

Here, then, was a most important truth that Canada was showing forth to the people of the United States, namely that slavery was not necessary to the welfare of the black race, as the south claimed. Canada was also showing that, though brutalized by slavery, the best instincts of the Negro race were reasserted in freedom and the degraded bondsman developed morality and intelligence. In short Canada steadily gave the lie to the plea that slavery was the state best suited to the Negro, and the one best calculated to raise him intellectually and morally.

But Canadians were not satisfied to be merely passive agents in the larger phases of the long struggle against slavery. Early in 1851 there was organized in the city of Toronto the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada which continued active until the Emancipation Proclamation had been made effective and the United States had itself removed the blot from its fair name. The objects of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada were declared to be "to aid in the extinction of slavery all over the world by means exclusively lawful and peaceable, moral and religious." Rev. Dr. Willis, principal of Knox College, Toronto, was president of the Society all through its history and among others who associated themselves with its work were George Brown, the editor of *The Globe*, and Oliver Mowat, afterwards premier of this province. From Toronto the work of the Society was spread out to the leading centres of Negro population, branches being formed and a steady campaign carried on. *The Globe* under Brown proved a stout ally, and gave much attention to the Society's work. Working relations were entered into with the Anti-Slavery societies in Great Britain and in the United States and a large amount of relief work was looked after by the Women's Auxiliaries. Though the churches generally, with the exception of the Presbyterians, held somewhat aloof from the work of the Society, recruits in plenty were drawn from the clergy. It was a Presbyterian clergyman who was president of the Society all through its history; the first secretary was a Methodist minister, and on the committees appointed from year to year there was always to be found a good representation of the clergy.²¹

The Canadian law gave the Negro fugitive all the rights of citizenship and protected him in their enjoyment. The Negro was encouraged to take up land and it gave him the franchise the same as his white neighbour. Negroes were enrolled in the Canadian militia and bore their share of service during the troubles of 1837-8. "The colored men," says Josiah Henson, "were willing to defend the Government that had given them a home when they had fled from slavery."²² Under the Canadian law the fugitives were allowed to send their children to the common schools or to have separate schools provided for them out of their share of the school funds.²³ Separate schools were established in some places where prejudice existed and religious agencies also established schools at a number of points. Visitors noted that a surprisingly large number of the Negroes learned to read and write after coming to Canada and in the University of Toronto a number of prizes were taken by coloured youths. Principal McCullum of the Hamilton Collegiate Institute was quoted as saying that his teachers agreed that the blacks were the equal of the whites

²¹ For a fuller account of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada see Landon: *The Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, Journal of Negro History*, Vol. IV, No. 1, January, 1919, pp. 33-40.

²² Henson: *An Autobiography*, p. 176.

²³ Howe: *Refugees from Slavery in Canada West*, pp. 77-78; also, Woodson: *Education of the Negro Prior to 1861*, pp. 248-255.