scott Decision and his involvement with
John Brown prevented any noteworthy efforts. The historic
decision demonstrating that the Negro had no rights was handed
down by Chief Justice Roger B. Taney declaring that Dred Scott
was still a slave and his presence or residence in a free state
could not erase that fact. Douglass delivered a splendid
oration at the Annual Meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society
in New York on May 11, 1857. He was critical of the decision
and used Taney as the example of injustice. "The Supreme Court
of the United States is not the only power in this world," said
Frederick:

It is very great, but the Supreme Court of the
Almighty is greater. Judge Taney can do many things,
but he cannot perform impossibilities. He cannot
take out the ocean, annihilate the firm old earth,
or pluck the silvery star of liberty from our
Northern sky. He may decide again; but he cannot
reverse the decision of the Most High. He cannot
change the essential nature of things—making evil
good, and good evil.157

155 Ibid., Douglass to Smith, December 16, 1856.

156 Andrew Wallace Crandall, The Party History of The Republi-
can Party. (Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1900), p. 257.

157 Speech delivered on the Dred Scott Decision, on the Occasion
of the Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society, May,
1357, (Rochester, 1357)
The friendship that Frederick had cultivated with John Brown almost cost him his life. Douglass visited Brown's home in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1847, and was informed of the plan to help slaves escape. The course of action was to involve squads of armed men who would aid the slaves. Such a scheme, Brown argued, would endanger and gradually destroy the money value of slave property. Douglass was not convinced of the plan, but he was impressed by the man himself and stated, "I have never talked with a... man who seemed so deeply excited upon the subject as Captain Brown... His zeal in the cause was infinitely superior to mine." Frederick saw Brown many times after that first meeting, and many of his radical viewpoints were born out of these meetings.

The passions aroused by the enactment of the Kansas-Nebraska Act had accomplished much in drawing the two men close. Their paths crossed again in 1855 at Syracuse, during the Radical Abolitionist Convention, at which time both men addressed the delegates, with Brown pleading for assistance for his campaign in Kansas.

Douglass later praised Brown's courage and military skill but did not approve of his severe tactics. After the Kansas Act...
problem began to ebb, Brown returned to his original plan; and early in February, 1858, Brown journeyed to Frederick's home in Rochester. Brown insisted on paying for his lodgings and labored long hours, writing letters to sympathizers pleading for money. Brown had not revealed his plan to Douglass or to his benefactors, as his raid on Harpers Ferry was delayed over a year when one of Brown's cohorts, Hugh Forbes threatened to expose the plan.

Douglass removed himself from the immediate problem. He planned an extensive Western tour in the early months of 1859, to plead the cause for his black brethren and insist upon agitation for the abolition of slavery. Frederick was pleased with his journey and found that the "repellancy has become less and less strong, so that abolitionism has become comparatively respectable in the West." During his seven week tour, Frederick visited Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois, made fifty speeches and usually lectured twice a day. While in Michigan, Frederick lectured in Albion, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Detroit, Jackson and Marshall. Beloit, Janesville, were some of the cities toured in Wisconsin; and Frederick also spoke to fine audiences in Belvidere, Bloomington, Elgin, Freeport, Morris, Ottawa.

162 For detailed account see Oswald Garrison Villard, John Brown; (New York, 1943), pp. 675-676; also Chesnutt, loc. cit. Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 320.

163 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, April, 1859.

164 Ibid.
Princeton, Rockford and Waukegan, Illinois.\textsuperscript{165} The Waukegan Weekly Gazette announced Frederick's appearance and was confident he would receive a cordial reception.\textsuperscript{166} While in the Lake County City, Douglass spoke on the "Races of Men" and based his arguments upon the religious, moral and physical conditions of the races, citing in support numerous ethical, historical and physiological facts.\textsuperscript{167} His audiences were responsive and he was invited to return to lecture on "Self-Made Men."\textsuperscript{168}

The Negro orator visited Chicago in early February and continued his lecturing schedule.\textsuperscript{169} He developed vibrant orations on "The Ethnology of African Races" and "Self-Made Men" at Metropolitan Hall in Chicago and enjoyed success in his engagements.\textsuperscript{170} He journeyed to Princeton, Illinois, and was highly praised for his efforts in the columns of The Bureau County Republican. Even though the people had not seen Frederick for twelve years, he was "the enimitible Fred Douglass still; and the occasional flashes of his rhetoric and his well balanced logic, fell, as ever, with their overwhelming power."\textsuperscript{171}

\begin{itemize}
  \item (Tbid.
  \item (Tbid., February 5, 1859, p. 3.
  \item (Tbid.
  \item \textit{Chicago Daily Press and Tribune}, February 3, 1859, p. 1; \textit{Frederick Douglass' Monthly}, March, 1859.
  \item (Tbid., February 5, 7, 1859, p. 1.
  \item The \textit{Bureau County Republican}, February 10, 17, 24, 1859, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
Frederick went to Ottawa, in LaSalle County, and delivered lectures in that city on February 25 and 26 on the "Races of Men." The Daily Pantagraph, of Bloomington, Illinois, was favorable to Douglass' appearance and mentioned that he had attracted large audiences who were unusually attentive. Frederick held his meetings in Bloomington at Phoenix Hall and was flattered over the applause he received. By mid-March, Frederick had made his way into Michigan and spoke at City Hall in Detroit on the unity of races. He rested in the city for a few days and delivered short speeches "on slavery and the cause of its establishment." The Detroit Daily Advertiser mentioned that Douglass' lectures "were very able and ingenious productions, and were listened to by a great many of our first citizens, and of course by a large number of colored persons." One of the most touching scenes of the entire tour occurred in Wisconsin, when a Mr. Cobb presented himself to Frederick. He had been Douglass' protector and friend twenty years ago in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Frederick humorously remarked that "twenty years ago he was a protector of a helpless black man in New Bedford, and now he came to Wisconsin to hear that black man..."
preach to him."177

Douglass returned home in late March only to be hounded by John Brown who stopped in Rochester to inform him of his actions. Spring passed quickly for Brown; and by early summer, 1859, he fixed his plan for an attack on Earper's Ferry. In August, Brown decided to reveal the details of his plan to Douglass in the hope of enlisting him as a member of the attacking company at Earper's Ferry. Brown was unsuccessful in his attempt to secure Douglass' aid, and the two never saw each other again. This final meeting had taken place under seemingly peculiar circumstances, in a stone quarry near Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.178 Brown made one last plea as Douglass prepared to leave; "Come with me, Douglass. I will defend you with my life. I want you for a special purpose. When I strike, the bees will begin to swarm and I shall want you to help me hive them."179

The finale was enacted at the "Confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers on the night of October 16, 1859, at Earper's Ferry."180 Brown took possession of the arsenal but was captured. He was subjected to a trial, convicted of high treason for inciting slaves to insurrection, and executed.

Frederick received the news of Brown's capture while lecturing in Philadelphia. Informed that he was implicated he

179Ibid., p. 310.
180Ibid., p. 310.
returned to Rochester and was advised to seek asylum in Canada.
Governor Wise of Virginia had sent extradition papers to Governor
Morgan of New York. Aware that President Buchanan would employ
the full power of the federal government to insure his arrest,
Douglass fled to Canada.131 Douglass was further implicated by
John E. Cook, who was captured with Brown at Harper's Ferry. He
also blamed Frederick for the failure of the plan. While in
Canada, Frederick wrote a letter to the editor of the Rochester
Democrat, denying the charges.132

Frederick had planned to visit England but was forced to
speed up his decision. On November 12, 1859, he sailed from
Quebec for Liverpool.133 He remained in England for six months
and praised the efforts of his friends who had given up their
lives for the freedom of slaves.134 He was about to visit
France when he was informed that his youngest daughter, Annie,
had died. He booked passage on the first ship out for Portland,
Maine, and detoured home by way of Canada in early May.135 A
Congressional Committee had been established but was disbanded
because no conclusive proof had been found to connect Douglass
with Brown's raid. In all probability, Douglass never had


132Liberator, November 11, 1859, p. 1. Citing Letter of
Frederick Douglass, dated Canada West, October 31, 1859, to
editor of Rochester Democrat; New York Times, November 5, 1859,
p. 1.

133Geschmutt, op. cit., p. 88.

134Douglass, op. cit., p. 326.

135Ibid., p. 328.
intended to join Brown for he was of an entirely different cast of temperament and mind, and realized the tremendous night and organization of the slave power. Brown's plan never in the slightest degree appealed to Douglass' reason.186 Frederick said that Brown had definitely "invited upon his own head, all the bolts of slaveholding vengeance."187 Many people including Douglass, loved and cherished John Brown but were against his methods. In 1832, at the Storer College Commencement, *Douglass spoke eloquently about the man he knew so well. "If, said Douglass, "John Brown did not end the war that ended slavery, he did at least begin the war that ended slavery."183 Frederick returned to his editorial duties and began surveying the upcoming presidential election. Slavery was strangling itself to death and the ascendancy of the Republican Party in 1860 was to mark a new and brighter course for the future of the Negro race.


187 Douglass, loc. cit.

188 Dubois, op. cit., pp. 344-346, citing (Frederick Douglass 1888, *Anacostia, Washington D.C.) *Storer College was a Negro school in West Virginia, at Harper's Ferry, but no longer exists due to integration.
CHAPTER VI

TO ENDURE IS TO OVERCOME

Frederick returned to America saddened by the death of his daughter Annie. The cause of death was unknown but her anxiety for her father's safety after he was implicated with John Brown was given as a probable cause. Realizing the importance of the upcoming Presidential election, Douglass quickly reassumed his editorial duties, sad that he could spend so little time consoling his family. Douglass had supported Fremont, the Republican candidate in 1856, but there was speculation that he would not raise a Republican banner in 1860. Frederick had strong affiliations with various members of the Radical Abolitionists, and this placed Republican Party members in a quandry. The Illinois back-woods lawyer, Abraham Lincoln, had received the Republican nomination for the presidency at their mid-May Convention in Chicago; and the Negro editor surprised many of his readers by praising Lincoln's nomination in the June issue of his paper.

Mr. Lincoln is a man of unblemished private character; a lawyer, standing near the front rank at the bar of his own state; he has a cool, well-balanced head; great firmness of will; is perseveringly industrious; and one of the purest, honest men in political life . . . His political life is thus far to his credit, but it is a political life of fair promise rather than one of rich heritage.2

1Frederick Douglass' Monthly, April, 1860, p. 243.
2Ibid., June, 1860, p. 276.
Frederick had confidence in Lincoln for defending his antislavery principles against Stephen A. Douglas, one of the leaders of the divided Democratic party. "In his debates with Stephen A. Douglas," said Frederick, "he [Lincoln] came fully up to the highest mark of Republicanism, and he is a man of will and nerve, and will not back down from his own assertions." 3 Frederick was fairly confident that Lincoln would not be a compromise candidate but surmised that the Republican party would need added support to offset the increases of slavery propaganda. The Negro editor criticized the Republican party for their slogan, "No More Slave States." He preferred the more adamant statement, "Death to Slavery." 4 Douglas had become familiar enough with politics to realize that the people were not ready for the more advanced slogan; but Frederick still believed that even though the Republican party platform was incomplete, he would never retreat into the Democratic camp. Frederick declared:

While we should be glad to cooperate with a party fully committed to the doctrine of "All rights to all men," in the absence of all hope of rearing up the standard of such a party for the coming campaign we can but desire the success of the Republican Party. 5

June of 1860 proved a month of letter writing for Douglass, complimenting his friends for their service in the cause of abolitionism. Writing to Charles Sumner on June 9, he praised

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
Sumner for his efforts in the United States Senate. "You spoke to the Senate and the Nation," said Frédéric, "but you have another and mightier audience. The civilized world will hear you, and rejoice in the tremendous exposure of the meanness, brutality, blood guiltiness, hell black iniquity, and barbarity of American Slavery." On June 29, Douglass returned a short note to D. Lee Child lauding his efforts "to do justice to the memory of the brave men who fell for our liberty on the soil of Kansas . . . . We must not forget the devotion of those in Kansas, who fell fighting against a harsher [sic] and blacker disposition than that which England sought to impose upon us." Frederick always remembered those who fought and died for the abolitionist cause and cherished their noble efforts. Even though his own abolitionist career had been jeopardized by his association with John Brown, Frederick always spoke highly of the man who gave his life for the cause of freedom. Douglass was proud to have the opportunity to lecture about John Brown in the course of his abolitionist career and there were but few occasions when he would refuse to speak about the martyr for the cause. In a letter to Charles E. Crain, Frederick thanked him for the opportunity to lecture but refused because it was only a single

6Frederick Douglass to Charles Sumner, June 9, 1860, (HSS, Charles Sumner Letterbooks, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts)

7Frederick Douglass to D. Lee Child, June 29, 1860 (HSS, Anti-Slavery Letters Written to William Lloyd Garrison and Others, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts)
engagement. Douglass felt that Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was not near enough "to make it possible for me to give my lecture upon John Brown. If I had a few appointments within striking distance, I might easily do so."³

Many of the Radical Abolitionists were fearful that the support of Douglass was lost to them because of the various articles he had written acknowledging the Republican party. Disheartened but unwilling to fold, the Radical Abolitionists decided to call a convention, to be held in Syracuse, August 29, 1860. Frederick decided to attend and was immediately appointed to the Business Committee.⁹ His position at the convention seemed ambiguous, for the August issue of the Frederick Douglass Monthly hinted that its editor would be within the Republican ranks for the election of 1860. The same issue also explained that because of so many delinquent subscribers, the paper would continue only on a monthly basis. "We shall speak to you weekly when we can," said Frederick, "and monthly when we must."¹⁰

The Radical Abolitionist Convention was a mass of resolutions severely condemning the Democratic party but also chastizing the Republicans for their "almost infinitesimal amount

³Frederick Douglass to Charles E. Crain, March 15, 1876, (MSS. Miscellaneous Collection of Frederick Douglass, University of Chicago Library, Chicago, Illinois)


¹⁰Frederick Douglass Monthly, August, 1860, p. 305; See also National Anti-Slavery Standard, May 26, 1860, p. 3.
of anti-slavery professions" which were "inadequate ... to quiet the agitation upon the subject of the slave's right to liberty." The speech of Douglass was definitely anti-Republican and he declared that the platform of the Republican party of 1860 "was more objectional than the one of 1856."12 The invigorated Radical Abolitionists nominated Gerrit Smith and Samuel McFarland as their candidates. Douglass was one of the two presidential electors-at-large, the first time that an American Negro had been nominated for such a party position.

Douglass continued to bolster the hopes of the Radical Abolitionists by attending a "Political, Anti-Slavery Convention" held in Worcester, Massachusetts, September 19, 1860.14 Frederick was reluctant at first to attend this meeting for Garrisonians were to be present, and he wanted to avoid any possible contact with them. Stephen S. Foster and John Pierpont had arranged the meeting for the purpose of organizing a political party upon an antislavery interpretation of the Constitution. These abolitionists at the Worcester Convention were desirous of abolishing slavery in the states, as well as in the territories of the Union. The Negro orator was restless and discontented.

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12Ibid., See also Frederic May Holland, Frederick Douglass—The Colored Orator, (Funk and Wagnalls, 1891), p. 273.
13Wesley, op. cit., p. 72.
14Frederick Douglass, Monthly, November, 1860, pp. 354-355; Liberator, October 5, 1860, p. 4.
with the course of abolitionism as evidenced in the Republican Party platform and therefore anxious to unite the scattered antislavery forces. His desire to develop one solid abolition organization to destroy the chattel system was almost a mania. Douglass worked earnestly on the Executive Committee at Worcester and was instrumental in introducing a resolution extending "earnest sympathy and their hearty God-speed for the little band of faithful abolitionists which had nominated Gerrit Smith as their candidate to be supported for the Presidency in the coming election."\textsuperscript{15} The Garrisonians were critical of Douglass, and he promptly drafted a letter to William Lloyd Garrison after the convention had approved his resolution. Frederick made it clear that there was no attempt made at the convention to annihilate the American Anti-Slavery Society. Everybody knows that to criticize the position of an association in respect to a single point in its plan of operation is a very different thing from discrediting an association altogether and working for its destruction.\textsuperscript{15}

The role that Frederick played during the months preceding the National election confused many friends and political aspirants. In October, Douglass seemed very disgruntled about the timidity of the Republican platform and took his wrath out on Lincoln. He advised his readers that "ten thousand votes for Gerrit Smith would accomplish more for the cause of abolition than two

\textsuperscript{15} Frederick Douglass, \textit{Papers}, \textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.;} \textit{Liberator,} October 26, 1860, p. 4.
million for Lincoln."\textsuperscript{17} However, during the final weeks of October, Frederick again spoke out in favor of Lincoln, whose "doctrine of the power and duty of the National Government to prevent the spread and perpetuity of slavery,"\textsuperscript{18} reclaimed the Negro abolitionist into the Republican fold. The dedicated Negro "threw himself into the campaign with firmer faith and more ardent hope than ever before; and what he could do with his pen or tongue, he did with a will."\textsuperscript{19} Even though his friendship for Gerrit Smith was a cherished one, Frederick decided that the Radical Abolitionists did not have enough national support to run a strong political race. Douglass, therefore, decided to exert whatever influence he could to help insure a Republican victory over the two Democratic factions headed by Stephen A. Douglas and John C. Breckenridge. Since he despised most of the Democratic party principles and feared that the Republicans might be classified along with them, Frederick argued that the Republican party was "now the great embodiment of whatever political opposition to the pretensions and demands of slavery is now in the field," and that "a victory by it in the coming

\textsuperscript{17}Frederick Douglass, \textit{Paper, October, 1860, loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{18}Frederick Douglass, \textit{Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, (Connecticut: Park Publishing Company, 1881), pp. 332-333.}

\textsuperscript{19}Ibid., Frederic Hay Holland, Frederick Douglass—The Colored Orator, (New York: Putnam and Appleton, 1891); p. 230; Wesley, "Participation of Negroes in Antislavery Political Parties," \textit{op. cit.}, p. 74. John A. Bell headed the Constitutional Union Party but was not powerful enough to cause any serious worry to the opposition.
election must and will be hailed as an antislavery triumph."

Frederick did some campaigning, for Lincoln, in western New York coupling this with his efforts to have an unrestricted state franchise law enacted. On election day, Frederick had mixed emotions for his efforts for equal suffrage were defeated by an overwhelming majority as Abraham Lincoln became the sixteenth President of the United States. "Had the Republican Party been as true to the sacred cause of liberty and equality as the Democratic Party always proves itself to slavery and oppression," said Frederick, "the invidious and odious discrimination against our equal citizenship would have been blotted out, and the colored voters of the state would have had some reason for the enthusiasm with which they have shouted their praises of the Republican party."  

Frederick had supported the Republicans for he believed that the Radical Abolitionists could not be victorious in 1860. However, he also realized that the Republicans had a weak anti-slavery program and would necessitate extra work on his part to insure a final victory over slavery. With this insight, it is not too difficult to realize that Frederick would praise or scorn a party in the same breath if he felt that their total efforts were not employed towards freedom of his race. Frederick's affiliation with the Republican Party was a perfect example of

20 *Frederick Douglass' Monthly*, November 1860, loc. cit.
this ideal. Douglass was willing to sacrifice his present radical antislavery convictions in hopes that the new party in the White House would secure freedom for the Negro race in the near future.

Frederick set about invigorating the Republican antislavery program and criticized their platform of non-interference with slavery where it existed. The Negro editor remarked:

If Lincoln were an antislavery President, if he were a friend to the abolitionist movement, instead of being as he is, its most powerful enemy, the dissolution of the Union might be the only effective mode of perpetuating slavery in the South.\(^\text{22}\)

Douglass believed that through a vigorous antislavery surge emanating from the Chief Executive, the South would be forced to abandon their system of bondage. However, Frederick found it difficult to revive the old spirit of abolitionism into the Republican party. He felt that the South would remain unopposed and thus there was not sufficient cause for the dissolution of the Union. Pessimism had overtaken him when he wrote:

Whoever lives through the next four years will see Mr. Lincoln and his administration attacked more bitterly for their pro-slavery truckling, than for doing any antislavery work. He and his party will become the best protectors of slavery where it is now and just such protectors as slaveholders will most need. The Union will therefore be saved simply because there is no cause in the election of Lincoln for its dissolution. Slavery will be as safe and safer, in the Union under such a President, than it can be under any President of a Southern Confederacy.\(^\text{23}\)

\(^{22}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. } 370.\)

\(^{23}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. } 371.\)
Frederick was worried that Lincoln's antislavery reputation would be mere fantasy owing to the weakness of the party platform but he hoped that Lincoln's election would at least awaken the nation to the consciousness of new powers.

Nevertheless, this very victory threatens and may be the death of the modern Abolitionist movement, . . . because "the Republican party does not propose to abolish slavery anywhere, and is decidedly opposed to abolitionist agitation. It is not even, by the confession of its President elect, in favor of the repeal of the unconstitutional Fugitive Slave Bill of 1850."24

The Negro editor was positive that unless the antislavery movement returned to all the agencies and appliances of writing, lecturing, and meetings, the movement would wither away because preventing the extension of slavery would not aid in abolishing the system. On December 7, 1860, Douglass traveled to Boston, to commemorate the anniversary of John Brown's execution. The question to be considered at the meeting was "How Can Slavery Be Abolished?" but a band of ruffians broke up the meeting, incited a riot and converged on Douglass.25 Although outnumbered, "Douglass fought like a trained pugilist . . . cleared his way through the crowd to the rostrum, which he clutched with an air that indicated his determination to hold his place . . . he was finally dragged away and thrown down the staircase."26 Frederick reorganized his faculties and at the Boston Music Hall, a few

24Ibid.

25Liberator, December 7, 1860, p. 3.

26Ibid., See also New York Tribune, December 6, 1860; National Anti-Slavery Standard, December 8, 1860, p. 2.
days later, made a brilliant plea for the constitutional right of free speech. He made it clear that the idea of freedom of speech "was deemed more sacred than any of the others by the fathers of the Government."27 "Liberty is meaningless," exclaimed Frederick, "where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist."28 Douglass concluded his endeavor with brilliant rhetoric:

There can be no right of speech where any man, however lifted up, or however old, is overawed by force and compelled to suppress his honest sentiments... When a man is allowed to speak because he is rich and powerful, it aggravates the crime of denying the right to the poor and humble... A man's right to speak does not depend upon where he was born or upon his color. The simple quality of manhood is the solid basis of the right—and there let it rest forever.29

Frederick's hopes of a strong antislavery inaugural address, by Lincoln, were shattered as the new President pledged himself to maintain the Union through non-interference directly or indirectly with slavery in the states and promised to support the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. Even though President Lincoln had stated there "is no such 'express' guarantees of the right of property in slaves in the constitution of the United States," Frederick felt that there was little news to gladden the hearts of his Negro brethren.30 A disconsolate

28Liberator, December 4, 1860, p. 3.
29Ibid.
30Frederick Douglass' Paper, January, 1861, p. 383.
Douglass in giving his early estimate of Lincoln, sorely predicted the crisis that would engulf the entire country in the following months.

For the present there is much reason to believe that he [Lincoln] will not violate the principle upon which he was elected; and since none which does not utterly trample upon that principle can be accepted by the south, we have a double assurance that there will be no compromise, and that the contest must now be decided, and decided forever, which of the two, Freedom or Slavery, shall give law to this Republic. Let the conflict come and God speed the Right, must be the wish of every true-hearted American, as well as that of an onlooking world.31

Douglass continued to analyze the meaning of Lincoln's inaugural address and doubted the President's ability to carry out his program of executing the law of the Constitution throughout all states. "It remains to be seen," said the Negro editor, "whether the Federal Government is really able to do more than hand over some John Brown to be hanged, suppress a slave insurrection, or catch a runaway—whether it is powerless for liberty and only powerful for slavery."32

The lion-maned Douglass was soon to find out how powerful the federal government was after events on April 12, 1861, at Fort Sumter. "What a change now greets us," said Douglass, surely there will be "freedom for all or chains for all" before the struggle terminates.33 "To our mind," said Frederick, "there..."
is but one easy, short and effectual way to suppress and put
down the desolating war—... strike down slavery itself, the
primal cause of that war."34 The Slavocracy of the South felt
powerful enough to break the bond of the Union and so "at last
the nation was confronted with the question it had dodged since
independence; whether an ostensible free state, founded on
principles of liberty and equality, could tolerate in its midst
a system of bondage."35

Douglass was no longer the despised Negro abolitionist for
he had predicted the ultimate outcome of Southern atrocities,
and realized that the struggle must end in a sea of blood. Many
Americans now looked upon Frederick as the distinguished anti-
slavery advocate, and prayed that the conflagration would not be
too serious—such was not the story of the ignoble Civil War
because of the difference in the two societies. The industrial
North was now bent on demonstrating their disapproval to the
agricultural South for attempting to weaken and destroy the bond
of Union. Frederick's labors increased and definitely became
more difficult after the war began for the problem of slavery
had become submerged. The sacred bond of the Union had been
desecrated and at first the Negroes were fearful that their status
would not be effected by the outcome of the Civil War. However,
Frederick realized that the war must surely be a crusade against

34 Ibid., p. 451.
35 Dwight Lowell Dunning, Antislavery Origins of the Civil War
in the United States (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan
infamous chattel system and it was his duty to arouse actions towards that goal. "It is not merely a war for slavery," said Douglass, "but it is a war for slave dominion." From Frederick's point of view, every man who entered the struggle to save the glory and honor of the Union, was in reality engaging in an antislavery activity. "He who faithfully works to put down a rebellion undertaken and carried on for the extension of slavery," argued Douglass, "performs an antislavery work." 37

Douglass entered into what was probably the most crucial period of his abolitionist career for he had to instill courage and continual hope into the souls of his race during a time when his brethren felt there was no hope or future for them. He labored diligently among friends and through the columns of his Monthly stressed the importance of Negro support in the war.

The South was literally scoffing at the North because they were impressing Negroes, both slave and free, to labor for the Southern cause. The first two years of the war were the most trying for Douglass as he ardently desired to show to the North the need to employ and enlist Negroes into the various jobs in and around the battlefronts. Furthermore, sound policy and humanity warranted that the government of the United States should turn the Negro force to its own use by being "as true to liberty as the rebels, who are attempting to batter it down, are true to slavery." 38

36 Frederic douglass' Monthly, May, 1861, p. 452.
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
Frederick charted his course early in the war. His ultimate goal of wanting freedom for slaves, scarcely overshadowed his desire that Negroes should be recruited into the Union army. Douglass was confident that one Negro regiment carrying the "Stars and Stripes" would brighten the spirits of his brethren and do more to educate the slaves "as to the nature of the conflict... than... a thousand preachers." 39 With the fervor and patience of a minister, Frederick continuously used his editorials, speeches and letters to stress how important the Negro could be in the war; but, the race must be given the opportunity.

"The Negro is the key of the situation," said Frederick, "the pivot upon which the whole rebellion turns." 40 Douglass' anxiety increased as each day passed for the goal which he had strived for all these years was so near, yet many people still held that this was only a white man's war for preservation of the Union. Frederick did not disagree with that point but was confident that the emancipation of the slaves would immediately unite the world in favor of the government of the United States. In a later autobiography, Frederick said:

From the first, I reproached the North that they fought the rebels with only one hand, when they might strike effectively with two—that they fought with their soft white hand, while they kept their black iron hand chained and helpless behind them—that they fought the effect, while they protected the cause, and that the Union cause would never prosper till the war assumed an antislavery attitude, and the Negro was enlisted on the loyal side. 41

39 Ibid.
40 Ibid., September, 1861, p. 532.
41 Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 341.
Frederick endeavored to instill within the hearts of his brethren and all interested in the cause, the necessity of offering their services to the Union. Many Negroes rushed to enlist in the Union army, but their services were sternly rejected. The reason given for this action was that many Union leaders feared that the employment of Negroes would cause the whites in the Union army to throw down their guns and return home. They felt that it was a disgrace to see a Negro in uniform. "And so it was," said Douglass, "that custom, pride, prejudice, and the old-time respect for southern feeling, held back the government from an antislavery policy and from arming the Negro," in the early phases of the war.\textsuperscript{42} Disheartened, but never willing to give up or admit defeat, Frederick continued to fill the columns of his paper with stirring editorials on "How To Feed The War." "Let the slaves and free colored people be called into service and formed into a liberating army," said Douglass, "to march into the south and raise the banner of Emancipation among the slaves."\textsuperscript{43} Negroes were seldom used as troops in the Confederate forces. "The moment you resort to Negro soldiers, your white soldiers will be lost ... If slaves make good soldiers, our whole theory of slavery is wrong."\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42}Douglass, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{43}Frederick Douglass' \textit{Monthly}, May, 1861, \textit{loc. cit.}

The first years of the war were difficult for Frederick in keeping the hopes of freedom alive within his brethren because for a time Union Soldiers seemed more concerned with shooting Negro fugitives. Secretary of State William H. Seward made Douglass' job more difficult because he felt that no matter how the war might terminate, "slaves would be slaves and masters would be masters." General George B. McClellan and General Benjamin Franklin Butler of the Union forces were not helpful either for they informed slaveholders that they would not interfere with slaves and "warned the Negroes in advance that if any attempt was made by them to gain their freedom, it would be suppressed with an iron hand." Undaunted, Frederick continued with masterful articles in his paper to remind his readers that "there can be no peace or safety in this world while slavery exists." Frederick boldly attacked the slaveholders in his paper.

What is a slaveholder but a rebel and a traitor? ... A man cannot be a slaveholder without being a traitor to humanity and a rebel against the law and government of the ever living God. He is a usurper, a spoiler. His patriotism means plunder ... and out of such stuff you can make nothing but conspirators and rebels. Slavery like all other gross and powerful forms of wrong which appeal directly to human pride and selfishness, when once admitted into the framework of society, has the ability and tendency

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46 Douglass, loc. cit.

47 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, July, 1861, p. 473.
to beget a character in the whole network of society surrounding it, favorable to its continuance. ... speak to but few and have little influence, but whatever I am or may be, I am at such a time as this, in the name of justice, liberty, and humanity, and in that of the permanent security and welfare of the whole nation, urge all men, and especially the government, to the abolition of slavery. 48

Douglass was angered by Lincoln's hesitance to use Negroes in the war, for he had expected him to increase measures for equalization of the Negro. Along with many other abolitionists, Frederick soon came to despise the expedient policies that Lincoln offered to the people in the Union. Realizing that the federal government would need stronger persuasion, Douglass began to speak and write various articles about the duty of the abolitionists. Frederick said there is a "need to do all we can to make the government and people an abolition government and abolition people, for until both shall become such, it is quite plain that this land is doomed to see no peace. ..." 49

The slave problem was continually printed throughout Frederick's paper and he pleaded with his friends and subscribers for donations for "we want our paper to live to record the death and burial of slavery, and to sing the glad song of jubilee to the sable millions whose case it has thus far endeavored faithfully and fearlessly to plead." 50

Many Negroes began to lose faith in the federal government when the trend toward colonization in Haiti arose. Frederick

48 Ibid., pp. 485-486.
49 Ibid., October, 1861, p. 535.
50 Ibid., p. 532.
admitted that the colonization spirit in 1861 was probably stronger than at any previous time.\textsuperscript{51} However, the Negro abolitionist was unwilling to allow slavery to overshadow the past work of abolitionism and dedicated himself to avert any mass emigrations. Douglass accepted the concept of emigration but vehemently opposed any movement to Africa; "Let him [the Negro] remember that a home, a country, a nationality, are all attainable this side of Liberia."\textsuperscript{52}

Frederick was losing all faith in Lincoln, when in mid-September, 1861, the President overruled the proclamation of General John C. Fremont of August 30, which had established martial law in Missouri and declared free all slaves whose masters were in open conflict against the United States. Lincoln was prompted into such an act because he was still uncertain of the support from the important border states and did not wish to alienate slaveholders there and probably lose them to the Confederacy. Frederick, however, could not justify such actions for he had labored so diligently for such a breakthrough into the slavocracy and was critical of the man he had supported for the Presidency of the country. Taking into account the many hours and speeches that Douglass made to kindle a fervent abolitionist spirit among the people, criticism of the Negro


\textsuperscript{52}\textit{Ibid.}
abolitionist at this stage of the conflict would probably be unjustified. After twenty arduous years on the abolitionist front, strong signs of advancement were apparent and Douglass would lash out at any obstacle that appeared to block the path of freedom for his enslaved brethren. In November, Frederick placed a stinging article in his papers entitled "Fremont and Freedom—Lincoln and Slavery." Douglass questioned the President's decision and said there is "a just ground for suspicion that foul play is at work." 53 "The attempt to sacrifice John C. Fremont has only one foundation," said Frederick, "that he loved his country better than Negro slavery, and offered the latter as a sacrifice to save the former." 54 General Fremont was finally removed from his command and replaced by General Halleck. 55

Orestes A. Brownson, an able and informative writer declared that "the true way to end the war is the issuance of a Proclamation of Emancipation on the part of the Federal Government." 56

Frederick traveled to Syracuse, New York, and was to lecture on "The Rebellion—Its Cause and Its Remedy" on November 14, and numerous signs of "Higgin Fred Coming" announcing his arrival prompted Syracuse Mayor Charles A. Andrews to appoint fifty special policemen and special cadets. Frederick was given a

53 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, November, 1861, p. 546.
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid., December, 1861, p. 563.
56 Ibid., November, 1861, p. 552.
fine welcome with no disturbances. Because of such precautions, Douglass was also encouraged by the warm responses of Samuel J. May in New York. The war had removed past differences and even though May was a strong Garrisonian, he was willing to help for the cause of abolition. Sensing a reinvigorated abolitionist program, Frederick made his position clear.

Every man who is ready to work for the overthrow of slavery, whether a voter, or non-voter, a Garrisonian or a Gerrit Smith man, black or white, is both clansman and kinsman of ours. We form a common league against slavery, and whatever political or personal differences, which have in other days divided and distracted us, a common object and a common emergency makes us for the time at least, forget those differences and strike at the common foe—and to give victory to the common cause.

Following the vein of abolitionism, Frederick began plans for a lecture tour. Surprisingly enough he also became a member of the newly formed Emancipation League, in late November, 1861. The strange part of Frederick's decision to become part of the league for the freedom of slaves was his willingness to join a group composed mainly of Garrisonians. Although his temperament allowed him to associate with Garrisonians again, he blasted the President's message to Congress and would not consider a compromise. Lincoln recommended colonization for slaves and free Negroes and Frederick became enraged. "Colonization was an old Whig and border state prepossession," said Douglass, and he was "bewildered by the spectacle of moral blindness,

57Holland, op. cit., p. 235; Frederick Douglass' Monthly, December, 1861, p. 223.

58Frederick Douglass' Monthly, December, 1861, p. 560.
infatuation, and helpless imbecility which the government of Lincoln represents."59 In the January issue of his monthly, Frederick placed an article entitled "What Shall Be Done With The Slaves If Emancipated?" "Deal justly with them," said Douglass, "he is a human being, capable of judging between good and evil, right and wrong, liberty and slavery, and is as much a subject of law as any other man."60 Frederick also declared:

When the accused slave system shall once be abolished, and the Negro, long cast out from the human family, and governed like a beast of burden, shall be gathered under the divine government of justice, liberty and humanity, men will be ashamed to remember that they were ever deluded by the flimsy nonsense which they have allowed themselves to urge against the freedom of the long enslaved millions of our land. That day is not far off. O Hasten it in mercy, gracious Heaven.61

Frederick traveled to Pennsylvania and spoke at National Hall in Philadelphia on January 14, 1862. He told his audience that he did not speak to them for applause but to inform them of the present situation in the nation. "He is the best friend of his country," said Douglass, "who, at this tremendous crisis, dares tell . . . the truth, however disagreeable that truth might be."62 Realizing that hope for Negro freedom lay within the Republican fold, Frederick toned down his criticisms of the President and remarked that facts show that this rebellion was

59Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, December 22, 1861, (NPS. Gerrit Smith Papers, Syracuse University Library, Syracuse, New York).

60Frederick Douglass' Monthly, January, 1862, p. 579.

61Ibid.

planned and prepared long before the name of Abe Lincoln was mentioned in connection with the office he now holds."63 Frederick reminded his audience that the war was essentially an abolitionist one and "slavery will be a conquered power in the land. I am, therefore, for the war, the government, for the Union and the Constitution in any and every event."64

Frederick continued his tour and on February 12 stopped at the Cooper Institute in New York City to deliver a speech against colonization. Frederick clearly stated that "For a nation to drive away its laboring population is to commit suicide... It is affirmed that the Negro, if emancipated, could not take care of himself. My answer is let him have a fair chance to try it. For two hundred years he has taken care of himself and his master into [sic] the bargain."65 Frederick continued:

Take any race you please, French, English, Irish or Scotch, subject them to slavery for ages—regard and treat them everywhere, every way, as property... Let them be loaded with chains, scarred with the whip, branded with hot irons, sold in markets, kept in ignorance... and I venture to say that the same doubt would spring up concerning either of them which now confronts the Negro.66

Throughout February, Douglass visited Milford, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; New York City; Jersey City,
New Jersey; and Naples, South Livonia, Henlock Lake, Towerville, and Conesus, New York. 67 Frederick said he had traveled more than 1,000 miles and met more than 10,000 people and his efforts proved worthwhile. 68 He received many favorable impressions by "firesides, and in churches, from people who are ready to sweep slavery from the country and would if the government would lead off or stand out of the way." 69 The National Anti-Slavery Standard in commenting about Frederick's recent speech at Cooper Institute reported that "his matter and manner were excellent and he commanded the close attention of his audience. More than one person expressed the opinion that no more effective discourse had been delivered in the city." 70 Another favorable report about Frederick's Cooper Institute speech came from the New York Independent:

... A man of genius, with fire in his blood and eloquence on his lips ... His speech was full of power, pathos, logic, wit and satire, alternately convulsing the house with laughter, rousing it to cheers, and now and then thrilling it into that muteness and awe which more highly compliments an orator than any applause. May he live to see the day when there shall be no more need of such appeals. 71

67 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, March, 1862, p. 610.
68 Ibid.
69 Ibid.
71 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, loc. cit., citing the New York Independent.
President Lincoln began to help the abolitionist cause when on March 31, 1862, he signed a bill forbidding the army or navy to return fugitive slaves. Any officer violating the law would be discharged from service and be forever ineligible to any appointment in the United States military. 72 The nation's capital was very active also because a bill calling for abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia was being debated. On March 30, 1862, Senator Charles Sumner delivered a fine address and called for the adoption of the antislavery measure in the District of Columbia. Sumner declared, "it is the first installment of the great debt which we all owe to an enslaved race, and will be recognized as one of the victories of humanity." 73 On April 8, Douglass wrote a letter of thanks to Sumner: "... the events taking place seem more a dream. If slavery is really dead in the District of Columbia ... to you more than any other American Statesman, belongs the honor of this great triumph of justice, liberty and sound policy." 74 Douglass concluded by saying that "the Slaveholder and the Slave look to you as the best embodiment [sic] of the antislavery idea now in the counsels of the nation. 75


73 Ibid., p. 274.

74 Frederick to Charles Sumner, April 3, 1862, Charles Sumner Letterbooks.

75 Ibid.
After passing both the Senate and House in early April, the bill was signed by President Lincoln banning slavery in the District of Columbia on April 16, 1862. Frederick was joyous for another important step had been taken to free his brethren. However, by the fourth of July, Frederick was lashing out at Lincoln anew for the latter had revoked General David Hunter's decree that slavery and martial law were incompatible in a free country and the slaves in Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina were, therefore, free. Lincoln issued a message declaring Hunter's order "unauthorized and null and void."76 Douglass aroused his audience by declaring that the administration was fighting with an olive branch instead of a sword, downgraded General McClellan as "either a cold blooded traitor or . . . an unmitigated military impressor, and blamed Lincoln for not adopting a decidedly antislavery policy.77

Because Douglass was so bound up with dreams of freedom, he could not understand that Lincoln was expressing difficulties in office and was uncertain that a Proclamation of Emancipation would have any effect in the South. Frederick was confident that both masters and slaves would be affected and it would help end slavery.78 President Lincoln became more aware of the demands for a proclamation and on July 21, 1862, he read a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet. However, he was advised

76 Wilson, op. cit., p. 283.
77 Holland, op. cit., p. 283.
78 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, August, 1862, pp. 630-690.
by various members of his cabinet to delay action on the document until the military situation was more favorable to the Northern forces. Douglass was still confused because Lincoln still talked about colonization. On August 15, 1862, the President had a group of free Negroes come to the White House to discuss plans for colonization. Douglass was present on that occasion and expressed bitter opposition to the proposal of colonization.79 Thoroughly disheartened because of Lincoln's continued hope of colonization, Frederick wrote to Gerrit Smith and said; "I think the nation was never more completely in the hands of the slave power. This government is now in the hands of the army, and the army is in the hands of the very worst type of American Democracy—the chief representative of which is now doing his utmost to destroy the country."80

However, within ten days after he wrote to Smith, the North won a decisive battle at Antietam, in western Maryland, and the Southern forces began to retreat. Prompted by the military victory and pressure from the abolitionists, President Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862.31 Because of his uncertainty of ever enforcing the proclamation in the South, Lincoln said he would "continue to


80Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, September 3, 1862, Gerrit Smith Papers.

encourage the voluntary colonization of Negroes upon this continent or elsewhere."82 Frederick would never forget the inspiring words incorporated in the proclamation:

That on the First day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand, eighteen hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any state or any designated part of a state, the people thereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then henceforward, and forever free.83

It was only natural that Frederick's anti-Lincoln policy was reversed because of the proclamation. His paper had nothing but praise for President Lincoln. "He may be slow," said Douglass, "but he is not a man to reconsider, retract and contradict words and purposes solemnly proclaimed over his official signature."84 He took a solid interest in the Lincoln administration and in a letter to his friends in Great Britain and Ireland informed them that the Union Government was now going to work towards the destruction of the slave system and help free all his brethren. Fearing that some of his European friends were planning to aid the Confederacy, Douglass pleaded with them to overlook the shortcomings of Lincoln's administration because the proclamation of freedom would soon be effective.


83 Stern, Ibid., pp. 718-719.

84 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, October, 1862, p. 722.
The hopes of millions, long trodden down, now rise with every advancing hour. Oh! I pray you, by all your highest and holiest memories, blast not the budding hopes of these millions by lending your countenance and extending your potent and honored hand to the blood-stained fingers of the impious slaveholding Confederate States of America.85

Frederick was not so naive to think that the issuance of the proclamation would end all of the Negro's problems. The southern plantation owners, both large and small, were dependent upon slave labor and would not easily relinquish the system of bondage. "Much work is needed to be done," said Douglass, "the slave will be bound to the invisible chains of slavery long after his iron chains are broken and forever buried out of sight... Time, experience, and culture must gradually bring society back to the normal condition from which long years of slavery have carried away under its iron sway."86

During the last week of December, 1862, Douglass journeyed to Boston, to participate in three antislavery meetings to be held at Tremont Temple. On the night of December 31, Frederick entered the hall along with William Wells Brown, the Negro historian and preacher, and Anna M. Dickenson, a youthful Quaker advocate of woman's rights and abolition of slavery. The tension and anxiety mounted quickly as the proceedings commenced because all present were anxious to receive the news


86 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, November, 1862, p. 750.
from Washington regarding the emancipation of slaves. Shortly after ten o’clock, a messenger pushed his way through the crowded Tremont Temple shouting, "It is coming! It is on the wires!" The audience burst into unrestrained praises and shouted out their happiness. Frederick was thankful that he had lived to see the beginning of the end of abominations. After the Emancipation Proclamation had been announced and the deafening sounds subsided, a proposal was made to continue the meeting elsewhere because the temple was rented only until midnight. The people regrouped at the Twelfth Street Baptist Church, and the rejoicing continued into the early morning hours. Frederick was elated when he said, "this is scarcely a day for prose—it is a day for poetry and song." Frederick's lecturing ability was in great demand and during January and early February, 1863, he traveled through many towns and cities from Boston to Chicago and covered approximately 2,000 miles. The Chicago Daily Tribune announced Frederick's arrival in their city and hoped that "As a man of unusual oratorical powers," his present juncture "will call out his best effort." The editorial staff remarked that "Those who have heard his impassioned eloquence in the darkest days of the African.

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88Ibid., p. 430.

89Frederick Douglas' Monthly, January, 1863, p. 770.

90Ibid., p. 793.

91Chicago Daily Tribune January 19, 1863, p. 4.
race in this country, can imagine how the dawning of Liberty for his people will inspire his tongue."\(^{92}\) Frederick's lecture was entitled "Truth and Error," and even though Chicago was experiencing a severe rain storm, he drew a large audience.\(^{93}\) He remarked that "Our government had discovered a new truth and was organizing it into law."\(^{94}\) Frederick blamed slavery for the war and said:

Had opponents of slavery been allowed the rights of free speech as the Federal Constitution declared all should have, the enormities of the 'patriarchal institution' would have been exposed and in time done away with in a peaceful manner.\(^{95}\)

President Lincoln's proclamation had struck "a fatal blow at the root of the gigantic evil," said Douglass, and it would surely be felt in the Confederacy.\(^{96}\) Frederick visited the home of an old friend, John Jones, after his oration, and was serenaded by Barnes and Broadville's Band.\(^{97}\) He thanked them for the honor, and his admirers wished him "God-speed in his errand of Liberty and Humanity."\(^{98}\) In a letter to his friend Gerrit Smith, Douglass informed him about his Chicago tour and hoped that the liberation

\(^{92}\)Ibid.

\(^{93}\)Ibid., January 20, 1863, p. 4.

\(^{94}\)Frederick Douglass' Monthly, February, 1863, p. 793, citing Chicago Tribune.

\(^{95}\)Chicago Daily Tribune, loc. cit.

\(^{96}\)Ibid.

\(^{97}\)Ibid., January 21, 1863, p. 4.

\(^{98}\)Ibid.
of the slaves would lead the country to salvation. 99

During his visit to New York in early February, Frederick lectured at the Cooper Institute in New York City. He pronounced the proclamation "a mighty event for the colored race, the nation and the world." 100 He was honored that he was now a colored citizen and defended the Emancipation Proclamation against the charge of it being only a paper proclamation. "So were the Declaration, the Magna Carta, and the Constitution, and this proclamation can be significant provided that the services of black men are accepted in the South." 101 "Stop calling us niggers and call us soldiers," said Frederick, "and in such a war, we will fight with a will." 102

Frederick embarked upon his most important war-time duties for recruiting Negroes into the Union army. Congress gave the President authority to organize colored regiments and passed a bill to that effect on July 17, 1862, but there was no action until after the proclamation. 103 Governor John A. Andrew of Massachusetts was granted permission by Lincoln to raise two colored regiments, but because of the small Negro population that could be recruited in his state, outside help was needed. Major George L. Stearns was contacted by Andrew, and he agreed

99Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, January 23, 1863, Gerrit Smith Papers.
100New York Times, February 7, 1863, p. 3.
101Ibid.
102Ibid.
103Holland, op. cit., pp. 296-297.
to handle recruiting.\textsuperscript{104} After entreating Frederick to assist in raising Negro troops, Stearns promised that Andrew guaranteed equality. Douglass was convinced that colored men should be in the army and rallied many to the Union with his "Men of Color—To Arms" speech.

Now or never, Liberty won by white men would lose half its luster. Who would free themselves must strike the blow. Better even die free, than to live slaves. They tell you this is the "white man's war;" ... believe them not; cowards themselves, they do not wish to have their cowardice shamed by your brave example. ... We can get at the throat of treason and slavery through the state of Massachusetts. ... Massachusetts now welcomes you to arm as soldiers. ... She has full leave of the general government to send one regiment to the war, and she has undertaken to do it.\textsuperscript{105}

Frederick wrote a long and important letter to Gerrit Smith on March 6, 1863, which gives the impression that Smith was again influential in advising Douglass to join Stearns. He told Smith that he hoped at least "one colored company of soldiers" from New York could make part of the regiment forming at Readville, Massachusetts. "Subsequent reflections and conversation with our friend George D. Stearns from Boston have convinced me that your suggestion should be carried out."\textsuperscript{106} Douglass was proud that his youngest son Charles was the first to enlist in the company.

\textsuperscript{104}Chesnutt, op. cit., p. 91; Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 344. Major Stearns lived in Boston and had been a noble worker for freedom in Kansas and friend of John Brown. See Holland, loc. cit., and Douglass, op. cit., p 346.


\textsuperscript{106}Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, March 6, 1863, Gerrit Smith Papers.
in the state of New York, but was still apprehensive of the plan because he knew that black soldiers could not as yet become officers no matter what their merits might be. He overlooked that problem for a few months because he strongly felt that "though coupled with disadvantage—colored men should hail the opportunity of getting on the United States uniform as a very great advance."107 Frederick informed Smith that he would recruit in New York and Pennsylvania and later returned to Troy, Albany, New York, and Philadelphia "to accommodate those who wanted time to decide."108 Douglass received two hundred dollars from Smith for personal expenses but was peeved because Stearns would allow him only ten dollars a week for his services.109 Douglass wrote another letter to Smith on March 7, 1863.

If you [Smith] said in your Albany Speech... that you are for the preservation of the Union at all hazards and at all costs, and that you would prefer the Union even with slavery, than to allow the slave-holders to go off and set up a government for themselves, I should agree with you even in that for I feel that there is more hope for the slave, even in an old Union, if that were possible, than there would or could be in an exclusively slaveholding Government.110

While Frederick settled his differences with Stearns and received $300 from him, he continued to recruit colored men in New York and Pennsylvania.111

107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid.
110 Ibid., March 7, 1863.
111 Gerrit Smith Papers for March, 1863, contains a list of Douglass' receipts and expenditures for the month. These included money received from Stearns and Smith as well as towns visited and men he recruited during March, 1863.
Frederick was an able recruiter and through the columns of his paper expressed the importance of Negro support. "The decision of our destiny is now, as never before, in our hands... To fight for the Government in this tremendous war is, then, to fight for Nationality and for a place with all other classes of our fellow citizens." 112 Frederick was confident that once the Negro had the brass letters of the Union on his uniform and a musket on his shoulder, then, "there is not the power on earth which can deny that he has earned the rights to citizenship." 113 In an article entitled "Why Enlist," Frederick explained to his brethren that they could win respect of others, "become citizens and prevent a drift back into the whirlpool of 'Pro-Slavery Compromise' at the end of the war." 114

Frederick became discouraged in April and May, 1863, because although he had received excellent responses to his plea, his promise of equal wages, rations, equipment, protection, and treatment to Negro troops had fallen short. His Negro brethren were being discriminated against and he felt that the responsibility of retribution was his. While speaking in the Church of the Puritans, in New York in May, Frederick said, "I shall advocate for the Negro, his most full and complete adoption into the great national family of America. I shall demand for him the most civil and political equality and that he shall enjoy

112 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, April, 1863, pp. 317-318.
113 Poore, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 34, citing Address of Frederick Douglass at National Hall, Philadelphia, July 5, 1863.
114 Ibid.
all the rights, privileges and immunities enjoyed by any other members of the body politic."  

115 Stearns prompted Douglass to visit Washington and speak to Lincoln and Edwin Stanton, the Secretary of War.  

116 Frederick journeyed to the nation's capital in late July and had his first interview with the President. He always remembered the first visit with Lincoln and remarked that he had "never more quickly been but at ease than by the presence of the man."  

117 Douglass listed the grievances of his Negro brethren. Lincoln informed Frederick that equal pay, promotions, and proper treatment would come, but it would take time because the enlistment of Negro troops was still in the experimental stages. The only real point of difference was over Frederick's desire to retaliate against Jefferson Davis's plan to kill Negroes who were captured. He left Lincoln without any true satisfaction but felt that Lincoln would honor his promises and help the poor conditions of the Negro troops. Lincoln had promised to sign any commission to colored soldiers if Stanton would commend them. Encouraged by this gesture, Douglass expressed his willingness to accept a commission when he spoke to Stanton. Lincoln's war secretary was unsure of Frederick's qualifications, but promised to make him an assistant adjutant on the staff of General Lorenzo Thomas, who at that  

115 Frederick Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 355.  


time was recruiting Negroes in the Mississippi valley. 113

Overjoyed and anxious to receive his commission, Douglass returned to Rochester, New York, and announced that the August issue of his monthly was to be the last. The final issue contained his "Valedictory" to his readers. He informed his readers that he was not abandoning the journalistic field because his paper was no longer supported, nor because he was motivated by a love of change or adventure, and not because he felt that writing and speaking were no longer necessary. He assured his readers that "I shall think, write, and speak as I have opportunity, while the slave needs a pen to plead his cause, or a voice to expose his wrongs before the people." 119

In a manner which seemingly indicated no remorse, Frederick said:

I discontinue my paper, because I can better serve my poor bleeding country-men when great opportunity has now come, by going South and summoning them to assert their liberty, than I can do by staying here. I am going South to assist Adjutant General Thomas, in the organization of colored troops, who shall win for the millions in bondage the inestimable blessings of liberty and country. 120

Frederick surely felt some feelings of regret for his journal had been published for sixteen consecutive years. However, he was looking ahead and felt that his efforts in the field of recruiting would help the Negro earn the respect, rank, payment, and equipment he deserved in the military and prevent

113 Ibid., pp. 352-353.
119 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, August, 1863, pp. 350-351.
time was recruiting Negroes in the Mississippi valley.\textsuperscript{113}

Overjoyed and anxious to receive his commission, Douglass returned to Rochester, New York, and announced that the August issue of his monthly was to be the last. The final issue contained his "Valedictory" to his readers. He informed his readers that he was not abandoning the journalistic field because his paper was no longer supported, nor because he was motivated by a love of change or adventure, and not because he felt that writing and speaking were no longer necessary. He assured his readers that "I shall think, write, and speak as I have opportunity, while the slave needs a pen to plead his cause, or a voice to expose his wrongs before the people."\textsuperscript{119}

In a manner which seemingly indicated no remorse, Frederick said:

\begin{quote}
I discontinue my paper, because I can better serve my poor bleeding countrymen whose great opportunity has now come, by going South and summoning them to assert their liberty, than I can do by staying here. I am going South to assist Adjutant General Thomas, in the organization of colored troops, who shall win for the millions in bondage the inestimable blessings of liberty and country.\textsuperscript{120}
\end{quote}

Frederick surely felt some feelings of regret for his journal had been published for sixteen consecutive years. However, he was looking ahead and felt that his efforts in the field of recruiting would help the Negro earn the respect, rank, payment, and equipment he deserved in the military and prevent

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., pp. 352-353.

\textsuperscript{119} Frederick Douglass' Monthly, August, 1863, pp. 350-351.

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid; The [New York] Princinna, August 13, 1863, p. 1167.
disaster such as occurred at Fort Wagner in South Carolina on
July 18, 1863.121 The 54th Massachusetts Regiment, one that
Douglass had helped muster, was severely beaten, there, and
Commander Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, along with many Negroes,
was killed. Both of Frederick's sons, Lewis and Charles, were
in that division, and they were fortunate enough to escape with
slight wounds. Frederick recalled the anxiety he felt when he
received a letter from his son Lewis stating that "Whites will
not come to help or we could have held the fort... If I die
tonight I will not die a coward."122 Frederick was thankful that
his sons' lives had been spared and labored unceasingly to pro-
cure equality for the Negro as a member of the military. In
October, Frederick's son Lewis was granted furlough to recuperate
and for "good conduct" in the field. Douglass mentioned to
Smith that his son would return to his post "as soon as his
health is restored."123

Douglass was annoyed when he did not receive his commission.
On August 15, 1863, Frederick received a letter from G. W.
Foster which informed him to report to General Thomas at Vicks-
burg, but there was no commission. Douglass inquired about it
but nothing materialized. Stanton was aware that a commission
to Douglass would strengthen the entire Negro recruiting campaign.

121 Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 346; The [New York]
Principle, September 17, 1863, p. 1137.
122 Frederick Douglass' Monthly, August, 1863, p. 352.
123 Frederick Douglass to Gerrit Smith, October 10, 1863,
Gerrit Smith Papers; See also The [New York] Principle, November
26, 1863, p. 1227.
and contribute to the war effort. However, because of too much Anti-Negro prejudice in the Lincoln administration, Douglass' commission was shelved.124 Frederick did not report to General Thomas.

The disappointment did not remain long with Frederick because too many other problems were pressing the country. The Irish population the the country had always discriminated against the Negro, and New York and Pennsylvania became problem areas. The July and August "Draft Riots" in 1863, pitted the large working class of Irish against the Negroes in what proved to be a dark chapter in the history of the war.125 In New York especially "the bloody mobs struck against the Negroes and spared neither sex nor age."126 The atrocities ranged from hanging to burning homes and the colored orphan asylum.127 Douglass was pensive about the problems that a free Negro would experience in the country.

Despite these setbacks, Frederick continued to hold some faith in the antislavery policy of the government. He turned again to the lecture platform and delivered a speech to the American Anti-Slavery Society in December at Philadelphia. Douglass reminded his audience that freeing the slave was only

124Toner, op. cit., p. 32. See also Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., pp. 353-350.
125Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit., p. 360.
126Ibid.
127Ibid.
the beginning, it would be necessary to work for his elevation and secure for him the right to elective franchise. A tinge of his animosity for the Irish is also evident in his speech.

Many say that the colored man is ignorant and therefore he shall not vote. In saying this, you lay down a rule for the black man that you apply to no other class of your citizens. . . If he [Negro] knows enough to be hanged, he knows enough to vote. If he knows an honest man from a thief, he knows much more than some of our white voters. If he knows as much when sober as an Irishman knows when drunk, he knows enough to vote. . . All I ask, however, in regard to the blacks is that whatever rule you adopt, whether of intelligence or wealth, as the condition of voting, . . . apply it equally to the black man. 128

During the winter and spring of 1864, Frederick once again became distrustful of Lincoln's antislavery policy. The Negro troops had demonstrated their abilities in various campaigns but were still receiving less pay and were unable to secure commissions. 129 While lecturing in Boston on February 13, 1864, Frederick declared: "I look for no miracle to abolish slavery . . . but I warn the Union people now—if they win they are to do so with the aid of their black cards." 130 Frederick began to flirt with the Radical Abolitionists in the spring and the advocates of that party felt confident of his support in the election and his avid response to a call for the Cleveland Convention can be discerned in his letter to E. Gilbert Esq.,

128 Liberator, January 29, 1864, p. 2.


130 Holland, op. cit. p. 303.
one of the five who originally issued the call:

... I mean the complete abolition of every vestige, form and modification of slavery in every port of the United States, perfect equality for the black men in every state before the law in the jury box, at the ballot-box, and on the battlefield. Ample and salutary retaliation for every instance of enslavement or slaying of prisoners of color. I mean that in the distribution of offices and honors under this Government no discrimination shall be made in favor of or against any class of citizens, whether black or white, of native or foreign birth. And supposing the convention which is to meet at Cleveland means the same thing, I cheerfully give my name as one of the signees of the call.131

Despite such verbal outbursts, Douglass gradually returned to the Republican Camp. He was knowledgeable of the fact that Congress had passed a bill granting full pay and bounty to Negroes who were free since May, 1861, and who had volunteered their services to the Union army. Lincoln also realized that the continued support of Douglass could prove invaluable especially if the war had to be ended prematurely. Douglass went to visit Lincoln for the second time in August, 1864. Frederick remarked that Lincoln "showed a deeper moral conviction against slavery than I have ever seen before in anything spoken or written by him."132 Lincoln asked that if Douglass would consent, he would employ him outside the army to organize a band of colored scouts, travel into the slave states and induce Negroes to come within

131 New York Times, May 27, 1864, p. 4. The New York Principia of May 25, 1864, p. 44 states that Douglass did not sign the call for the Cleveland Convention of Radical men—"Central Frement Club" but the June 2, issue of The Principia cites Douglass' letter to E. Gilbert reversing his decision.

132 Douglass, Life and Times, op. cit. p. 326.
the Federal lines. Lincoln informed Douglass that opposition to the war was increasing in the North because the Southern sympathizers, called Copperheads, disliked the abolitionist goal of the North. He explained to Frederick that he was apprehensive that "a peace might be forced upon him which would leave still in slavery—all who were not numbered among those in free states." Douglass accepted but the plan was never carried out because of the rapid success of the Union forces. General Ulysses S. Grant had proven himself worthy of assuming General George B. McClellan's position as commander of the Army of the Potomac and with the aid of capable assistants removed Lincoln's fear of a possible peace—any price proposal.

During the second conference with Lincoln, Douglass was astonished by the President's request to Governor Buckingham of Connecticut. "Tell Governor Buckingham to wait, for I want to have a long talk with my friend, Frederick Douglass." Later in life Douglass remarked that it was "probably the first time in the history of this Republic when its chief magistrate found occasion or disposition to exercise such an act of impartiality between persons so widely different in their positions and supposed claims upon his intentions."

With Frederick back in the Republican fold, Lincoln set

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133 Douglass, Life and Times, loc. cit.; Chesnutt, op. cit., pp. 94-95; Holland, op. cit., p. 503.
134 Douglass, Life and Times, pp. 363-364.
135 Ibid.
136 Ibid., p. 365.
his sights on being reelected. Douglass helped to secure Lincoln's return into the White House and his hatred for the Democratic Party made his talks that much more pleasant. Even with all the weaknesses that the Republican party embraced, it was in effect the only one the Negro could support. During the Colored National Convention held in Syracuse, on October 4-7, 1864, Frederick declared that the Republican Party should be looked to for leadership.

In the ranks of the Democratic Party, all the worst elements of American society fraternize; and from which we need not expect a single voice for justice, mercy or even decency. We therefore pray, that whatever wrath, curse, or calamity the future may have in store for us, the occasion of the Democratic Party to the reins of power will not be one of them; for this to us would comprise the sum of all social woes.137

Douglass' efforts were noble but the combination of John C. Fremont's withdrawal from the Radical Abolitionist ticket plus the federal victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July, 1863, proved to be decisive factors in Lincoln victory over McClellan. As a Radical Abolitionist, Fremont did not necessarily approve of the Republican policies, but because McClellan came out in favor of restoration of the Union with slavery, the Democrats had to be defeated at all costs. Douglass remarked that the Democrats were foolish to even think that people "would vote for a party under which Buchanan betrayed the Government into the hands of secession and treason."138

137Poncr, op. cit., p. 413, citing Proceedings of the National Convention of Colored Men Held in Syracuse, New York, October 4-7, 1864.

138Douglass, Life and Times, loc. cit.
The election was not won so much by speeches and letters as it was by the remarkable and shocking victories of Grant and Meade. Lincoln's spirit was invigorated with the victory at the electoral polls and the military prowess of his generals. Confident of a Northern victory, the President turned his thoughts toward lifting the Negro race to a position of dignity. In December, 1864, Lincoln placed the thirteenth amendment before Congress and in January, 1865, slavery was abolished from any part of the United States or any place subject to its jurisdiction.

Frederick traveled to Washington to witness Lincoln's second inaugural on March 4, 1865. The prominent Negro was refused entrance to the reception room as he reached the door, and requested that guards make his presence known to Lincoln. Seemingly unaware of just who they had detained, the guards soon round themselves ushering Douglass into the East Room of the White House. Persistent as ever, Frederick had gotten word to the President through a friend and was promptly acknowledged. As soon as Lincoln saw his Negro confidant, he remarked, "Here comes my friend Douglass." 139

As I approached him he reached out his hand, gave me a cordial shake, and said; Douglass, I saw you in the crowd today listening to my inaugural address. There is no man's opinion that I value more than yours; what do you think of it? I said: Mr. Lincoln, I cannot stop here to talk with you, as there are thousands waiting to shake you by the hand; but he said again: what do you think of it? I said Mr.

Lincoln, it was a sacred effort, and then I walked off. I am glad you liked it, he said.140

Frederick had an unpleasant experience at Lincoln's inaugural reception. He was casually introduced to Andrew Johnson, the Vice-President, who would shortly assume the role of Chief Executive of the country. The contemptible feelings which Frederick held for that man are expressed through his own words.

There are moments in the lives of most men, when the doors of their souls are open and unconsciously to themselves, their true characters may be read by the observant eye... the true index of his [Johnson's] heart was one of bitter contempt and aversion. His first glance was the from of a man, the second was the bland and sickly smile of a demagogue.141

Douglass journeyed to Boston and at Faneuil Hall, in early April, celebrated the fall of Richmond, the Confederate Capital. In addressing his audience, Frederick said, "I tell you the Negro is coming up—he is rising, rising. While a little while age, we were the Lazarus of the South... But a change has now taken place."142 "Judge us not," declared Douglass, "by the heights we have reached but by the depths from which we have come."143

The Civil War had scarcely concluded when another tragedy enveloped the nation. Lincoln was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth on the night of April 14, 1865, in the Ford's Theater.

140Ibid.; Douglass, Holley; Remson.
141Douglass, Ibid., p. 370.
142Holland, op. cit., p. 311.
Frederick had returned to Rochester, New York, when news arrived of the President's death. One member of the audience at City Hall where Douglass spoke, said that although he had heard Clay and Webster in their best moments, their eloquence could not compare to Frederick's on that occasion. Douglass said that he spoke out of fullness of his heart. "I gave expression to so much of the soul of the people present that my voice was several times utterly silenced by the sympathetic tumult of the great audience... We shared in common a terrible calamity, and this touch of nature made us more than countrymen, it made us kin." 144 As a reminder to his audience Douglass said:

Let us not be in too much haste in the work of restoration. Let us not be in a hurry to clasp to our bosom the spirit that gave birth to Booth. when we turn to our arms again, as brethren, our Southern foes, let us see to it that we take also our Southern friends. Let us not forget that justice to the Negro is safety to the nation.145

Frederick was saddened by Lincoln's death and was deeply honored when Mrs. Lincoln presented him with a cane that belonged to her husband. The Rochester Express reported:

Mr. Lincoln desired to present Douglass with some token of regard... Mrs. Lincoln in carrying out what she knew was the desire of her honored husband, sent the cane to Mr. Douglass with a letter explaining the circumstances. The cane is a very ordinary one, but is, of course, highly prized by its owner as a relic of the great and good man who was his friend.146


145Holland, op. cit., p. 311.

The Great Emancipator was gone but much work in the field of equality for Negroes still needed to be accomplished. Douglass wrote to his friend Charles Sumner in late April, and expressed his feeling of dependance upon the stalwart senator.

The friends of freedom all over the country have looked to you and confided in you, of all men in the U. S. Senate, during all this terrible war. They will look to you all the more now that peace down, and the final settlement of our national troubles is at hand. God grant you strength equal to your day and your duties, is my prayer and that of millions.147

For a short time, Douglass felt that since the antislavery platform had performed its work, his voice would no longer be needed. "My great and exceeding joy," said Frederick, "over these stupendous achievements, especially over the abolition of slavery . . . was slightly tinged with a feeling of sadness."148 However, the Union forces had barely emerged victorious, when Douglass turned his attention to the status of the freedman continually urging education as a way of improvement. Many of his ideas were read by Booker T. Washington and embodied in Tuskegee Institute. "Douglass finally became a bridge between struggle and achievement, between humble birth and high purpose. His career is without parallel as a striking example of the American ideal of pulling oneself up by his bootstraps."149

147Frederick Douglass to Charles Sumner, April 29, 1865, Charles Sumner Letterbooks.


Frederick Douglass possessed the "natural abilities of purpose, perseverance, unconquerable will and industry," because he, "left little to chance, destiny, or superior natural endowments."150 He later held such federal appointments as Marshall of the District of Columbia, Recorder of Deeds for the District, and United States Minister to Haiti. The distinguished Negro abolitionist died on February 20, 1895.

A famous writer of biography, Emil Ludwig, points out that great men are not gods; that they have been gripped by the same all-too-human passions, repressions, and encumbrances which afflict every other mortal, but they achieved greatness because they fought through to their goals.151 Douglass struggled throughout his entire life to help the downtrodden Negro race because he too had experienced the ravenous jaws of oppression. "You are better than I," said Frederick, "when you do better than I."152 His challenge rings clear to all who denounce the Negro's Constitutional right to equalization of opportunity. Unwillingness to accept has exposed the weakness of their position and brightened the path towards Civil Rights.

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150 *Chicago Daily Press and Tribune*, February 7, 1859, p. 1, citing Lecture of Frederick Douglass at Metropolitan Hall on "Self-Made Men."

151 Quarnles, Frederick Douglass: "Bridge-Builders in Human Relations," op. cit., p. 100.

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The slavery controversy in the United States gave birth to many stalwart individuals who directed their efforts to expunge the chattel system. This study concerns the Negro abolitionist, Frederick Douglass, whose animosity to slavery engendered within him the will to break the chains of bondage and become one of the most influential and respected Negro exponents of manumission in the nineteenth century. With an inborn gift of enunciation, Douglass provided the spark that sustained the dwindling spirit of hope in his brethren.

Frederick became one of the most prized speakers of the Garrisonian movement, but his trenchant desire to free his black brethren rendered him unable to confine his lectures to simple narrative. The Negro abolitionist's determination led to the publication of the first of three autobiographies in 1845. Popularity and reputation soon followed, but so did the possibility of reversion to bondage. A tour of the British Isles was hurriedly scheduled. While there, Frederick was subtly introduced to the realm of political abolitionism and several friends
procured his freedom.

His return to America in 1847, marked an even bolder chapter in his abolitionist career because his newly acquired political aspirations occasioned the split with his former tutor, William Lloyd Garrison. For the next sixteen years, Douglass ably edited his own newspaper, and with valuable assistance from Liberty and Free Soil Party advocates, pleaded the cause of the Negro throughout most of the northern states. The culmination of his antislavery efforts occurred with the ascendancy of the Republican Party in 1860.

With the coming of the Civil War, Douglass bent his efforts to urging President Lincoln to liberate the slaves. Even after the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Frederick unceasingly labored to secure for the free Negroes eligibility and equality in the union army forces.

Unwilling to compromise at the expense of Negro liberation, Frederick would criticize individuals and institutions whose efforts were not directed towards complete abolition. His challenge rings clear to all who denounce the Negro's Constitutional right to equalization of opportunity. The unwillingness on the part of exponents of prejudice and discrimination to accept has exposed the weakness of their position and brightened the path towards Civil Rights.

Douglass was the bridge between struggle and achievement and his humble birth and high purpose render his efforts toward racial freedom and equality among the noblest in any
Accept by:

Vivie B. Howard, Chairman

[Signatures]