God forbid. And we think the universal reply will be—We will not.

A half century brings about a mighty change, in the reality of existing things, and events of the world’s history. Fifty years ago, our fathers lived: for the most part they were sorely oppressed, debased, ignorant and incapable of comprehending the political relations of mankind; the great machinery and motive power by which the enlightened nations of the earth were impelled forward. They knew but little, and ventured to do nothing to enhance their own interests, beyond that which their oppressors taught them. They lived amidst a continual cloud of moral obscurity—a fog of bewilderment and delusion, by which they were of necessity compelled to confine themselves to a limited space—a known locality—lest by one step beyond this, they might have stumbled over a precipice, ruining themselves beyond recovery in the fall.

We are their sons, but not the same individuals; neither do we live in the same period with them. That which suited them, does not suit us; and that with which they may have been contented, will not satisfy us.

Without education, they were ignorant of the world and fearful of adventure. With education, we are conversant with its geography, history and nations, and delight in its enterprises and responsibilities. They once were held as slaves; to such a condition we never could be reduced. They were content with privileges; we will be satisfied with nothing less than rights. They felt themselves happy to be permitted to beg for rights; we demand them as an innate inheritance. They considered themselves favored to live by sufferance; we reject it as a degradation. A secondary position was all they asked for; we claim entire equality or nothing. The relation of master and slave was innocently acknowledged by them; we deny the right, as such, and pronounce the relation as the basest injustice that ever scourged the earth and cursed the human family. They admitted themselves to be inferiors; we barely acknowledge the whites as equals—perhaps not in every particular. They lamented their irrecoverable fate, and incapacity to redeem themselves and their race. We rejoice, that as their sons, it is our happy lot and high mission, to accomplish that which they desired and would have done, but failed for the want of ability to do.

Let no intelligent man or woman, then, among us, be found at the present day, exulting in the degradation that our enslaved parents