

To the Senate and House of Representatives
of the United States, in Congress assembled:

The undersigned, appointed to represent the Yearly Meetings of the Religious Society of Friends, composed of the members of said society, residing in the States of New York, Vermont, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan, having met, in the City of Baltimore, to consider the present condition of the recently liberated Slaves in our country, believe it to be our duty respectfully to address this Memorial to you.

It is, as a religious body, under a solemn sense of our responsibility to God and duty to our fellow-men, and not in any sense as political partisans, that we address you. We feel that it is cause for reverent gratitude that the terrible and devastating civil war, which has prevailed in our beloved country, has been brought to a close; that the authority of our excellent Government has been preserved, and its blessings continued to us; and that the system of slavery has been abolished.

Whilst rejoicing at these results, it is our earnest desire that, as a nation, we may not forget the lessons of the past; but that all the actions of our Government, more especially those which bear upon the poor or the defenceless; may be conceived and executed with especial reference to the command of our Saviour, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."—(*Matthew* vii, 12.) The faithful observance in the past, of this injunction, which is binding upon all Christians, would have saved the lives of multitudes of our fellow-citizens, and millions of treasure. Its faithful observance in the future will not only heal existing differences, but ensure the happiness of our citizens and the honor and dignity of the Nation: for "righteousness exulteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."—(*Proverbs* xiv, 34.)

We are induced to express this desire from facts respecting the condition and treatment of many of the Freedmen, in various parts of our country, which justify the belief that, under the name of freemen, they are in some respects worse off than in slavery. There were some important alleviations to the evils of that condition. They, like other branches of the human family, are creatures of habit; and under that system were, in a great measure, relieved from care for the future, and became, like children, dependent upon others, and deficient in those habits of industry and economy which are necessary to provide against the vicissitudes of civilized life. Under their new condition they are thrown upon their own resources, with none personally interested in their welfare or in that of their children. Without property, or right to occupy even the rude "quarters" in which they formerly lived—ignorant and improvident—surrounded by hostile laws and unjust prejudice—many must perish, unless sufficient provision be promptly made for their protection and relief. In expressing this belief, we have no doubt that an impartial history of the race, both in this and other countries, will show that, with the advantages of education, and opportunity to practice the arts of civilization, they are abundantly able, not only to support themselves, but to contribute their full proportion to the

MEMORIAL
ON BEHALF OF
THE FREEDMEN,
BY
REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.