as we have now done, to expose and denounce it. But this is not all. Even now, after twenty years of so-called emancipation, we are subject to awless raids of midnight riders, who, with blackened faces, invade our homes and perpetrate the foulest of outrages upon us and our families. This condition of things is too flagrant and notorious to require specifications or proof. Those who will fill the relations of life and death we are met by the color line. We can not ignore it if we would, and ought not if we could. It hunts us at midnight, it makes us accommodation in hotels and justice in the courts. It excludes our children from schools, refuses our souls the means to learn trades and compels us to pursue only such labor as will bring the least reward. While we recognize the color line as a hurtful force, a mountain barrier to our progress, wounding our bleeding feet with its thorns and sticks at every step, we do not despair. We are a hopeful and enterprising people. This convention is a proof of our faith in you, in your in truth and justice—our belief that prejudice, with all it malign accompaniments, may yet be removed by peaceful means; that, assisted by time and events and the growing enlightenment of both races, the color line will ultimately become harmless. When this shall come it will be our noblest use, as it should be, to distinguish one variety of the human family from another. It will cease to have any civil, political or moral significance, and color discriminations will then be dispensed with as anachronisms, which have their place, but not till then. Do not marvel that we are not discouraged. The faith within us has a rational basis, and is confirmed by facts. When we consider how deep-seated this feeling against us is; the long centuries it has been forming; the forces of avarice, which have been employed to sustain it; how the language and literature of the country have been pervaded with it; how the church, the press, the play-house, and other influences of the country have been arrayed in its support; the progress toward its extinction must be considered vast and slow.

If liberty, with us, is yet but a name, our citizenship is but a sham, and our suffrage thus far only a cruel mockery, we may yet congratulate ourselves upon the fact, that the laws and institutions of our country are sound, just and liberal. There is hope for people when their laws are righteous, whether for the moment they conform to their requirements or not. But until this nation shall make its practice accord with its Constitution and its righteous laws, it will not do to reproach her colored people of this country with keeping the color line—only for that people would prove themselves scarcely worthy of even theoretical freedom, to say nothing of practical freedom, if they settled down in silent, servile and cowardly submission to their wrongs, from fear of making their color visible. They are bound by the common interests of manhood to hold conventions, in their own name and on their own behalf, to keep their grievances before the people and make every organized protest against the wrongs inflicted upon them within their power. They should scorn the counsels of cowards, and strike the banner on the outer wall. Who would be free from wrongs must strike the blow. We do not believe, as we are often told, that the negro is the ugly child of the National family, and the more he is kept out of sight the better it will be for him. You know that liberty has never been so precious as liberty sought for and fought for. The man outraged is the man to make the outcry. Depend upon it, men will not care much for a people who do not care for themselves. Our meeting here was opposed by some of our members, because it would disturb the peace of the Republican party. The suggestion came from coward lips and was unsuitable to the character of that party. If the Republican party can not stand a demand for justice and