

A PUBLIC MEETING

Being held in Chatham on the 18th inst., pursuant to requisition, addressed to John Waddell, Esq., Sheriff, W. D. to take into consideration the scheme proposed by the Elgin Association, for settling the Township of Raleigh with Negroes, the following resolutions were passed and Address adopted.

1st. Moved by William McCrae, Esq., and seconded by Duncan McCall, Esq.

That this meeting abhors slavery, and is ready and willing to assist in its abolition by every possible means in its power, it disputes not the intellectual abilities of the black man, and would be glad to see him in every enjoyment of every political and moral privilege; but at the same time deprecates any attempt at partial colonization, association, or amalgamation, and looks upon its consequences with deep alarm.

2nd. Moved by Walter McCrae, Esq. and seconded by Edwin Larwill, Esq., D. C.

2. Resolved. That in the opinion of this meeting, it would be impolitic in the government, to sell, and unjust on the part of any association to procure large portions of the domain in settled parts of this province, for the purpose of colonizing the African race; but that distinct and separate localities should be allotted for such a purpose.

3rd. Moved by Wm. McCrae, Esq., and seconded by Mr. Charles Dolsen.

3. Resolved. That in the opinion of this meeting it would be unconstitutional, impolitic and unjust in the government, to sell large portions of the public domain in settled parts of this province, to foreigners, the more so, when such persons belong to a different branch of the human family, and are black.

4th. Moved by Edwin Larwill, Esq. and seconded by Mr. Lourie.

4. Resolved. That petitions be immediately prepared and signed, to be presented at the next session of the provincial parliament, urging the necessity of legislation on the subject of negro immigration, pauperism, and colonization.

Moved by Edwin Larwill, Esp., and seconded by A. R. Robertson, Esp., M. D.

5. That a committee of vigilance be appointed to note the proceedings of the Elgin Association and from time to time, to give publicity to such matters as it may deem useful in carrying out the object of this meeting, and also to prepare petitions for presentation to parliament and that the following gentlemen compose such committee, John Crow, Edwin Larwell, Walter McCrae, John G. Weir, and Wm. D. Eberts. And that the councillors of Raleigh, Harwich, Chatham and Dover, be requested to advance an equal sum out of their respective township funds, to said committee for defraying the expenses of stationery, printing, postage, and for the use of the same.

Moved by A. R. Robertson, Esq., and seconded by Walter McCrae, Esq.

6. Resolved. That a copy of the proceedings of this meeting, together with a copy of the address be transmitted to His Excellency the Governor General, also to the Member of Parliament for this County, to the Canada Company Agent, the President of the Elgin Association, to the Warden of this District, and that the Press of Canada be respectfully solicited to co-operate with us in our effort to emancipate this country from the growing evil.

Walter McCrae, Esq. then read an Address to the Inhabitants of Canada, published below, which was afterwards adopted unanimously by the meeting.

Henry Gouins addressed the meeting before it dispersed, in favor of the principles of the 'Elgin Association.'

After three hearty cheers for the Queen and Royal Family, the meeting was, by the Chairman, declared adjourned *sine die*.

An Address.

FELLOW SUBJECTS:

Canadians by birth, or adoption, we address you, and we call your attention to a subject of vital importance, connected, as it is, with the future destinies of our Country. We do this independent of all party considerations, and with the single object of promoting the welfare of our country. We ask your assistance, we claim your support, and we doubt not, but that it will be freely given.

The Imperial Parliament of Great Britain has forever banished Slavery from the Empire. In common with all good men, we re-

joice at the consummation of this Immortal act; and we hope, that all other nations may follow the example. Every member of the human family is entitled to certain rights and privileges, and no where on earth, are they better secured, enjoyed, or more highly valued, than in Canada. Nature, however, has divided the same great family, into distinct species, for good and wise purposes, and it is no less our interest, than it is our duty, to follow her dictates, and to obey her Laws. Believing this to be a sound and correct principle, as well as a moral and a christian duty, it is with alarm we witness the fast increasing emigration, and settlement amongst us of the African race; and with pain and regret, do we view the establishment of an association, the avowed object of which is to encourage the settlement in old and well established communities, of a race of people which is destined by nature to be distinct and separate from us. It is also with a feeling of deep resentment, that we look upon the selection of the Township of Raleigh, in this District, as the first portion of our beloved country, which is to be cursed, with a systematic organization for setting the laws of nature at defiance. Do Communities in other portions of Canada, feel that the presence of the negro among them, is an annoyance? Do they feel that the increase of the colored people among them, and amalgamation, its necessary and hideous attendant, is an evil which requires to be checked? With what a feeling of horror, would the people of any of the old settled Townships of the eastern portion of this province, look upon a measure which had for its avowed object, the effect of introducing several hundreds of Africans, into the very heart of their neighborhood, their families interspersing themselves among them, upon every vacant lot of land, their children mingling in their schools, and all claiming to be admitted not only to political, but to social privileges? and when we reflect, too, that many of them must from necessity, be the very worst specimens of that neglected race; the fugitives from justice; how much more revolting must the scheme appear? How then can you adopt such a measure? We beseech our fellow subject to pause before they embark in such an enterprise, and ask themselves whether they are doing by us as they would wish us to do unto them?

Mutual protection is the grand object of association, naturally deducible from the proposition, that self preservation is the first law of nature. Few will submit to have their interests sacrificed, much less to have their feelings insulted.

The inhabitants of the Western District, from their position, reaching far into the heart of a slave holding Republic, are more subject to an inundation of colored people than any other portion of Canada. One third of the population in several of our townships are already of that class. The old, the maimed, the pauper, the lunatic, we are not only obliged to come in daily contact with, but by our charity to maintain. When it is considered what number of these poor creatures are to be found in all the frontier towns in the adjoining States, the interest these communities have in getting rid of them, and the ease with which they can be thrust upon us, you will not be surprised at the result, nor yet at our alarm. Surely our natural position is irksome enough without submitting to a measure, which not only holds out a premium for filling up our district with a race of people, upon whom we cannot look without a feeling of repulsion, and who, having been brought up in a state of bondage and servility are totally ignorant, both of their social and political duties; but at the same time makes it the common receptacle into which all other portions of the province are to void the devotees of misery and crime. Look at your prisons and your penitentiary, and behold the fearful preponderance of their black over their white inmates in proportion to the population of each.

In emancipating the negro, the Parliament of Great Britain never intended that any portion of the inhabitants of her wide spread realm, should suffer wrong. In this view of the case every British subject, was remunerated for any loss which he might have sustained, in consequence of the manumission of

slaves, and it was guaranteed to the slave holder by the law of the land. In this case, our rights are guaranteed by higher authority, the authority of the laws of the God of nature.

We have no desire to show hostility towards the colored people, no desire to banish them from the Province. On the contrary, we are willing to assist in any well devised scheme for their moral and social advancement. Our only desire is that they shall be separated from the whites, and that no encouragement shall hereafter be given to the migration of the colored man from the United States, or any where else. The idea that we have brought the curse upon ourselves thro' the establishment of slavery by our ancestors is false. As Canadians we have yet to learn that we ought to be made a vicarious atonement for European sins.

CANADIANS:

The hour has arrived when we should arouse from our lethargy; when we should gather ourselves together in our might and resist the onward progress of an evil which threatens to entail upon future generations a thousand curses. Now is the day. A few short years will put it beyond our power.—Thousands and tens of thousands of American negroes with the aid of the abolition societies in the states, and with the countenance given them by our own Philanthropic institutions, will continue to pour into Canada, if resistance is not now offered. Many of you who live at a distance from this frontier have no conception either of the number or the character of these emigrants, or of their poisonous effect upon the moral and social habits of a community. You listen with active sympathy to every thing narrated of the sufferings of the poor African; your feelings are enlisted, and your purse strings unloosed, and this often by the hypocritical declamation of some self styled philanthropist. Under such influences many of you in our large cities and towns, form yourselves into societies, and without reflection, you supply funds for the support of schemes prejudicial to the best interest of our country. Against such proceedings, and especially against any, and every attempt to settle any township in this district with negroes, we solemnly protest, and we call upon our countrymen in all parts of the province, to assist in our opposition.

FELLOW CHRISTIANS:

Let us forever maintain the sacred dogma, that all men have equal, natural, and inalienable rights. Let us do every thing in our power, consistent with international polity and justice, to abolish the accursed system of slavery in the neighboring Republic. But let us not through a mistaken zeal to abate the evil of another land, entail upon ourselves a misery which every enlightened lover of his country must mourn. Let the slaves of the United States be free, but let it be in their own country; let us not countenance their further introduction among us; in a word, let the people of the United States bear the burden of their own sins.

What has already been done cannot now be avoided; but it is not yet too late to do justice to ourselves, and retrieve the errors of the past. Let a suitable place be provided by the Government, to which the colored people may be removed, and separated from the whites, and in this scheme we will cordially join. We owe it to them, but how much more do we owe it to ourselves? But we implore you that you will not, either by your counsel or your pecuniary aid, assist those who have projected the association for the settlement of a horde of ignorant slaves in the township of Raleigh. It is one of the oldest and most densely settled townships, in the very centre of our new and promising District of Kent, and we feel that this scheme, if carried into operation, will have the effect of hanging like a dead weight upon our rising prosperity. What is our case to-day, to-morrow may be yours; join us then, in endeavoring to put a stop to what is not only a great general evil, but in this case an act of unwarrantable injustice, and when the time may come in which you shall be similarly situated to us, we have no doubt, that like us you will cry out, and your appeal shall not be in vain.