PLAT FORM:

OR

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS

OF THE

CLEVELAND CONVENTION.

WHEREAS, for years the Colored People of the United States have been looking, hoping and waiting in expectation of realizing the blessings of Civil Liberty; and

WHEREAS, during this long, tedious and anxious period, they have been depending upon their white fellow countrymen to effect for them this desirable end: but instead of which they have met with disappointment, discouragement and degradation; and

WHEREAS, no people can ever attain to the elevated position of freemen, who are totally or partially ignorant of the constituent elements of Political Liberty; and

WHEREAS, in the multitude of Conventions heretofore held by our fathers and contemporaries among the colored people of the United States, no such principles as a basis have ever been adduced or demonstrated to us as a guide for action; and

WHEREAS, no people can maintain their freedom without an interested motive and a union of sentiment, as a rule of action and nucleus to hold them together; and

WHEREAS, all of the Conventions heretofore held by the whites in this country, of whatever political pretensions—whether Democrat, Whig, or Free Democracy—all have thrown themselves upon the declaration: "To sustain the Constitution as our forefathers understood it, and the Union as they formed it; all of which plainly and boldly imply, unrestricted liberty to the whites, and the right to hold the blacks in slavery and degradation: