

WE'S G'WINE OFF TO KANSAS.

(Hymn from First Chapter of "Exodus.")

BY E. MASON, JR.

We's g'wine off to Kansas—can't stay hyar no mo'—
Trubble's brewin' in de field an' 'round de cabin do';
We's sicken'd at de prospers, our hearts am berry sad,
Our chil'ns starvin' in de Souf, de old folks goin mad.

Yes, we's g'wine off to Kansas,
To dat lan' forebber free;
To settle down, an' till de groun',
An' plant de fam'ly tree.

(All sing.) Yes, we's g'wine off to Kansas,
De lan' whar we'll be free,
Whar de only "shoot" comes
Dat bears de Liberty Tree!

No mo' we pick de cotton-balls nor raise de sugar-cane;
No mo' we see de little old log cabin in de lane;

No mo' we lock de houses to keep de "shooters" out—
We's g'wine off to Kansas. Oh, let our people shout!

Yes, we's g'wine off to Kansas,
With our chil'ns an' our wives,
To lib or die beneaf dat sky,
And struggle fo' our lives.

(All sing.) Yes, we's g'wine off to Kansas,
To dat lan' forebber free,
Whar de only "shoot" comes
Dat bears de Liberty Tree.

The Colored Exodus.

Boston Special to Cincinnati Gazette.

Gen. Thomas Conway's efforts in this city and elsewhere to raise funds to charter a steamboat to transport the negroes who are trying to fly from the South have been so successful that he will leave Boston to-night for Cincinnati. He has received within a few days a gift of \$2,000 from a Pittsburgh gentleman, and \$1,000 more pledged from the same city. This, with what he had previously raised, he thinks will avail to secure a boat for this trip. Cincinnati is taken as the point of chartering and departure, because in no city further south, on the Mississippi or its tributaries, has it been found possible to get a boat on good terms. Boston has not opened a lavish purse to this scheme. At the recent meeting in Tremont temple, to awaken interest in the colored refugees, only \$200 was raised. Of that only \$94 was in cash, and the remainder was in promises. Speeches were made by Gen. Conway, Wendell Phillips and the Rev. H. H. Turner (colored), of Georgia, but the temperate advice was so prominent that it is doubtful how much the cause was helped. The address of the Georgia representative, especially, who is an extreme negro enthusiast, was so full of bloody shirt talk and so ridiculous in its defense of the blacks that he hurt his cause far more than he helped it. He charged the southerners with being even now plotting a new rebellion; said the time will come when in the new war the North will need the help of the negroes to re-conquer the South, and maintained the rightfulness of each negro's claim to forty acres of land and a mule from the government. General Conway was much more temperate, but yet would have the military force of the government exerted, if necessary, to protect the steamboat he proposed to charter to help rescue the negroes, whom he depicted as crowding the Louisiana landings in their endeavors to escape the hardness of their fate. He has announced no definite plan, beyond getting a steamboat at Cincinnati and going down to Louisiana to bring back boatloads of negroes, in spite of angry planters and the violence of riotous mobs who may attack the boat.

The Solid Truth.

Wendell Phillips says: For ten years the negro has tried to do his duty as a citizen; held faithfully up his side of the yoke, walked to the ballot box between loaded revolvers, been plundered, hunted and shot for his opinions. At last, deserted by his Northern ally, disheartened, trampled in blood mercilessly under foot, he seeks safety in exile; asks for the nation, who in her need summoned him to the post of danger, only the poor boon of protection in his escape, in his right to travel.—Ex.

This great man, this truly good man, Wendell Phillips, has all his life long been the friend of the poor and oppressed of every nation, and for the oppressed colored people of this country his great heart has always been full of the sincerest sympathy. In the above extract there is much solid truth, and we would that all Americans could see as he sees.

THE NEGRO IN THE SOUTH.

One of the Causes of Discontent, an Abominable Law—Entering Wedge to Re-enslavement of the Negro.

Chicago Tribune.

JACKSON, MISS., June 20.—Among the causes of that dissatisfaction of the colored people in the South which has produced the exodus therefrom, there is one that lies beneath the surface and is concealed from even an astute observer, if he is a stranger to that section. This cause consists in certain legislative enactments that have been passed in most of the cotton States, ostensibly for other purposes, but really for the purpose of establishing in those States a system of peonage similar to, if not worse, than that which prevails in Mexico. This is the object of a statute passed by the Legislature of Mississippi, in March, 1878. The title of the act, whether intentionally so or not, is certainly misleading. It is entitled "An act to reduce the judiciary expenses of the State."

But how it can possibly have that effect is beyond human wisdom to perceive. It, however, does operate, and is used in such a way as to enslave a large number of negroes, who have not even been convicted of the slightest offense against the laws. The act provides that "all persons convicted and committed to the jail of the county, except those committed to jail for contempt of court, and except those sentenced to imprisonment in the penitentiary, shall be delivered to a contractor, to be by him kept and worked under the provisions of this act; and all persons committed to jail, except those not entitled to bail, may also, with their consent, be committed to said contractor and worked under this act before conviction." But Section 5 of the act provides ample and cogent machinery to produce the necessary consent on the part of the not yet convicted prisoner to work for the contractor. In that section it is provided "that if any person committed to jail for an offense that is bailable shall not consent to be committed to the safe keeping and custody of said contractor, and to work for said contractor and to work for the same under this act, the prisoner shall be entitled to receive only six ounces of bacon, or ten ounces of beef, and one pound of bread and water." This section also provides that any prisoner not consenting to work before his conviction for the contractor, and that, too, without compensation. "If said prisoner shall afterward be convicted, he shall, nevertheless, work under said contractor a sufficient term to pay all costs of prosecution, including the regular jail fees for keeping and feeding him." The charge for feeding him, upon the meager bill of fare above stated, is twenty cents a day. Now, it cannot be denied that the use made of this law is to deprive the negro of his natural right to choose his own employer, and in the following manner: Let us suppose a case, and such cases are constantly occurring. A is a cotton planter, owns 3,000 or 4,000 acres of land, and has 40, 50 or 100 negro families on his plantation. At the expiration of the year, a negro proposes to leave the plantation of A and try to better his condition by making a more advantageous bargain with B or C for another year. If A cannot prevent the negro from leaving him in no other way, this statute puts full power in his hands. A trumps up some petty charge against the negro, threatens to have him arrested and committed to jail. The negro knows how little it will take to commit him to jail, and that then he must half starve on a pound of bread and water and six ounces of bacon a day, or otherwise work for the contractor for nothing until he can be tried; and when tried he must run the risk of conviction, which is not slight, though he may be ever so innocent. Avarice, unscrupulous avarice, is pursuing him, and with little power to resist. There being no healthy public sentiment in favor of fair play to encourage him, he yields and becomes the peon of his oppressor.

Under this law a case came up last March, upon habeas corpus, in Noxubee county, Miss., where a negro, for some petty offense, had been fined \$250 and cost. A careful computation showed that he would have to work for the contractor not less than five and possibly ten years. The negro in this case happened to have some education and means and some friends who were willing to help him in his efforts to obtain justice. What the result of the habeas corpus pro-

ceedings in this case were, the writer of this has not yet learned, but he knows of many cases fully as bad where, for want of education, a knowledge of his rights, money, or influential friends, victim after victim of this law has lost his liberty for years, and perhaps for life, and that, too, if guilty at all, was of some petty offense. This law is held as a terror over the negroes by their landlords to prevent them, at the expiration of each year, from seeking employment elsewhere, and thus to keep bound to the soil as serfs and peons. A similar statute prevails in Alabama. And in North Alabama and Mississippi there is rapidly springing up a class of men who, as contractors, work the convicts sentenced to hard labor for the county, or pay excessive fines by such labor; and these contractors in many cases surpass the brutal overseers of the old slave time. Perhaps some other Harriet Beecher Stowe may yet find employment for her pen in setting forth the miseries of the slaves now made peons, and the atrocities of the overseer turned into a contractor.

Southern Deviltry.

People's Advocate.

It is a fact which can no longer be concealed, that a large minority of the southern white people, in certain sections, notably in the Gulf States, are bent on reducing the colored laborers to a condition far worse than that of the chattel slavery, and that those who may inwardly oppose these schemes have neither the inclination nor the ability to prevent them from being carried out. In some States the penal laws are so framed as to consign the most petty criminals to a condition of servitude so exacting that escape therefrom is possible only in extreme cases and after long years of imprisonment. Witness a statute passed by the Legislature of Mississippi in March, 1879, entitled, "An act to reduce the judiciary expenses of the State." This act provides that all criminals, except those committed for contempt of court and those sentenced to the penitentiary, shall be delivered to a contractor, who may work them; and persons committed to jail for bailable offenses may, with their consent, be also placed under these contractors before trial; but if they do not consent they shall be entitled to receive from "the common jailor as diet for each day only six ounces of bacon or ten ounces of beef, and one pound of bread and water." In case of the conviction of the party so refusing, he is required to work under said contractors a sufficient term to pay all costs of prosecution, including the regular jail fees for keeping and feeding him." Twenty cents a day is the charge made for the luxurious diet above referred to.

It is also provided, that in working out his fine, the labor of the prisoner shall be valued at twenty-five cents a working day, and that for every day lost by sickness he shall work two days; one of which is for compensation for keeping him during the day on which he was sick.

Excessive fines are put on the most trivial offenses, the effect of which is to deprive men of their liberty for years.

On the Subject of Oklahoma.

The following are extracts from the report of the special committee on Oklahoma: Lying along our entire Western border is a country of great beauty and fertility. It ought to be the home of thousands of happy families, the site of growing and busy cities, the theater of intellectual and material progress. Instead, it stands as the barrier of progress, and a monument of governmental folly. Fugitives and lawless men have crossed the border to the injury of Indians, and the reproach of whites. Where they have been in contact with the best of the whites the relation has been pleasant and profitable. This is strikingly illustrated by the result of the action of Secretary Shurz in August, 1877, based upon law and treaties, allowing the people of Oklahoma to employ white skilled labor. The consequence is, that vast tracts have been brought under cultivation, school houses and churches built, and a new era of progress inaugurated. We believe that the organization of the Territory of Oklahoma by Congress is a necessity growing out of progressive civilization, and an act of mercy owing to the exposed and unprotected condition of the Indian. We therefore recommend that members of the association strive in every way lawful, honorable and consistent with treaty stipulations to effect this end.—Ex

GAINES HIGH SCHOOL.

Commencement Exercises at Robinson's Opera House.

Cincinnati Gazette.

The audience which assembled at Robinson's Opera House to enjoy the commencement exercises of the Gaines High School (colored) was so large and so appreciative, and the exercises were of so high a character, that the occasion may be justly marked as a red letter day in the history of the school. There were many white persons in the audience, who expressed astonishment at the admirable character of the essays, the delivery, and the singing.

The following programme of essays gives also the list of the graduates:

"Step by Step"..... Thomas Johnson
"Music"..... Florence Johnson
"Faith"..... Consuelo Clark
"Poetry"..... Chas. D. Horner
"The Force that Wins"..... Lelia Adams
"Mission and Influence of Women"..... Susan Johnson
"Latin as a Classic"..... John L. Jackson

Of these essays, the best was that of Miss Consuelo Clark, on "Faith." All the essays, however, were well written and well read or delivered, comparing very favorably, at least so far as the young ladies were concerned, with the work of the two larger high schools. The same can be said of the music, the choruses being well sung. The following pieces were on the programme: "To Our Immortal Leader," Mozart; "Autumn," Sterling; "Leave Me, Wearyed Muse," "Israel's Sons," Rossini; "Sovereign Eternal," "Apollo Strikes the Lyre," Bishop; "Along the River of Time," Root.

The exercises were conducted by the Principal, Mr. Peter H. Clark. The diplomas were presented to the graduates by Mr. J. P. Carbery, who was introduced by Mr. J. B. Callahan, of the Local Trustees. Mr. Carbery, in presenting the diplomas, made an address, which was admirable in style as well as in matter. It referred to the destiny of the freedmen and of all who belong to their race, and spoke of the privilege which the graduates had, of standing on equal footing with their white fellowmen. He urged them to be courageous, for no one was ever defeated who showed true courage in moments of trial and of struggle.

The school then sang the chorus from Root referred to above, "Along the River of Time." At the conclusion of the song, Miss Minnie Moore, one of the pupils of the school, stepped forward and presented to Mr. Victor Williams, who had led the music, a basket of flowers, as a token of the appreciation by the school of Mr. Williams' timely assistance. The music of the school is regularly under the direction of Wendel Shiel, who, however, fell ill. Mr. Williams took his place, and carried the class successfully through the exercises. In returning his thanks for the flowers, Mr. Williams said that he was always ready to lend a helping hand in this way, and he always did the best he could.

Mr. Clark then announced that the school would attempt a song which was not on the programme, Haydn's "The Heavens Are Telling." The class went through it quite creditably.

The success of the exercises, throughout, is certainly something on which the colored residents of the city are to be highly congratulated, and the way in which they filled the Opera House, and applauded the exercises, showed that they were keenly alive to the honor done them by the success of the commencement.

The above was sent us by a friend in Cincinnati. Such items as this make us happy, and we all ought to feel proud of our race. It has only been a short time that we have had these glorious privileges, and they should be appreciated.

An exchange says: "This migration of colored people to Kansas ought to be stopped." Very well; only go down South and teach your friends a little humanity, and take some of the brute out of them, and it will be stopped, but not till then.

A gentleman who thought that the price asked for the ground floor of a house was somewhat steep, told the janitor so. "Well, ye-es, perhaps it is high, but then there is an elevator."

An old maid had a cat and a canary. The cat died. She had him stuffed and placed in the cage of the canary, saying: "I have put the dear creature where he always desired to be."

A Black Man on Prince Napoleon.

Doubtless our readers have all read of the tragic death of the young Prince Napoleon at the hands of the Zulus, a powerful tribe of South African Negroes, whom the English are trying to subjugate, but have so far met with only one disaster after another, until it is now very apparent that a terrible war must be waged before the Zulus can be conquered. The young Prince Napoleon, desiring to prove his military greatness enlisting in the English army and entered the forest of Africa, expecting to accomplish wonderful results, but succeeded only in losing his own life, and destroying at the same time the last hope of the Empire in France. Concerning his death, Dr. H. M. Turner, publisher of the *Christian Recorder*, the leading colored Journal in America, writes that paper as follows:

Just as I was about to write this letter, I took up the morning paper and thought I would run my eyes over it a minute, and about the first thing that arrested my attention was the death of Prince Napoleon, the last relic of the Napoleonic dynasty, who has just fallen a victim to the bravery and strategy of South African Negroes. Truly we might adopt the language of Holy Writ 'Vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord.'

Less than a hundred years ago, there figured in San Domingo a brave and mighty man, a general, a statesman, philosopher and hero. He was engaged in the humanitarian work of elevating his race, and removing certain encumbrances to that end. But he was a Negro; yes, a Negro hero the world looked on with amazement and admiration, for he had no equal, with the means at his disposal. About the time he was verging his zenith, however, another coruscation throws a glare over earth's gazing millions, who talked the same language and had risen from a similar obscurity. And to that extent should have been an ally a confederate of Gen. Toussaint L'Ouverture, this negro hero, but instead, what was the sequel? With the foulest treachery upon record in the history of the world, after feigned respect and even friendship, by the so-called great Napoleon Bonaparte, he decoys this negro General into his clutches, and then, like a devil, starves him by piece meal till God relieved him by death in the dismal dungeon of the fortress of Joux, in 1803, thus terminating forever the usefulness of this good man to his unfortunate race, but actually cutting off from the face of the earth every relic and vestige of the seed of General Toussaint L'Ouverture. But God was noting transpiring events, and at the end of seventy-six years the race of this same negro hero—for all we know, some of his blood kin—rise up in the majesty of the war-like prowess and smites down not only the last remnant of the Napoleonic dynasty, or claim to dynasty, but absolutely rid the world of his blood or any hope of Imperial succession. I don't care who likes it, I say hurrah for the South African Negro!

To all of the above five million American negroes say AMEN.

Shall we Have a Convention?

Shall we have a convention or meeting of newspaper men? Yes; if there can be such an interchange of opinion, as to the sphere and scope of the colored newspaper as to indicate more plainly the policy to be followed; if besides the fraternal feeling and *esprit de corps* resulting from a gathering of this character there can be a better understanding or the business principles upon which the safe conduct of newspapers are founded, there should be such a gathering.

While "the colored press" of today is quite an institution, it is in its first stage; its influence is not as fully developed or recognized as it should be. The causes for this are within our control. A clear understanding of the sphere and scope of a "colored paper," strictly so-called, may throw a great deal of light upon this subject and prevent failure and miscarriage. Count the *Advocate* favorable to such a meeting.—*People's Advocate*.

Count the COLORED VISITOR with the fraternity in all enterprises that will bring about favorable results.

A gang of pickpockets who were attending a fair at Bernay, France, recently, raised a cry of fire in a theater, and at the same moment turned the gas out. In the panic and confusion they plundered the audience and the box-office, and escaped under cover of the darkness.