CHAPTER II

FREDERICK DOUGLASS (1817 - 1895):

The son of an unknown white father and a Negro mother, Frederick Douglass spent the first 21 years of his life as a slave, working as a house servant, a field hand and a shipyard labourer. He taught himself to read and write. He won public recognition after addressing an anti-slavery convention. He became one of the leading organizers of Massachusetts Anti-slavery Society. By the mid-1840's Douglass was famous for his eloquence on behalf of his people and to refute the rumours that he had never been a slave, he published, in 1845, a full account of his years in bondage.

Fearing that the story of his early years would lead to his arrest and reenslavement, Douglass fled to Britain, where for two years he toured and on the evils of slavery. In 1847, he returned to the U.S. and settled in Rochester where he founded a Weekly North Star. During Civil War Douglass urged fellow Blacks to take up army on behalf of the Union and helped organize two Negro regiments. In later days, Douglass served the Government and held a succession of Federal Jobs. The permanent place of Douglass in the history of Black Movement rest on the autobiography which Douglass wrote in mid 1840's and 1845.
The publication in 1845 of the Narrative of Frederick Douglass was a passport to prominence for a twenty-seven year old Negro. It brought to him widespread publicity in America and in British Isles. Henceforth his own oratorical abilities and the temper of the times fully sufficed to keep him in the limelight. His life stone was assessed as one among the most eventful of American personal histories. This remarkable work of an American slave has been selected for a critical documentation in the first Chapter of this thesis.

There were protests against slavery from the minute the first African slaves were imported in the 17th Century. The movement for abolition of Negro Slavery gathered momentum and achieved national prominence in American life in mid-nineteenth Century. Among the anti-slavery spokesmen of the mid-nineteenth century the most celebrated name is that of Douglass who was followed by the heroic figure of John Brown.

JOHN BROWN (1800 - 1859):

Reviled as a blood-stained abolitionist by his enemies, John Brown came to be considered by his admirers as a martyr to the cause of Negro-Freedom. Brown organised free-Negroes and fugitive slaves into a
self-protective association in the first instance. This phase of self-protection was followed by more offensive postures of armed insurrectionary raids and attacks on slave-owners establishments. Brown was tried, sentenced to death and hanged on December 2, 1859.

NARRATIVE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS :

No book more vividly describes the matter of "Growing up Black", which constituted the emotional impelling behind the black liberation movement than Frederick Douglass's Narrative, first published in 1845. Douglass who escaped from slavery to become a leading abolitionist and later U.S. Minister to Haiti, had recorded in this autobiography his memories about the dark, painful twenty one years of growing up as a black. A critical and historical documentation of this narrative which presented in this thesis is important for several reasons. Douglass was a prolific writer. He talked and wrote lot. He delivered public lectures, wrote editorials and magazine articles. He also wrote autobiographical accounts of his life. The narrative was the first one that he wrote in 1845.

Benjamin Quarles in his editorial introduction of the latest edition of the Narrative has narrated
the story of the phenomenal success of the Narrative. The Narrative's initial edition of 5,000 copies was sold in four months. Within a year four more editions of 2,000 additional publication occurred in 1848 and another in 1849. In British isles, five editions appeared, two in Ireland in 1846, and three in England in 1846 and 1847. By 1850 a total of some 30,000 copies of the Narrative had been published. To these may be added an 1845 French edition. The immediate and instant phenomenal success of the Narrative in terms of copies published and sold makes it a great historical publication, that calls for a critical documentation. The Autobiographical accounts that Federick Douglass wrote merited attention of the reading public. But they did not equalled the Narrative in sales of influence. The Narrative is a story well told. It articulated the life experiences of a slave boy. It is a heroic-fugitive school of American literature. The Narrative is of interest for several reasons. As Jay David puts it: It gives a vivid description of the cruelties of slavery on a Maryland plantation from perspective of a young boy. It provides an account of the life of a slave in the city with comparisons to that of a rural slave; and it offers another example of the stirring determination with which some slaves pursued the golden dream of education. Finally, it
gives a penetrating insight into the effects of slaveholding upon the owner, as we witness the rapid degradation of a decent family when confronted with the arbitrary power of human bondage. The narrative has been selected and critically documented in the present thesis with a view to provide a historical backdrop for the emergence of a giant figure like Du Bois in the annals of black liberation. Douglass is a spark that grew into a fire in later times. Through the pages of Douglass's Narrative we are made aware that Thomas Jefferson perhaps forgot to include people with black skin when he wrote that all men were entitled to life, liberty and happiness. Frederick Douglass used to leave his audiences electrified by his docimand voice. They were mesmerized by the story of his years in bondage. All that made him the stuff of the great personal of the nineteenth century. His boyhood experiences were a prelude to his later life. Hence, these boyhood experiences of Douglass have been selected for a historical and critical documentation in this thesis.

A PROFILE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS:
(1817 - 1895)

Born in the backwoods of Maryland, his name was not Douglass. It was Bailey. As a young boy he was
taken from his grandmother, and with a dozen other slave children was put into the care of a mean old hag on the plantation who whipped them often and frequently sent them to sleep on a dirt floor without their suppers. His father was a white but Frederick was a born slave. He was seperated from his mother. He could not stay even with his grandmother for long. He occasionally used to meet his grandmother but he never remembered seeing his mother more than half a dozen times in his life. The last time he saw her she had walked twelve miles after dusk to hold him on her knee until she went to sleep. Then she had to walk twelve miles back to a distant plantation before sunrise to be at work in the field.

His life in the plantation was a long misery. Frederick was ragged, neglected and sometimes so hungry that he would scramble with the dogs to pick up what fell into the yard.

His father was a white man. He was admitted to be such by all he ever heard speak of his parantage. The opinion was also whispered that his master was his father; but of the correctness of this opinion, he knew nothing; the means of knowing was withheld, from him. His mother was separated from him when he was but an infant. This separation was done, he later
believed, to hinder the development of the child's affection towards its mother, and to blunt and destroy the natural affection of the mother for the child. His mother passed away when he was seven years old. Frederick was not allowed to be present during her illness at her death, or burial. She was gone long before he knew anything her death. Never having enjoyed, her motherly presence, her tender and watchful care, Frederick received the tidings of her death with much the same emotions he should have probably felt at the death of a stranger (Frederick Douglass: Narrative of the Life of An American Slave, Boston, 1845, Reprint Harvard, 1960, p. 25).

**CHRONOLOGICAL PROFILE OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS**

(1817 - 1895)

I. "PERPETUAL UNPAID TOIL" (1817-1837)

1817 - Born a slave in Talbot County on the Eastern shore of Maryland.

1825 - Sent to Baltimore where he worked as a houseboy and an unskilled labourer.

1833 - Sent to St. Michael in Talbot county and fell out with his master Thomas Auld.
1834 - Hired out to a professional slave-breaker, Edward Covey.

1836 - Sent to Baltimore after an unsuccessful attempt to escape. Put to work in shipyards.

1838 - Escaped from slavery by borrowing a Negro sailor's "Protection" papers and impersonating him.

II. "ALLOW ME TO SPEAK PLAINLY" (1837-1865)

1841 - At abolitionist meeting at Nantucket, Massachusetts, asked to speak of his slavery experiences was then hired as a full-time anti-slavery lecturer.

1845 - Published his narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass.


1848 - Actively participated in the proceedings of the Equal Rights For Women's Convention held at Seneca Falls, New York which formally inaugurated the Women's rights movement in America.
1858 - Entertained John Brown for three weeks as a house guest during time when Brown was laying plans for Harpers Ferry Raid.

1863 - Recruited Negro Troops for Union Armies.

1864 - Had second white House audience with Lincoln concerning Negro soldiers.

III. THIS STRUGGLE WILL GO ON (1865-1895)

1866 - Led a delegation of Negroes to visit President Johnson to ascertain his views on matters relating to the recently freed slaves.

1870 - Was featured speaker at celebrations of the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, held at Baltimore.

1876 - At Washington, D.C. on April 14, was the orator of the day at unveiling memorial monument to Lincoln, for which Negroes had raised a large fund.

1877 - Appointed Marshal for the district of Columbia.

1883 - Led the chorus of condemnation of the supreme Court for declaring unconstitutional the Civil Rights Act of 1875.

1891 - Appointed a Minister-Resident and Consul-General to the Republic of Haiti, and charge d'affairs for Santo Domingo.

1895 - Died of a heart attack at Washington D.C. on February 25, upon returning home after speaking at a women's rights meeting.

The purpose of the present study is not to document the life story of Frederick Douglass, but to highlight the literary ethos of the black movement that brings forth the nexus between the black and white liberation movements. Douglass was a prolific writer. He lived a long life and worked very laboriously for every job that he undertook. Most of his labour was intellectual. He delivered speeches and lectures, wrote letters, editorials, and magazine articles. Most of this output has been brought together in a massive four-volume work by Philip Foner, The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, New York 1950-55. Foner's Collection did not include his all these autobiographies because of their length. The Narrative in 1845 was the first of these. In the present study, an attempt has
been made to document the literary ethos of this early autobiography of Douglass. The Narrative was an instant success. The first edition was sold in four months. Within a year four more editions, of 2,000 copies, each were brought out. An additional republication occurred in 1848 and another in 1849. In the British Isles five editions appeared, so in Ireland in 1846 and three in England the same year and the next. By 1850 a total of some 30,000 copies of the Narrative had been published in America and England. To these may be added an 1848 edition, in French translated by S.K. Parkes. The sales of the Narrative were boosted by good press reviews, New York Tribune, the most prestigious paper of America was lavish in its praise. "Considered merely as a narrative, we have never read one more simple, true, coherent and warm with genuine feeling." A word of praise came from across the Atlantic, Chamber's Edinburgh Journal praised the Narrative: "it bears all the appearances of truth, and must, we conceive, help considerably to disseminate correct ideas respecting slavery and its attendant evils." An American periodical Littell's Living Age, pointed out that the autobiography had received many notices in the public press abroad, gave an estimate of its reach: "Taking all together not less than one
million of persons in Great Britain and Ireland have been excited by the book.

In 1855 Douglass published his second autobiography My Bondage and my Freedom. In this work of 462 pages, well over three times the length of the Narrative, Douglass expands on his life as a freeman, and includes a fifty-eight page appendix comprising extracts from his speeches. My Bondage was reprinted in 1856 and again in 1857, its total publication running to 18,000 copies. In 1860, it was translated into German by Ottilie Assing.

The final autobiography, Life and Times of Frederick Douglass, was published in 1881. In it Douglass had to reduce the space given to his slavery experience in order to narrate his Civil war and Postwar activities. As in My Bondage, however, he included excerpts from his speeches. "Life and Times did not sell well. On July 19, 1889, its publishers regretfully informed Douglass that although they had pushed and repushed the book, it had become evident that "interest in the days of slavery was not as great as we expected."

Another Boston publisher brought out the autobiography in 1892, hoping that Douglass's appointment as Haitian Minister had made the reading eager to take a fresh look at his career. A revised edition
was issued in 1893, but its sale was "a disappointment to us." Wrote De Wolfe, Fiske and Company on March 9, 1896, to Douglass's widow.

"Life and Times" was published in England in 1882 with an introduction by the well-known John Bright. A year later, a French edition was brought out by the house of E. Plon and Company, and in 1895 at Stockholm a Swedish edition was issued. To these may be added a twentieth-century printing. In 1941, the Pathway Press republished Life and Times in preparation for one hundredth anniversary of Douglass's first appearance in the cause of emancipation.


"The Narrative had many advantages over its successors. The Narrative... lent itself very well to abolitionist propaganda... sources of its influence (were many). To begin with it belonged to the "heroic fugitive" School of American Literature which enjoyed a great popularity. Among the hundred or more of these slave-told stories, Douglass's book has a special point of merit because unlike many other ghost-written abolitionist
tracts, this was Douglass's own writing as the title page of the Narrative carried the words "Written by Himself." Douglass's Narrative was written in simple and direct prose. The Narrative is absorbing in its sensitive descriptions of persons and places. The most striking quality of the Narrative is Douglass's ability to mingle incident with argument. Aside from its literary merit, Douglass's autobiography was in many respects symbolic of the Negro's role in American life. Its central theme is struggle. The Narrative is clear and passionate evidence both of the Negro's protest and of his aspirations. The book was written, as Douglass states in the closing sentence, in the hope that it would do something toward "hastening the glad day of deliverance to the millions of my brother in bonds."

The Narrative stamped Douglass as the foremost Negro in American reform with the publication of this autobiographical work he became the first colored man who could command an audience that extended beyond local boundaries or racial ties. From the day his volume saw print Douglass became a folk hero, a figure in whom Negroes had pride. But if Douglass emerged as the leading Negro among Negroes, this is not say that the man was himself a racist, or that he glorified all
things black. Never given to blinking unpleasant facts, Douglass did not hesitate to mention the frailties of the Negroes, Douglass did not dislike whites—his close association with reformers in the abolitionist and women's rights movement, his many friends across the color lines and the choice he made for his second wife indicate that he was without a trace of anti-caucasianism. A product of its age, the Narrative was an American book in theme, in tone, and in spirit—Pre-Civil War America was characterized by reformist movements, woman's rights, peace, temperance, prison improvements among others. In the front rank of these programs for human betterment stood the abolitionist cause.... The Narrative Swept Douglass into the mainstream of the anti-slavery movement. The final reason for the influence of the Narrative is its credibility.

The genuine and authentic character of Douglass's writing is confirmed by two contemporary witnesses—one by W. L. Garrison and the other one by Wendel Phillips. Writing the Preface to Douglass's Narrative W. L. Garrison wrote: "Frederick Douglass was a stranger to the anti-slavery compaigners, but having made his escape from the prison house of bondage, he was induced to address an anti-slavery convention in the month of August 1841,
in Nantucket. Douglass's first speech at the convention was an unforgettable matter. I cannot forget the extraordinary emotion it excited, the powerful impression it creates upon a crowded auditory, completely taken by surprise - the applause which followed from the beginning to the end of his felicitous remarks.

A friend from New Bedford prevailed on Mr. Douglass to address the convention. He came to the platform with a hesitancy and embarrassment. After apologizing for his ignorance, and reminding the audience that slavery was a poor school for the human intellect and heart, he proceeded to narrate some of the facts in his own history as a slave, and in the course of his speech gave utterance to many noble thoughts and thrilling reflections. As soon as he had taken his seat, I rose and declared that Patrick Henry, of revolutionary fame, never made a speech more eloquent in the cause of liberty, than the one we had just listened to from the lips of that hunted fugitive...

In a personal letter to Douglass, Wendel Phillips a veteran abolitionist wrote about the merit of his Narrative. He wrote: "I was glad to learn, in your story, how early the most neglected of God's children wakened to a sense of their rights and of the injustice done them... In reading your life, no one can say that
we have unfairly picked out some rare specimens of cruelty we know that the bitter drops, which even you have drained from the cup are no individual ills, but such as must mingle always and necessarily in the lot of every slave. They are the essential ingredients, not the occasional results, of the system..." (Ibid pp. 18-19)

When Douglass made his first talk at an anti-slavery society meeting in Nantucket, he was twenty-four years old, six feet tall, with hair like a lion, and very handsome. The speeches he made, the more effective he became. Soon he was persuaded to quit his work on the docks and become an orator for the Negro cause. In 1845 he made his first trip to England to tell sympathisers there about the plight of the America's slave millions. When he returned he began to publish a paper in Rochester, called the North Star. From then on, for fifty years, Douglass was a great public figure. He spoke on platforms with many of the distinguished men and women of his times. He published his life story. He defied the Fugitive slave Law of 1850 and sheltered runaways in his home. On occasions mobs attacked his meetings. He was sometimes stoned. After John Brown's famous raid on Harper's Ferry, in which he had no part, the newspaper and slave-owners sought to implicate him. Douglass had to flee for his life to Canada, whence he made his
second trip to England. When the War between the States broke out, he was back in his country, counselling with President Lincoln, and recruited troops for the Union Army Negroes fought in this Civil War — inspired to do so by the brilliant speeches of Frederick Douglass.

When the War was over, Douglass became one of the leaders of the Republican Party. He was made a United States Marshall. Later he was appointed the Recorder of the Deeds for the District of Columbia And in 1889 he was confirmed as American Minister to the Republic of Haiti. After Emancipation, Douglass demanded no special privileges for Negroes. In a famous speech, he said "All I ask for the Negro is that he be given a chance to stand on his own legs...."

The spirit of the Black-Liberation and the underlying sentiment in its dramatic character with the elements of pity and terror, are very graphically articulated in these Memoirs written by Frederick Douglass, in that following section of his autobiography.

I FIND, since reading over the foregoing Narrative that I have, in several instances, spoken in such a tone and manner, respecting religion, as may possibly lead those unacquainted with my religious views
to suppose me an opponent of all religion. To remove the liability of such misapprehension, I deem it proper to append the following brief explanation. What I have said respecting and against religion, I mean strictly to apply to the slaveholding religion of this land, and with no possible reference to Christianity proper; for, between the Christianity of this land, and the Christianity of Christ, I recognize the widest possible difference—so wide, that to receive the one as good, pure, and holy, is of necessity to reject the other as bad, corrupt, and wicked. To be the friend of the one, is of necessity to be the enemy of the other. I love the pure, peaceable, and impartial Christianity of Christ: I therefore hate the corrupt, slaveholding, women-whipping, cradle-plundering, partial and hypocritical Christianity of this land. Christianity. I look upon it as the climax of all misnomers, the boldest of all frauds, and the grossest of all libels. Never was there a clearer case of "stealing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in." I am filled with unutterable loathing when I contemplate the religious pomp and show, together with the horrible inconsistencies, which every where surround me. We have men-stealers for ministers, women-whippers for missionaries, and cradle-plunderers for church members. The man who wields the blood-clotted cowhide during the week fills the pulpit on
Sunday, and claims to be a minister of the meek and lowly Jesus. The man who robs me of my earnings at the end of each week meets me as a class-leader on Sunday morning, to show me the way of life, and the path of salvation. He who sells my sister, for purposes of prostitution, stands forth as the pious advocate of purity. He who proclaims it a religious duty to read the Bible denies me the right of learning to read the name of the God who made me. He who is the religious advocate of marriage robs whole millions of its sacred influence, and leaves them to the ravages of wholesale pollution. The warm defender of the sacredness of the family relation is the same that scatters whole families,—sundering husbands and wives, parents and children, sisters and brothers,—leaving the hut vacant, and the hearth desolate. We see the thief preaching against theft, and the adulterer against adultery. We have men sold to build churches, women sold to support the gospel, and babes sold to purchase Bibles for the poor heathen! all for the glory of God and the good of souls! The slave auctioneer's bell and the churchgoing bell chime in with each other, and the bitter cries of the heart-broken slave are drowned in the religious shouts of his pious master. Revivals of religion and revivals in the slave trade go hand in hand together. The slave prison and the
church stand near each other. The clanking of fetters and the rattling of chains in the prison, and the pious psalm and solemn prayer in the church, may be heard at the same time. The dealers in the bodies and souls of men erect their stand in the presence of the pulpit, and they mutually help each other. The dealer gives his blood stained gold to support the pulpit and the pulpit, in return, covers his internal business with the garb of Christianity. Here we have religion and robbery the allies of each other - devils dressed in angels' robes and hell presenting the semblance of paradise.

"Just God! and these are they,
Who minister at thine altar, God of right!
Men who their hands, with prayer and blessing lay
On Israel's ark of light.
"What! preach, and kidnap men!
Give thanks, and rob thy own afflicted poor
Talk of thy glorious liberty, and then
Bolt hard the captive's door?
"What! Servants of thy own
Merciful Son, who came to seek and save
The homeless and the outcast, fettering down
The tasked and plundered slave!
"Pilate and Herod friends!
Chief priests and rulers, as of old, combine! Just God and holy! is that church which lends Strength to the spoiler thine?"

The Christianity of America is a Christianity, of whose votaries it may be as truly said, as it was of the ancient scribes and Pharisees, "They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. All their works they do for to be seen of men. - They love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, .... and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. - But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. - Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides! which strain at a gnat, and
swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter; but within, they are full of extortion and excess. — Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whitened sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

Dark and terrible as is this picture, I hold it to be strictly true of the overwhelming mass of professed Christians in America. They strain at a gnat, and swallow camel. Could any thing be more true of our churches? They would be shocked at the proposition of fellowshipping a sheep-stealer; and at the same time they hug to their communion a manstealer, and brand me with being an infidel, if I find fault with them for it. They attend with pharisaical strictness to the outward forms of religion, and at the same time neglect the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. They are always ready to sacrifice, but seldom to show mercy. They are they who are represented as professing to love God whom they have not seen, whilst they hate their brother whom they have seen. They love the heathen on the other side of the globe. They can
pray for him, pay money to have the Bible put into his hand, and missionaries to instruct him; while they despise and totally neglect the heathen at their own doors.

Such is, very briefly, my view of the religion of this land; and to avoid any misunderstanding, growing out of the use of general terms, I mean, by the religion of this land, that which is revealed in the words, deeds, and actions, of those bodies, north and south, calling themselves Christian churches, and yet in union with slaveholders. It is against religion, as presented by these bodies, that I have felt it my duty to testify.

In conclude these remarks by copying the following portrait of the religion of the south, (which is, by communion and fellowship the religion of the north,) which I soberly affirm is "true to the life," and without caricature or the slightest exaggeration. It is said to have been drawn, several years before the present anti-slavery agitation began, by a northern Methodist preacher, who, while residing at the south, had an opportunity to see slaveholding morals, manners, and piety, with his own eyes. "Shall I not visit for these things? Saith the Lord. Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"
"A PARODY.

"Come, saints and sinners, hear me tell
How pious priests whip Jack and Nell,
And women buy and children sell,
And preach all sinners down to hell,
And sing of heavenly union.

"They'll bleat and baa, (go on) like goats,
Gorge down black sheep, and strain at motes,
Array their back'y's in fine black coats,
Then seize their negroes by their throats,
And choke, for heavenly union.

"They'll church you if you sip a dram,
And damn you if you steal a lamb;
Yet rob old Tony, Doll, and Sam,
Of human rights, and bread and ham;
Kidnapper's heavenly union.

"They'll loudly talk of Christ's reward,
And bind his image with a cord,
And scold, and swing the lash abhorred,
And sell their brother in the Lord
To handcuffed heavenly union.

"They'll read and sing a sacred song,
And make a prayer both loud and long,
And teach the right and do the wrong,
Hailing the brother, sister throng,
With words of heavenly union.

"We wonder how such saints can sing,
Or praise the Lord upon the wing,
Who roar, and scold, and whip, and sting,
And to their slaves and mammon cling,
In guilty conscience union.

"They'll raise tobacco, corn, and rye,
And drive, and thieve, and cheat, and lie,
And lay up treasures in the sky,
By making switch and cowskin fly,
In hope of heavenly union.

"They'll crack old Tony on the skull,
And preach and roar like Bashan bull,
Or braying ass, of mischief full,
Then seize old Jacob by the wool,
And pull for heavenly union.

"A roaring, ranting, sleek man-thief,
Who lived on mutton, veal, and beef,
Yet never would afford relief
To needy, sable sons of grief,
Was big with heavenly union.

"Love not the world," the preacher said,
And winked his eye, and shook his head;
He seized on Tom, and Dick, and Ned,
Cut short their meat, and clothes, and bread,
Yet still loved heavenly union.

"Another preacher whining spoke
Of One whose heart for sinners broke;
He tied old Nanny to an oak,
And drew the blood at every stroke,
And prayed for heavenly union.

"Two others oped their iron jaws,
And waved their Children-stealing paws;
There sat their children in gewgaws;
By stinting negroes' backs and maws,
They kept up heavenly union.

"All god from Jack another takes,
And entertains their flirts and rakes,
who dress as sleek as glossy snakes,
And cram their mouths with sweetened cakes;
And this goes down for union."

Sincerely and earnestly hoping that this little book may do something toward light on the American slave system, and hastening the glad day of deliverance to the millions of my brethren in bonds—faithfully relying upon the lower of truth, love, and justice, for success in my humble efforts—and solemnly pledging myself anew to the sacred cause,—I subscribe myself,

LYNN, Mass., April 28, 1845. FREDERICK DOUGLASS
The two most important and the scintillating appreciations of the Douglass's Memoirs and life were penned by his contemporary literary figures WM. Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips which are documented in the paragraphs that follow:—

In the month of August, 1841, I attended an anti-slavery convention in Nantucket, at which it was my happiness to become acquainted with FREDERICK DOUGLASS, the writer of the following Narrative. He was a stronger to nearly every member of that body; but, having recently made his escape from the southern prison-house of bondage, and feeling his curiosity excited to ascertain the principles and measures of the abolitionists, — of whom he had heard a somewhat vague description while he was a slave, — he was induced to give his attendance, on the occasion alluded to, though at that time a resident in New Bedford.

Fortunate, most fortunate occurrence! — fortunate for the cause of Negro emancipation, and of universal liberty! — fortunate for the land of his birth, which he has already done so much to save and bless! — fortunate for a large circle of friends and acquaintances, whose sympathy and affection he has strongly secured by the many sufferings he has endured.
by his virtuous traits of character, by his everabiding remembrance of those who are in bonds, as being bound with them! — fortunate for the multitudes, in various parts of our republic, whose minds he has enlightened on the subject of slaver, and who have been melted to tears by his pathos, or roused to virtuous indignation by his stirring eloquence against the enslavers of men! — fortunate for himself, as it at once brought him into the field of public usefulness, "gave the world assurance of a MAN," quickened the slumbering energies of his soul, and consecrated him to the great work of breaking the rod of the oppressor, and letting the oppressed go free!

I shall never forget his first speech at the convention — the extraordinary emotion it excited in my own mind — the powerful impression it created upon a crowded auditory, completely taken by surprise — the applause which followed from the beginning to the end of his felicitous remarks. I think I never hated slavery so intensely as at that moment; certainly, my perception of the enormous outrage which is inflicted by it, on the godlike nature of its victims, was rendered far more clear than ever. There stood one, in physical proportion and stature commanding and exact — in intellect richly endowed — in natural
eloquence a prodigy - in soul manifestly "created but a little lower than the angels" - yet a slave, ay, a fugitive slave, - trembling for his safety, hardly daring to believe that on the American soil, a single white person could be found who would befriend him at all hazards, for the love of God and humanity! Capable of high attainments as an intellectual and moral being - needing nothing but a comparatively small amount of cultivation to make him an ornament to society and a blessing to his race - by the law of the land, by the voice of the people, by the terms of the slave code, he was only a piece of property, a load of burden, a chattel personal, nevertheless!

A beloved friend from New Bedford prevailed on Mr. DOUGLAS3 to address the convention. He came forward to the platform with a hesitancy and embarrassment, necessarily the attendants of a sensitive mind in such a novel position. After apologizing for his ignorance, and reminding the audience that slavery was a poor school for the human intellect and heart, he proceeded to narrate some of the facts in his own history as a slave, and in the course of his speech gave utterance to many noble thought and thrilling reflections. As soon as he had taken his seat, filled with hope and admiration, I rose, and declared that
PATRICK HENRY, of revolutionary fame, never made a speech more eloquent in the cause of liberty, than the one we had just listened to from the lips of that hunted fugitive. So I believed at that time—such is my belief now. I reminded the audience of the peril which surrounded this self-emancipated young man at the North,—even in Massachusetts, on the soil of the peril which surrounded this self-emancipated young man at the North, — even in Massachusetts, on the soil of the Pilgrim Fathers, among the descendants of revolutionary sires; and I appealed to them, whether they would ever allow him to be carried back into slavery, — law or no law, constitution or no constitution. The response was unanimous and in thunder-tones — "NO!" "WILL you succor and protect him as a brother-man — a resident of the old Bay State?" "YES!" shouted the whole mass, with an energy so startling, that the ruthless tyrants south of Mason and Dixon's line might almost have heard the mighty burst of feeling, and recognized it as the pledge of an invincible determination, on the part of those who gave it, never to betray him that wanders, but to hid the outcast, and firmly to abide the consequences.
It was at once deeply impressed upon my mind, that, if Mr. DOUGLASS could be persuaded to consecrate his time and talents to the promotion of the anti-slavery enterprise, a powerful impetus would be given to it, and a stunning blow at the same time inflicted on northern prejudice against a colored complexion. I therefore endeavored to instil hope a courage into his mind, in order that he might dare to engage in a vocation so anomalous and responsible for a person in his situation; and I was seconded in this effort by warm-hearted friends, especially by the late General Agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, Mr. JOHN A. COLLINS, whose judgment in this instance entirely coincided with my own. At first, he could give no encouragement; with unfeigned diffidence, he expressed his conviction that he was not adequate to the performance of so great a task; the path marked out was wholly an untrodden one; he was sincerely apprehensive that he should do more harm than good. After much deliberation, however, he consented to make a trial; and ever since that period, he has acted as a lecturing agent, under the auspice either of the American or the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. In labors he has been most
abundant; and his success in combating prejudice, in gaining proselytes, in agitating the public mind, has far surpassed the most sanguine expectations that were raised at the commencement of his brilliant career. He has borne himself with gentleness and meekness, yet with true manliness of character. As a public speaker, he excels in pathos, wit, comparison, imitation, strength of reasoning, and fluency of language. There is in him that union of head and heart, which is indispensable to an enlightenment of the heads and a winning of the hearts of others. May his strength continue to be equal to his day! May he continue to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of God," that he may be increasingly serviceable in the cause of bleeding humanity, whether at home or abroad!

It is certainly a very remarkable fact, that one of the most efficient advocates of the slave population, now before the public, is a fugitive slave, in the person of FREDERICK DOUGLASS; and that the free colored population of the United States are as ably represented by one of their own number, in the person of CHARLES LENOX REMOND, whose eloquent appeals have extorted the highest applause of multitudes on both sides of the Atlantic.
Let the calumniators of the colored race despise themselves for their baseness and illiberality of spirit, and henceforth cease to talk of the natural inferiority of those who require nothing but time and opportunity to attain to the highest point of human excellence.

It may, perhaps, be fairly questioned, whether any other portion of the population of the earth could have endured the privations, sufferings and horrors of slavery, without having become more degraded in the scale of humanity than the slaves of African descent. Nothing has been left undone to cripple their intellects, darken their minds, debase their moral nature, obliterate all traces of their relationship to mankind; and yet how wonderfully they have sustained the mighty load of a most frightful bondage, under which they have been groaning for centuries! To illustrate the effect of slavery on the white man, — to show that he has no powers of endurance, in such a condition, superior to those of his black brothers, — DANIEL O'CONNELL, the distinguished advocate of universal emancipation, and the mightiest champion of prostrate but not conquered Ireland, relates the following anecdote in a speech delivered by him in the
Conciliation Hall, Dublin, before the Loyal National Repeal Association, March 31, 1845. "No matter," said Mr. O'CONNELL, "under what specious term it may disguise itself, slavery is still hideous. It has a natural, an inevitable tendency to brutalize every noble faculty of man. An American sailor, who was cast away on the shore of Africa, where he was kept in slavery for three years, was, at the expiration of that period, found to be imbruted and stultified - he had lost all reasoning power; and having forgotten his native language, could only utter some savage gibberish between Arabic and English, which nobody could understand, and which even he himself found difficulty in pronouncing. So much for the humanizing influence of THE DOMESTIC INSTITUTION!" Admitting this to have been an extraordinary case of mental deterioration, it proves at least that the white slave can sink as low in the scale of humanity as the black one.

Mr. DOULASS has very properly chosen to write his own Narrative, in his own style, and according to the best of his ability, rather than to employ some one else. It is, therefore, entirely his own production; and, considering how long and dark was the career he had to run as a slave, - how few have
been his opportunities to improve his mind since he broke his iron fetters, — it is, in my judgment, highly creditable to his head and heart. He who can peruse it without a tearful eye, a heaving breast, an afflicted spirit, — without being filled with an unutterable abhorrence of slavery and all its abettors, and animated with a determination to seek the immediate overthrow of that execrable system, — without trembling for the fate of this country in the hands of a righteous God, who is ever on the side of the oppressed, and whose arm is not shortened that it cannot save, — must have a flinty heart, and be qualified to act the part of a trafficker "in slaves and the souls of men." I am confident that it is essentially true in all its statements; that nothing has been set down in malice, nothing exaggerated, nothing drawn from the imagination; that it comes short of the reality, rather than overstates a single fact in regard to SLAVERY AS IT IS. The experience of FREDERICK DOUGLASS, as a slave, was not a peculiar one; his lot was not especially a hard one; his case may be regarded as a very fair specimen of the treatment of slaves in Maryland, in which State it is conceded that they are better fed and less cruelly treated than in Georgia, Alabama, or Louisiana. Many have
suffered incomparably more, while very few on
the plantations have suffered less, than himself,
Yet how deplorable was his situation! what terrible
chastisements were inflicted upon his person!
what still more shocking outrages were perpetrated
upon his mind! with all his noble powers and
sublime aspirations, how like a brute was he treated,
even by those professing to have the same mind in
them that was in Christ Jesus! to what dreadful
liabilities was he continually subjected! how
destitute of friendly counsel and aid, even in his
greatest extremities! how heavy was the midnight
of woe which shrouded in blackness the last ray of
hope, and filled the future with terror and gloom!
what longings after freedom took possession of his
breast, and how his misery augmented, in proportion
as he grew reflective and intelligent, — thus
demonstrating that a happy slave is an extinct man!
how he thought, reasoned, felt, under the lash of
the driver, with the chains upon his limbs! what
perils he encountered in his endeavors to escape
from his horrible doom! and how signal have been
his deliverance and preservation in the midst of
a nation of pitiless enemies!
This Narrative contains many affecting incidents, many passages of great eloquence and power; but I think the most thrilling one of them all is the description DOUGLASS gives of his feelings, as he stood soliloquizing respecting his fate, and the chances of his one day being a freeman, on the banks of the Chesapeake Bay — viewing the receding vessels as they flew with their white wings before the breeze, and apostrophizing them as animated by the living spirit of freedom. Who can read that passage, and be insensible to its pathos and sublimity? Compressed into it is a whole Alexandrian library of thought, feeling, and sentiment — all that can, all that need be urged, in the form of expostulation, entreaty, rebuke, against that crime of crimes, — making man the property of his fellow-man! O, how accursed is that system, which entombs the godlike mind of man, defaces the divine image, reduces those who by creation were crowned with glory and honor to a level with four-footed beasts, and exalts the dealer in human flesh above all that is called God! Why should its existence be prolonged one hour? Is it not evil, only evil, and that continually? What does its presence imply but the absence of all fear of God, all regard for man, on the part of the people of the United States? Heaven speed its eternal overthrow!
So profoundly ignorant of the nature of slavery are many persons, that they are stubbornly incredulous whenever they read or listen to any recital of the cruelties which are daily inflicted on its victims. They do not deny that the slaves are held as property; but that terrible fact seems to convey to their minds no idea of injustice, exposure to outrage, or savage barbarity. Tell them of cruel scourgings, of mutilations and brandings, of scenes of pollution and blood, of the banishment of all light and knowledge, and they affect to be greatly indignant at such enormous exaggerations, such wholesale misstatements, such abominable libels on the character of the southern planters! As if all these direful outrages were not the natural results of slavery! As if it were less cruel to reduce a human being to the condition of a thing, than to give him a severe flagellation, or to deprive him of necessary food and clothing! As if whips, chains, thumb-screws, paddles, bloodhounds, overseers, drivers, patrols, were not all indispensable to keep the slaves down, and to give protection to their ruthless oppressors! As if, when the marriage institution is abolished, concubinage, adultery, and incest, must not necess-
arily abound; when all the rights of humanity are annihilated, any barrier remains to protect the victim from the fury of the spoiler; when absolute power is assumed over life and liberty, it will not be wielded with destructive say! Skeptics of this character abound in society. In some few instances, their incredulity arises from a want of reflection; but, generally, it indicates a hatred of the light, a desire to shield slavery from the assaults of its foes, a contempt of the colored race, whether bond or free. Such will try to discredit the shocking tales of slaveholding cruelty which are recorded in this truthful Narrative; but they will labor in vain, Mr. DOUGLASS has frankly disclosed the place of his birth, the names of those who claimed ownership in his body and soul, and the names also of those who committed the crimes which he has alleged against them. His statements, therefore, may easily be disproved, if they are untrue.

In the course of his Narrative, he relates two instances of murderous cruelty, — in one of which a planter deliberately shor a slave belonging to a neighboring plantation, who had unintentionally gotten within his lordly domain in quest of fish;
and in the other, an overseer blow out the brains of a slave who had fled to a stream of water to escape a bloody scourging. Mr. DOUGLASS states that in neither of these instances was any thing done by way of legal arrest or judicial investigation. The Baltimore American, of March 17, 1845, relates a similar case of atrocity, perpetrated with similar impunity — as follows: — "Shooting a Slave — We learn, upon the authority of a letter from Charles country, Maryland, received by a gentleman of this city, that a young man named Matthews, a nephew of General Matthews, and whose father, it is believed, hold an office at Washington, killed one of the slaves upon his father's farm by shooting him. The letter states that young Matthews had been left in charge of the farm; that he gave an order to the servant, which was disobeyed, when he proceeded to the house obtained a gun, and, returning, shot the servant. He immediately, the letter continues, fled to his father's residence, where he still remains unmolested." — Let it never be forgotten, that no slaveholder or overseer can be convicted of any outrage perpetrated on the person of a slave, however, diabolical it may be, on the testimony of colored witnesses, whether bond or free. By
the slave code, they are adjudged to be as incompetent to testify against a white man, as though they were indeed a part of the brute creation. Hence, there is no legal protection in fact, whatever there may be in form, for the slave population; and any amount of cruelty may be inflicted on them with impunity. Is it possible for the human mind to conceive of a more horrible state of society?

The effect of a religious profession on the conduct of southern masters is vividly described in the following narrative, and shown to be anything but salutary. In the nature of the case, it must be in the highest degree pernicious. The testimony of Mr. Douglass, on this point, is sustained by a cloud of witnesses, whose veracity is unimpeachable. "A slaveholder's profession of Christianity is a palpable imposture. He is a felon of the highest grade. He is a manstealer. It is of no importance what you put in the other scale."

Reader! are you with the man-stealers in sympathy and purpose, or on the side of their downtrodden victims? If with the former, then are you the foe of God and man. If with the latter, what are you prepared to do and dare in their behalf?
Be faithful, be vigilant, be untiring in your efforts to break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free, come what may—cost what it may—inscribe on the banner which you unfurl to the breeze, as your religious and political motto—"No COMPROMISE with SLAVERY! NO UNION with SLAVEHOLDERS!"

WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

BOSTON, MAY 1, 1845.

From Wendell Phillips, Esq.

Boston, April 22, 1845.

My dear Friend:

You remember the old fable of "The Man and the Lion," where the lion complained that he should not be so misrepresented "When the lions wrote history."

I am glad the time has come when the "Lions write history." We have been left long enough to gather the character of slavery from the involuntary evidence of the masters. One might, indeed, rest sufficiently satisfied with what, it is evident,
must be, in general, the results of such a relation, without seeking farther to find whether they have followed in every instance. Indeed, those who stare at the half-peck of corn a week, and love to count the lashes on the slave's back, are seldom the "stuff" out of which reformers and abolitionists are to be made. I remember that, in 1838, many were waiting for the results of the West India experiment, before they could come into our ranks. Those "results" have come long ago; but, alas! few of that number have come with them, as converts.

A man must be disposed to judge of emancipation by other tests than whether it has increased the produce of sugar, — and to hate slavery for other reasons than because it starves men and whips women, — before he is ready to lay the first stone of his anti-slavery life.

I was glad to learn, in your story, how early the most neglected of God's Children waken to a sense of their rights, and of the injustice done them. Experience is a keen teacher; and long before you had mastered your A B C, or knew where the "white sails" of the Chesapeake were bound, you began, I see, to gauge the wretchedness of the slave, not by his hunger and want, not by his lashes and
toil, but by the cruel and blighting death which gathers over his soul.

In connection with this, there is one circumstance which makes your recollections peculiarly valuable, and renders your early insight the more remarkable. You come from that part of the country where we are told slavery appears with its fairest features. Let us hear, then, what it is at its best estate - gaze on its bright side, if it has one; and then imagination may task her powers to add dark lines to the picture, as she travels southward to that (for the colored man) Valley of the Shadow of Death, where the Mississippi sweeps along.

Again, we have known you long, and can put the most entire confidence in your truth, candor, and sincerity. Every one who has heard you speak has felt, and, I am confident, every one who reads your book will feel, persuaded that you give them a fair specimen of the whole truth. No one-sided portrait, - no wholesale complaints, - but strict justice done, whenever individual kindliness has neutralized, for a moment the deadly system with which it was strangely allied. You have been with us, too, some years, and can fairly compare the
twilight of rights, which your race enjoy at the North, with that "noon of night" under which they labor south of Mason and Dixon's line. Tell us whether, after all, the half-free colored man of Massachusetts is worse off than the pampered slave of the rice swamps!

In reading your life, no one can say that we have unfairly picked out some rare specimens of cruelty. We know that the bitter drops, which even you have drained from the cup, are no incidental aggravations, no individual ills, but such as must mingle always and necessarily in the lot of every slave. They are the essential ingredients, not the occasional results, of the system.

After all, I shall read your book with trembling for you. Some years ago, when you were beginning to tell me your real name and birthplace, you may remember I stopped you, and preferred to remain ignorant of all. With the exception of a vague description, so I continued, till the other day, when you read me your memories. I hardly knew, at the time, whether to thank you or not for the sight of them, when I reflected that it was still dangerous, in Massachusetts, for honest men to tell their names! They say the fathers, in 1776, signed
the Declaration of Independence with the halter about their necks. You, too, publish your declaration of freedom with danger compassing you around. In all the broad lands which the Constitution of the United States overshadows, there is no single spot, — however narrow or desolate, — where a fugitive slave can plant himself and say, "I am safe," The whole armory of Northern Law has no shield for you. I am free to say that, in your place, I should throw the MS into the fire.

You, perhaps, may tell your story in safety, endeared as you are to so many warm hearts by rare gifts, and a still rarer devotion of them to the service of others. But it will be owing only to your labors, and the fear less efforts of those who, trampling the laws and Constitution of the country under their feet, are determined that they will "hide the outcast," and that their hearths shall be, spite of the law, an asylum for the oppressed, if, some time or other, the humblest may stand in our streets, and bear witness in safety against the cruelties of which he has been the victim.
Yet it is sad to think, that these very throbbing hearts which welcome your story, and form your best safeguard in telling it, are all beating contrary to the "statute in such esse made and provided." Go on, my dear friend, till you, and those who, like you, have been saved, so as by fire, from the dark prison-house, shall stereotype these free, illegal pulses into statutes; and New England, cutting loose from a blood-stained Union, shall glory in being the house of refuge for the oppressed; — till we no longer merely "hide the outcast," or make a merit of standing idly by while he is hunted in our midst; but, consecrating anew the soil of the Pilgrims as an asylum for the oppressed, proclaim our welcome to the slave so loudly, that the tones shall reach every hut in the Carolinas, and make the broken-hearted bondman leap up at the thought of old Massachusetts.

God speed the day!

Till then, and ever,

Yours truly,

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

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