

During the war of 1812, Capt. Perry, writing to Commodore Chauncey, the senior officer, said—"The men that came by Mr. Champlin are a motley set—blacks, soldiers, and boys: *I am, however, pleased to see any thing in the shape of a man.*" The following letter was sent by Commodore Chauncey in reply:—

"ON BOARD THE PIKE, OFF BURLINGTON BAY, }
July 13th. }

"SIR, — I have been duly honored with your letters of the 23d and 26th ultimo, and notice your anxiety for men and officers. I am equally anxious to furnish you, and no time shall be lost in sending officers and men to you, as soon as the public service will allow me to send them from this lake. I regret that you are not pleased with the men sent you by Messrs. Champlin and Forrest; for, to my knowledge, a part of them are not surpassed by any seamen we have in the fleets; and I have yet to learn that the color of the skin, or the cut and trimmings of the coat, can affect a man's qualifications or usefulness. *I have nearly fifty blacks on board this ship, and many of them are among my best men;* and those people you call soldiers have been to sea from two to seventeen years, and I presume that you will find them as good and useful as any men on board of your vessel; at least, if I can judge by comparison, for those which we have on board this ship are attentive and obedient, and, as far as I can judge, many of them excellent seamen; at any rate, the men sent to Lake Erie have been selected with a view of sending a fair proportion of petty officers and seamen, and I presume, upon examination, it will be found they are equal to those upon this lake."

During the Dorr excitement, the colored population of Rhode Island received high encomiums from the papers of the State for their conduct. The *New York Courier and Enquirer* said:—"The colored people of Rhode Island deserve the good opinion and kind feeling of every citizen of the State, for their conduct during the recent troublous times in Providence. They promptly volunteered their services for any duty to which they might be useful in maintaining law and order. Upwards of a hundred organized themselves for the purpose of acting as a city guard for the protection of the city, and to extinguish fires, in case of their occurrence, while the citizens were absent on military duty. The fathers of these people were distinguished for their patriotism and bravery in the war of the Revolution, and the Rhode Island colored regiment fought, on one occasion, until half their number were slain. There was not a regiment in the service which did more soldierly duty, or showed itself more devotedly patriotic."

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