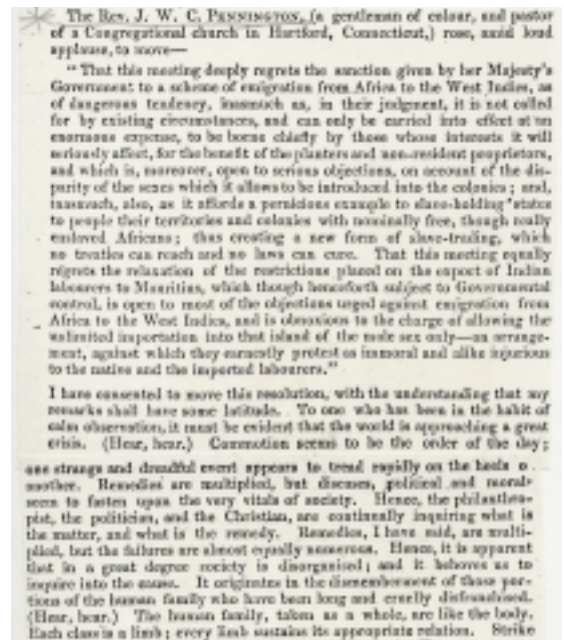


The Rev. J. W. C. PENNINGTON, (a gentleman of colour, and pastor of a Congregational church in Hartford, Connecticut,) rose, amid loud applause, to move—

“That this meeting deeply regrets the sanction given by her Majesty’s Government to a scheme of emigration from Africa to the West Indies, as of dangerous tendency, inasmuch as, in her judgement, it is not called for by existing circumstances, and can only be carried into effect at an enormous expense, to be borne chiefly by those whose interests it will seriously affect, for the benefit of the planters and non-resident proprietors, and which is, moreover, open to serious objections, on account of the disparity of the sexes which it allows to be introduced into the colonies; and, inasmuch, also, as it affords a pernicious example to slave-holding states to people their territories and colonies with nominally free, though really enslaved Africans; thus creating a new form of slave-trading, which no treaties can reach and no laws can cure. That this meeting equally regrets the relaxation of the restrictions placed on the export of Indian labourers to Mauritius, which though henceforth subject to Governmental control, is open to most of the objections urged against emigration from Africa to the West Indies, and is obnoxious to the charge of allowing the unlimited importation into that island of the male sex only—an arrangement, against which they earnestly protest as immoral and alike injurious to the native and the imported labourers.”

I have consented to move this resolution, with the understanding that my remarks shall have some latitude. To one who has been in the habit of calm observation, it must be evident that the world is approaching a great crisis. (Hear, hear.) Commotion seems to be the order of the day; one strange and dreadful event appears to tread rapidly on the heels of another. Remedies are multiplied, but diseases, political and moral seem to fasten upon the very vitals of society. Hence, the philanthropist, the politician, and the Christian, are continually inquiring what is the matter, and what is the remedy. Remedies, I have said, are multiplied, but the failures are almost equally numerous. Hence, it is apparent that in a great degree society is disorganised; and it behoves us to inquire into the cause. It originates in the dismemberment of those portions of the human family who have been long and cruelly disfranchised. (Hear, hear.) The human family, taken as a whole, are like the body. Each class is a limb; every limb sustains its appropriate relation. Strike



off a limb, and you injure the whole body. (Cheers.) To treat any one class of the human family without a respect to the relationship they sustain, is to do injury to the entire body, and to diffuse pain throughout it. Here is the exact position of that limb of the human family which I represent to-day. For hundreds of years it has been dismembered from the trunk, and hence mutual pain, mutual disease, mutual agony, mutual trouble throughout the whole body. Again, I ask, What is the remedy? It is direct, it is close, it is reasonable. Restore the dismembered limb. (Cheers.) I have great pleasure in moving this resolution, because it will call upon you to protest against all the petty policy that has been pursued with respect to Africa, from the days of Charles the Fifth of Spain down to the present moment. I protest against the scheme of emigration from Africa, because it involves a line of policy inadequate to meet the necessities of that country, and unworthy of being adopted by one nation towards another. I protest against it, because that country has an ample extent of land; it has splendid rivers; it has exhaustless resources; it abounds in gold dust, in ivory, in palm oil, and furnishes room enough for all its inhabitants. (Cheers.) There is no use, therefore, in transporting them from its shores. I protest against it, because I would first call upon the nations to do justice to those portions of the family of Africa whom they have already stolen and enticed away, before they think of the removal of others. Let the United States emancipate all that are found within her territories. Let Great Britain educate and refine the 800,000 freemen in her colonies. She has already enough to whom to do justice, ere she entices others away. (Cheers.) I have said that the dismemberment of society is the occasion of all its troubles and pains. Let me fasten your attention on this view of the subject. I am not one of those who would maintain that portions of society which have long been in possession of power and privilege have had their energies exhausted; but I do maintain that we have arrived at a great crisis in the course of time and events; that the hand of Providence has been placed on the ear, and that the mandate is, that it shall proceed no further till all the passengers are in. (Hear, hear.) Or, if you choose to change the figure, suppose the case of a ship, about to sail with 100 passengers, all of whom have been registered, and have paid their fare. Fifty only are on board; shall the ship sail without the rest? I am persuaded, that if the noble lord

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were the commander of that ship, he would not weigh anchor till all were on board. (Cheers.) But I rejoice to know that God is the Commander of the ship, and that he says that the anchor shall not be weighed, a sail shall not be hoisted, until all the passengers are embarked. (Cheers.) My race constitute the rejected passengers, and the mandate of Providence is, that the ship shall not depart without them. There is mutiny among the passengers, and if the noble lord were among the fifty, he would protest against the sailing of the vessel until the remainder were on board. (Cheers.) And on board they must, go or the ship cannot sail. I have been much pleased with the remarks made by his Lordship with regard to English and Irish emigrants to America; and more especially that he referred to the fact that Irish emigrants are amongst the most inveterate foes to human rights. It is greatly to be lamented that the subjects of the British empire do not carry their principles with them to America. (Applause.) When I came to this country, two of my fellow passengers were slave-holders, one a Briton, and the other an Irishman. The latter told me more than once that he knew his slaves in Kentucky had more to waste than his friends in Ireland had to live upon. (Laughter, and ironical cheers.) I appeal to the audience, never at the peril of liberty to countenance the idea that we are to have perpetual slavery. (Cheers.) I wish to make known to-day, before heaven and earth, that if you are to have perpetual slavery, you cannot have the black man for a perpetual slave. (Immense cheers.) I am prepared to abide by this position. I say it advisedly, that our servitude, which has been a submissive and a bloody one, is nearly out, and therefore, if slavery is to be perpetual, the question comes—who are to be the slaves? (Cheers.) Who shall settle this question? Will the British Government, the British nation, or any other government or nation, undertake the settlement of this question? I imagine that I see an individual enter the door before me; he throws his eye around the audience; he advances and delivers a message; the message is brought to the noble chairman, who announces to the meeting that the man designs to take some one from this hall and make him a slave, and the meeting are to decide who that individual shall be. I ask your Lordship and your fellow citizens, would any one be prepared to stand up and assign a reason why I should not be that slave. (Cheers.) I believe the audience intended to

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respond in the negative, I then ask, why treat my people so? (Renewed cheers.) I am the representative of that people, and what I gain anywhere and everywhere, I gain for every manacled slave in America, and for every benighted African in the world. (Loud cheers.) Allow me to say, in conclusion, that I do not stand here to recriminate. Though I have a country that has never done me justice, yet I must return to it, and I shall not therefore recriminate. It has pleased God to make me black and you white, but let us remember, that whatever be our complexion, we are all by nature labouring under the degradation of sin, and without the grace of God are black at heart. (Hear, hear.) I know of no difference between the depraved heart of a Briton, an American, or an African. There is no difference between its colour, its disposition, and its self-will. There is only one mode of emancipation from the slavery of sin, from the blackness of heart, and that is by the blood of the Son of God. (Hear, hear.) Whatever be our complexion, whatever our kindred and people, we need to be emancipated from sin, and to be cleansed from our pollution by the all-prevailing grace of God. I bless his name, that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, but all are one. (Long continued applause.)

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