ADDRESS BY THE STATE CONVENTION TO THE COLORED CITIZENS OF CALIFORNIA

Men and Brethren:

For the fourth time the colored citizens of this State assembled in Convention, by their representatives, and the session just closed a degree of harmony and good feeling prevailed, unexemplar in deliberative bodies. We met to devise ways and means to obtain the highest privilege of citizenship, the Elective Franchise; to increase the educational facilities of our children; to promote temperance, morality and frugality; to encourage progress in Agriculture, Mechanics, and all the Industrial pursuits, and to advance the cause of TRUTH, VIRTUE and Christian piety.

How well we have succeeded in the work for which we were appointed, we leave to you to judge. We here lay before you the result of our labors, and are willing to abide the test of your judgment.

We call your attention to the various subjects which were under the deliberation of the Convention.

First--And most important, is the position we took as regards Truth, Virtue and Christian piety. Although the discussion of these subjects was not the primary cause for which the Convention was called, yet they over-balanced all other subjects, for without them no good can be accomplished. We took high grounds on these subjects, and we earnestly invite your attention to the report of the Committee on Public Morals, and the resolutions appertaining thereto introduced by the Business Committee, and we feel confident that your mature judgment will endorse the action of your representatives.

Second--The Elective Franchise demanded a large portion of our deliberations. This is an important subject, as relating to our interests in this country and our rights as men and citizens. With prayerful consideration we entered upon our duty, and our minds were sorely exercised in view of the great responsibility which rested on us. We commend to your notice the action of the Convention, the able report of the Committee on that subject, the convincing argument produced, and the powerful speeches made on the occasion.

Third--The education of our offspring was not neglected. You are doubtless well aware of the disabilities we labor under as regards the educational progress of the rising generation. In consequence of the unjust provisions of the law, in many localities our children are growing up in ignorance. We call upon you to use your influence, in your respective localities, to the end that our children may receive the advantages of the Public Schools. We are taxed for the general School Fund, but in many places our children are deprived of its benefits. In reference to the San Jose School, we believe, by united efforts on our part and a small individual contribution, that it can be made an Institute where the higher branches can be taught and principles of virtue and religion instilled into the youthful mind. The principal, Professor Peter W. Cassey, is well known in this State, and by scholarly acquirements and Christian character he is eminently fitted for his position. That, however, should not cause us to lessen our efforts to obtain a repeal.

Fourth--We next call your attention to the report of the Committee on Industrial pursuits. The subjects introduced, and the action taken thereon, merit and should receive careful consideration. To gain an eminence in the new field of political equality, toward which our journey tends, we must prove ourselves equal in art, industry and labor, as well as in knowledge and piety, to all others. We must not be satisfied with mediocrity, we must endeavor to excel.

Fifth--On the subject of Statistics we are not as full as we would wish. In consequence of the limited attendance at the Convention, the Committee on that subject had not sufficient materials on which to work. Their report, however, is alike instructive and interesting, and although limited, it is reliable.

Sixth--We have organized a State Executive Committee, consisting of men who are well known throughout the State for their ability, untiring industry, and devotion to our cause and the welfare of mankind.

Seventh--We have pledged your fealty to the Government as order loving, law-abiding citizens. We are responsible for your loyalty, and fell proud of our responsibility.