The white American's home is free, cheerful, and surrounded by all to make it prosperous; ours is encumbered by bars, props and restraints, and shorn of most that produces prosperity.

The white American's hearth-stone finds around it a cluster of vigorous youth, preparing successfully for the more vigorous battle of life; the colored American's, a few ill-trained and often worse-governed youth grouping in the gloom and mist of uncertainty. The former, a fixed reality; the latter, since no settled purpose governs it, rather an existence in name—a mere thing of to-day. From the domicil to the active world, the white occupant has, as it were his pathway made for his entrance; the colored occupant has yet to make his own.

How best to do it, is the question for our grave consideration.

The next point to which we would direct your attention, as having immediate connection with this, is the possession, in "fee simple," of our fire-sides. It is lamentable to state, that not more than one in fifty of us possess our own hearth-stones; and this is not so much from the want of means, as from ill management.

A larger number still live crowded, pent up, shoved back, and even piled up and this, too, at rates of expense, startling to contemplate; especially is this true in larger cities.

When we add to this the feebleness and instability, the utter helplessness of a floating people, not possessing the very roofs that shelter them, having no anchorage, hold, or even footing in the soil from whence they derive their subsistence—we would earnestly call attention to this matter, hoping that in some tangible form it may be brought to bear upon our people.

All history, and our own sad experience, point with such significance to the weakness of such a class, that we ought to profit by it.

The peculiarities of our condition in this community, of which we form an integral part, render it doubly incumbent upon us to possess, hold and transmit to posterity as much of the soil as [is] possible.

The time for this in large cities, perhaps, is gone by; yet the country, fertile in climate and large in extent, offers abundant opportunity.

This point belonging more properly to the head of agriculture, at least in the exposition of its principles and their bearings upon our condition, we leave it to the disposition of your committee on that subject, and call attention to another point.

In thus reviewing our social state, it would be some relief if our own condition threw only its own obstacles in our way—since, then, we could easily remove them, but the difficulty does not stop here; it goes further, and produces obstacles from without which, too, clog our way and impede our progress.

Every bar placed before us at the door of the hotel, the steam boat, the rail car, the stage coach, the work-shop, or the counting-room, the law court, or the Christian church, is of material of double strength, having for its composition our condition and strong prejudicial feelings generated from that condition, and is so placed as much by our own acquiescence, as by the dictate of public sentiment. With the superscription written upon each, "thus far