Some blame may attach at this point. But those who reproach us thus, should remember that it is hard for labor, however fortunately and favorably surrounded, to cope with the tremendous power of capital in any contest for higher wages or better working conditions. A strike for higher wages is seldom successful in its result for the strikers; the losses sustained are seldom compensated by the concessions gained. A case in point is the recent strike of the Telegraph operators, a more intelligent class can no where be found. It was a contest against money and the want of money compelled intelligence to surrender to wealth.

An empty sack is not easily made to stand upright. The man who has it in his power to say to a man you must work the land for me, for such wages as I choose to give, has a power of slavery over him as real, if not as complete, as he who compels toll under the lash. All that a man hath will be given for his life.

In contemplating the little progress made by the colored people in the acquisition of property in the South, and their present wretched condition, the circumstances of their emancipation should not be forgotten. Measurement in their condition could begin from the height yet to be attained by them, but from the depths whence they have come.

It should be remembered by our severe judges that freedom came to us not from the sober dictates of wisdom, or from any normal condition of things, not as a matter of choice on the part of the colored men of the South, nor from moral considerations on the part of the North. It was born of battle and of blood. It came across fields of smoke and fire, strewn with wounds, bleeding and dying men. Not from the Heaven of Peace amid the morning stars, but from the hell of war—out of the tempest and whirlwind of war—out of the tempest and whirlwind of war—out of the tempest and whirlwind of war—out of the tempest and whirlwind of war. It was not strange that they should make the hardest bargains for our labor and get it for as little as possible. For them the contest was easy; their tremendous power and our weakness equally gave them the victory.

At last the choice of Stevens, Sumner and Wade, and other far-seeing statesmen, the Government by whom we were emancipated left us completely in the power of our former owners. They turned us loose to the open sky and left us not a foot of ground from which to get a crust of bread.

It did not do as well as Russia did by her serfs, or Pharaoh did by the Hebrews. With freedom Russia gave land and Egypt loaned jewels.

It may have been best to leave us thus to make terms with those whose wrath it had kindled against us. It does not seem right that we should bend the knee, but it fully explains our present poverty and wretchedness.

The marvel is not that we are poor in such circumstances, but rather that we were not exterminated. In view of the circumstances, our extermination was confidently predicted. The facts that we still live and have increased in higher ratio than the native white people of the South...