I Have Come to Tell You Something About Slavery
Lynn, Massachusetts, October 1841

I feel greatly embarrassed . . . ] The exact date in October 1841 on which Douglass delivered this first recorded speech is not known. According to the witness who recorded it, it was “delivered with energy, and evidently from one unaccustomed to make speeches, yet it came so spontaneously that it thrilled through every one present, and compelled them to feel for the wrongs he had endured.”

my master] Thomas Auld.

one of his young female slaves] This was Douglass’s cousin Henny Bailey, who had been severely burnt in a childhood accident and lost the use of her hands. Douglass recounts Auld’s “most brutal” beating of “this lame and maimed woman” in his second autobiography, My Bondage and My Freedom.


a speech by John Quincy Adams] Though not an abolitionist himself, John Quincy Adams (1767–1848), in his post-presidential career as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, 1831–48, became an outspoken advocate for the right of citizens to petition the government to restrict slavery.

Country, Conscience, and the Anti-Slavery Cause
New York, New York, May 11, 1847

this Anniversary] Douglass delivered this address before a crowd of nearly four thousand who had gathered at New York's Broadway Tabernacle to mark the thirteenth anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Just returned from his tour of the British Isles, Douglass had reached new levels of fame. During William Lloyd Garrison’s introduction, shouts rang out for “Douglass! Douglass!”


Pandemonium] In Milton’s Paradise Lost (1667), the capital of Hell.

my friend Phillips] Wendell Phillips (1811–1884), a prominent radical abolitionist from Boston and a close ally of Garrison and sometime traveling companion of Douglass. An opponent of political abolitionism, Phillips had in his address to the meeting proclaimed: “We think that a man was born a man, before an American.”

Voting supplies for Slavery . . . in this land.] In March 1847 Congress had appropriated nearly $19 million to fund the war with Mexico, which abolitionists like Douglass viewed as a thinly veiled scheme to seize new territory for the expansion of slavery.

a Corn monopoly] In the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, Great Britain imposed a series of tariffs on imported corn and other commodities, collectively known as the Corn Laws, that artificially inflated prices to the benefit of the landed aristocracy. A crusade for repeal finally succeeded in Parliament in 1846, while Douglass was in England.
Rev. Dr. Cox . . . World’s Temperance Convention.] In 1846 Douglass had been invited to speak at the World Temperance Convention, an international gathering at Covent Garden in London to oppose the sale and use of alcohol. Among those in attendance was Samuel Hanson Cox, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn Heights and a director of the Union Theological Seminary, who attacked Douglass for the tone of his speech, claiming he had been “indiscriminate in his severities” and had behaved like a “schoolmaster.”

On August 1, 1842, some one thousand African Americans marched through Philadelphia to celebrate the eighth anniversary of the end of slavery in the British West Indies and were attacked by a largely Irish Catholic mob. Known as the Lombard Street Riot, the violence lasted three days and resulted in the destruction of the Second African Presbyterian Church and Smith’s Hall on Lombard Street, a regular abolitionist meeting place.

Rev. Doctor Smythe] Reverend Thomas Smyth, a Presbyterian minister in Charleston, South Carolina, and a delegate to the 1846 Evangelical Alliance convention in London.

Rev. Mr. Kirk. Dr. Marsh] Edward Norris Kirk (1802–1874) was pastor of the Mount Vernon Congregational Church in Boston. Congregational minister John Marsh (1788–1868) of Connecticut was secretary of the American Temperance Union.

Messrs. Gerrit Smith and Arthur Tappan] Reformer, abolitionist, and founder of the Liberty Party, Gerrit Smith (1797–1874) was a wealthy landowner in upstate New York who would become a close friend and benefactor to Douglass and his newspaper. Arthur Tappan (1786–1865), along with brothers Lewis and Benjamin, was a wealthy merchant in the New York City silk business and a prominent abolitionist.


**What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?**
Rochester, New York, July 5, 1852

Mr. President, Friends and Fellow Citizens] Douglass delivered this, one of his most famous speeches, before a crowd of more than five hundred in Rochester’s Corinthian Hall, at the invitation of the Rochester Ladies’ Anti-Slavery Society. (James Sperry presided over the meeting.) The speech was quickly published in pamphlet form.

what the Passover was . . . people of God.] Described in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Exodus.

Three score years and ten is the allotted time] Cf. Psalm 90:10.

tried men’s souls] Echoing the famous line from Thomas Paine’s The Crisis, December 23, 1776.


Oppression makes a wise man mad.] Ecclesiastes 7:7.
a more modern . . . euphonious term] Possibly an allusion to “Hunker,” the name for the conservative faction in the New York Democratic Party opposed to the antislavery “Barnburners.” Douglass may also have been referring to “Doughface,” a term for a Northerner with proslavery attitudes.

their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor] Douglas evokes the closing line of the Declaration of Independence.

Mammon] The personified figure of money or greed, referred to by Jesus in Matthew 6:24.


Sydney Smith] English cleric Sydney Smith (1771–1845) was considered one of the Wittiest men of his time.


Washington could not . . . his slaves.] In July 1799, five months before his death, George Washington drew up a will that provided for the emancipation of 122 people whom during his life he had held in slavery. However, some 153 so-called “dower slaves” at Mount Vernon, those men and women belonging to the Custis estate of his wife Martha Dandridge Custis Washington, remained in bondage.

“The evil that men do . . . with their bones.”] Julius Caesar, III.ii.75–76.


“lame man leap as an hart.”] Isaiah 35:6.

“By the rivers of Babylon . . . roof of my mouth.”] Psalm 137.1–6.

“I will not equivocate; I will not excuse;”] In the first issue of his abolitionist newspaper, The Liberator, January 1, 1831, William Lloyd Garrison declared, “I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard.”

a question for Republicans?] That is, Americans. The Republican Party would not be formed until 1854.

the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake] Cf. Isaiah 29:6.

Ex-Senator Benton] Though he had once been a slaveholder, U.S. Senator Thomas Hart Benton (1782–1858) was in his vocal opposition to the Fugitive Slave Law. He faced significant backlash from his proslavery constituents in Missouri and was defeated for reelection in 1850.

Austin Woldfolk] Austin Woolfolk was a slave trader who moved from Georgia to Baltimore in 1819 and became Maryland’s most notorious human trafficker in the 1820s and 1830s.


By an act of the American Congress] The 1850 Fugitive Slave Law.

Your President, your Secretary of State] Daniel Webster served as secretary of state in the Fillmore administration from July 22, 1850, until his death on October 24, 1852.

Covenanter[s] Thousands of Scottish protestants signed a “National Covenant” in 1638 to secure their control of church structure and governance against the interventions of the Stuart king Charles I, who sought consolidation with the English church.

John Knox] Scottish reformer John Knox (1514–1572) was the founder of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Queen Mary of Scotland] Mary Stuart (1542–1587), Queen of Scots.


Thomas Paine, Voltaire, Bolingbroke] Three famous Deists who were often called atheists by their critics: Thomas Paine (1737–1809), author of Age of Reason; François-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694–1778), French Enlightenment philosopher and essayist; and English essayist and orator Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678–1751).


“Bring no more vain oblations . . . for the widow.”] Cf. Isaiah 1:13–17.

Albert Barnes] Barnes (1798–1870) was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, 1830–70, and author of An Inquiry into the Scriptural Views of Slavery (1846).

The LORDS of Buffalo . . . the DEWEYS of Washington] A roll call of conservative clergy: John Chase Lord (1805–1877); Gardiner Spring (1785–1873); Leonard Elijah Lathrop (1796–1857); Samuel Hanson Cox (1793–1880); Ichabod Smith Spencer (1798–1854); Ezra Stiles Gannett (1801–1871); Daniel Sharp (1783–1853); and Orville Dewey (1794–1882).

“that we ought to obey . . . the law of God.”] Cf. Acts 5:29.

Henry Ward Beecher . . . on the platform] Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887) was a famous Congregationalist preacher, reformer, abolitionist, and minister of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn; Samuel J. May (1797–1871) was a staunch Garrisonian abolitionist, anti-poverty reformer, and a travel and lecturing companion early in Douglass’s career. May was indicted, but not convicted, for taking part in the “Jerry rescue” of a fugitive from slavery (William “Jerry” Henry) from a Syracuse police station on October 1, 1851. On the dais with Douglass was The Reverend Robert R. Raymond of Syracuse.

The Sharps . . . and the Knibbs.] Celebrated British abolitionists Granville Sharp (1735–1813); Thomas Clarkson (1769–1846); William Wilberforce (1759–1833); Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786–1845); Thomas Burchell (1799–1846); and William Knibb (1803–1845). While on his tour of England, Douglass met Clarkson shortly before the latter’s death.

fallen Hungary] Hungarian nobleman Lajos Kossuth (1802–1894) led a short-lived independent Kingdom of Hungary, 1848–49, before being forced into exile in Great Britain and the United States when the uprising was quashed by Austrian and Russian forces.

British artillery . . . threepenny tax on tea] Douglass refers to colonial American resistance to Parliamentary taxation schemes in the 1760s and 1770s—including the subsidization of a monopoly on colonial tea imports.
to the British East India Company—which led to the American Revolution.


“Hold these truths . . . the pursuit of happiness”] Quoting from the Declaration of Independence.

“Is worse . . . to oppose,”] Douglass paraphrases from a letter Jefferson wrote to Jean Nicholas Démeunier on June 26, 1786.

“To palter with us . . . the heart.”] Cf. Macbeth, V.viii.20–22.

Lysander Spooner . . . Gerritt Smith] Like Douglass’s friend and patron Gerrit Smith, New York State abolitionist and journalist William Goodell (1792–1878) and Massachusetts abolitionists Lysander Spooner (1808–1876) and Samuel E. Sewall (1799–1888) were proponents of the antislavery interpretation of the Constitution, which held that the Constitution was inherently anti-slavery in spirit and that it already granted the federal government the power to limit slavery to only those states where it had already existed at the time it was adopted. Therefore, control of the mechanisms of the federal government needed to be contested, and abolitionists had a moral obligation to enter the political fray. This was contrary to “proslavery” interpretation of the Garrisonians, who believed that the Constitution was so fundamentally corrupted by slavery that any political action under its system, including voting, was morally compromised—only a separation from slavery, through disunion if necessary, could redeem the American polity.

Ex-Vice-President Dallas] George M. Dallas (1792–1864) was a Democratic senator from Pennsylvania, 1831–33, and vice president under James K. Polk, 1845–49.

Senator Berrien] John M. Berrien (1781–1856) was born in New Jersey but moved while young to Savannah, Georgia, where he lived most of his life. He was Andrew Jackson’s attorney general, 1829–31, and served in the U.S. senate, 1825–29, 1841–45, and 1845–52, where he was staunchly proslavery. In 1850, he held some 143 individuals in bondage in and around Savannah.


“The arm of the Lord is not shortened,”] Cf. Isaiah 59.1.

The Celestial Empire] China.

“Let there be Light,”] Genesis 1:3.

“Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand unto God.”] Psalm 68:31.


**The Proclamation and a Negro Army**
**New York, New York, February 6, 1863**

I congratulate you . . .] Douglass delivered this address to a large crowd at New York’s Cooper Institute, the same stage from which Lincoln had delivered his famous “Cooper Union” speech during the 1860
presidential campaign. It became the basis of his recruiting speech to potential Black soldiers, delivered throughout the Midwest in the spring of 1863.

Slavery has ruled . . . with a rod of iron] Cf. Revelation 19:15.

Cotton is King] During debates over Kansas in the 1850s, Southerners, especially James Henry Hammond of South Carolina, were fond of saying that their power was secure and impregnable because “cotton was king” of the American and Atlantic economy.

by crooking . . . the knee] Cf. Hamlet, III.ii.61.

the Attorney-General . . . common country.] Edward Bates (1793–1869), a Missouri lawyer and former congressman, was attorney general in the Lincoln administration. He issued an opinion on November 29, 1862, that every free person born in the United States, regardless of race, was “at the moment of birth prima facie a citizen.”


Catholic Emancipation] The process in England and Ireland during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to eliminate restrictions, especially penal laws, against Roman Catholics.

British Reform Bill] A law passed in British Parliament in 1832 to increase the distribution of seats in the House of Commons, especially to newer industrial towns.

that noble act of Russian liberty] The 1861 edict that ended serfdom in Russia.

I believe in the millennium] In Christian eschatology, Christ’s second coming will be heralded by a thousand years of peace. Cf. Revelation 20:1.

“Thrice is he armed . . . with injustice is corrupted.”] 2 Henry VI, III.ii.233–235.


innate depravity] A Christian theological concept which holds that human beings carry an inherently sinful nature by virtue of the original sin in the Garden of Eden.

error may be . . . combat it.] Douglass quotes a passage from Thomas Jefferson’s second inaugural address (1805).

Hunkers] The name for the conservative faction in the New York Democratic Party opposed to the antislavery “Barnburners.”

the pious Godwin] Anglican cleric Morgan Godwyn (1640–1686) argued for the education of Africans and American Indians in The Negro’s and Indians Advocate, suing for their admission to the church, or, A persuasive to the instructing and baptizing of the Negro’s and Indians in our plantations shewing that as the compliance therewith can prejudice no mans just interest, so the willful neglecting and opposing of it, is no less than a manifest apostacy from the Christian faith: to which is added, a brief account of religion in Virginia (1680).

All the wisdom . . . the cartwhip] Douglass refers to the persecution of Quakers in seventeenth-century Massachusetts.
Roger Williams found more toleration] Puritan minister Roger Williams (1603–1683), pastor at Salem in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, ran afoul of the colony’s leadership when he questioned their comingling of state and church authority and their claims to Indian land. In the winter of 1635–36 he sought refuge with an Indian tribe to the colony’s south, where he would eventually found a colony called Providence Plantations, later Rhode Island.

the very Athens of America] As proud democratic-minded Bostonians have sometimes called their home.

Brooks could knock down the Senator] In his anti-slavery address “The Crime Against Kansas,” delivered in the Senate May 19–20, 1856, Charles Sumner (1811–1874) of Massachusetts described Senator Andrew F. Butler of South Carolina as having chosen “the harlot, Slavery” as his “mistress.” On May 22 South Carolina congressman Preston S. Brooks, a nephew of Butler, approached Sumner as he sat at his desk in the Senate chamber, accused him of libeling South Carolina and Butler, and beat him unconscious with a cane. A subsequent motion to expel Brooks from the House of Representatives failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority. Sumner was prevented by his physical and psychological injuries from resuming his seat on a regular basis until December 1859.


Haman] The antagonist in the biblical book of Esther. He was hanged for his hubris on gallows of his own making.

Jefferson . . . justice would not sleep forever] Cf. Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia (1785), Query XVIII.

Franklin . . . in America] The Pennsylvania Abolition Society was founded in Philadelphia in 1775. Benjamin Franklin became its president in 1787.

Madison . . . property in man] In his notes for August 25 at the Constitutional Convention of 1787, James Madison recorded himself saying, “Twenty years will produce all the mischief that can be apprehended from the liberty to import slaves. So long a term will be more dishonorable to the American character than to say nothing about it in the Constitution.” That same day he would add that he “thought it wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in men.” Douglass would have encountered these notes in the third volume of Henry D. Gilpin, ed., The Papers of James Madison, 3 vols. (1840).

the Congress of 1807] Congress passed the bill to end the foreign slave trade on December 31, 1807.

the men of 1787] Douglass alludes here to the Confederation Congress, which passed the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 prohibiting slavery in the newly-acquired territories north and west of the Ohio River.

507.28 Abrahams, Isaacs and Jacobs] Douglass alludes to by the Harmony Presbytery of South Carolina collected in James G. Birney, ed., The American Churches, the Bulwarks of American Slavery (London, 1840): “Whereas, Sundry persons in Scotland and England, and other in the North, East, and West of our country, have denounced slavery as obnoxious to the laws of God . . . Resolved:—That slavery has existed from the days of those good old slaveholders and patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, (who are now in the kingdom of heaven) to the time when the Apostle Paul sent a run-away home to his master, Phililemon, and wrote a Christian and fraternal letter to this slaveholder, which we find still stands in the canon of the Scriptures—and that slavery has existed ever since the days of the Apostle, and does now exist.”

508.9 Dr. Thornwall] James Henley Thornwell (1812–1862), professor of theology at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina.
George B. Cheever (1807–1890) was a fiery abolitionist preacher at New York City’s Congregational Church of the Puritans.


walked by faith and not by sight.] Cf. 2 Corinthians 5:7.

No Abolitionist . . . on the soil of Kansas.] On March 30, 1855, Kansas held its first elections for its territorial legislature. Disputed returns—many proslavery individuals crossed from Missouri to tip the scales—resulted in the creation of two separate legislatures, one proslavery, one free soil. President Pierce refused to recognize the free soil Topeka Constitution, declaring it “insurrectionist” in a January 24, 1856, message to Congress, further aggravating the crisis. To counteract what they perceived as the designs of the Slave Power in Kansas, many northerners migrated to the territory to join what amounted to a rehearsal for civil war, a four-year crisis that came to be called “Bleeding Kansas.”

the huge Leviathan . . . sevenfold agony.] Cf. Job 41:1–34.

Copperheads] This name of a deadly snake was used to describe Northerners who sympathized with or supported the Confederate war effort.

Kilkenny cats] Cats of lore in County Kilkenny, Ireland, that would fight and ultimately devour each other; the term “Kilkenny cats” became a common nineteenth-century phrase for fights in which both sides are destroyed.

Oh! where’s the slave . . . slowly?] From the poem “Where Is the Slave” by Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779–1852).

They know that . . . strike the blow.] Cf. Lord Byron, Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage, Canto II, stanza 76.

the Governor of New York] Edwin Dennison Morgan (1811–1883), a Republican first elected governor in 1858.

Gov. Curtin] Republican Andrew Gregg Curtin (1817–1894) was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1860.

the bubble reputation . . . the cannon’s mouth] Cf. As You Like It, II.vii.152–53.

on the banks of the Mobile . . . Jackson.] Andrew Jackson traveled from Mobile to New Orleans in December 1814 just weeks before an anticipated British invasion of the Crescent City in what would prove to be the last days of the War of 1812. He quickly proclaimed martial law and, desperate for manpower to build and fortify defensive works, he turned to commandeering men, both enslaved and free, as needed. He had earlier made a special appeal to Louisiana’s free Black population to join the fight, expressing regret about the racially restrictive language of Militia Act and promising a bounty of 160 acres for enlistment, and two battalions were formed. After the Battle of New Orleans, on January 8, Jackson praised the “courage and perseverance” of the Black troops, but in the end no land bounties were issued.


two machines . . . Tremont Temple] These were the two Boston abolitionist gatherings, often remembered collectively as the “watch night,” that eagerly awaited word of the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.
Judge Russell] Thomas B. Russell (1825–87), first justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court.


**Lessons of the Hour**

Washington, D.C., January 9, 1894

**FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS**] Douglass delivered “Lessons of the Hour” at Washington’s Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church. He had first presented this lecture, which he sometimes entitled “The Negro Problem,” in 1893.

the pestilence that walketh in the darkness] Psalm 91:6.

Bishop Haygood . . . “Brother in Black,”] Atticus Greene Haygood (1839–1896) was bishop of the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church. A chaplain in the Confederate army, he developed progressive views on the rights of freed people, especially with respect to education, which he articulated in Our Brother in Black: His Freedom and His Future (1881). Douglas quotes from his article “The Black Shadow in the South,” which appeared in the October 1893 issue of Forum.

ex-Governor Chamberlain] Daniel Henry Chamberlain (1837–1907), a white man, served as captain in the 5th Massachusetts Cavalry, a Black regiment, and moved to South Carolina during Reconstruction. He was elected attorney general in the radical Republican government, was governor of South Carolina, 1872–76, and was defeated in the disputed election of 1876, after which he left the South to practice law in New York.

“In July 1892, the North American Review published Douglass’s article, “Lynch Law in the South.”

Frances Willard, of the W. C. T. U.] Frances Willard (1839–1898) was an educator, temperance reformer, women’s suffragist, and president of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, 1879–1898.

the mark set upon the first murderer] The mark of Cain, described in Genesis 4:11–16.

Bishop Fitzgerald] Oscar Penn Fitzgerald (1829–1911) was for a dozen years before his elevation to the episcopate in 1890 the editor of the Christian Advocate, a Methodist paper published in Nashville, Tennessee.

“Let no guilty man escape.”] President Grant used this phrase in a July 1875 letter advocating full prosecution of all those involved in the so-called “Whiskey Ring,” a corruption scandal within his Treasury Department.

“False in one, false in all.”] An ancient legal maxim (falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus) asserting that a witness’s testimony in one matter is deemed unreliable if the same witness’s testimony regarding another matter is known to be perjurious.

Prof. Weeks] Stephen Beauregard Weeks (1865–1918), professor of history and political science at Trinity College in Durham, North Carolina and at Native American reservation schools in the West. He delivered a paper defending the disfranchisement of southern Black people at the Auxiliary Congress on Jurisprudence and Law Reform, held at the Columbian World’s Exposition in Chicago, August 1893. Douglass had been in attendance and publicly responded.

Hamburg . . . Copiah] Douglass refers to instances of deadly mob violence directed against Black individuals and communities and their white allies in Hamburg, South Carolina (July 4, 1876), Yazoo City, Mississippi
(September 1, 1875), New Orleans (July 30, 1866), and Copiah County, Mississippi (October 25–November 6, 1883.)

“They did not consider . . . bound to respect.”] Douglass evokes an infamous line from Chief Justice Roger B. Taney’s 1857 Dred Scott decision: “They [African Americans] had for more than a century before been regarded as beings of an inferior order, and altogether unfit to associate with the white race, either in social or political relations; and so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit.”

unfairness and discrimination against the negro] Douglass criticized the various kinds of racism exhibited at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where ethnology was a key factor in depictions of race and nationality, and where any meaningful representation of Black Americans was absent.


The great measure . . . a failure.] Referring to the Fifteenth Amendment.

John J. Ingalls . . . John M. Langston] John James Ingalls (1833–1900) was a Republican senator from Kansas, 1873–1891; John M. Langston (1829–1897) was a free-born African American from Virginia who would become an influential abolitionist, lawyer, dean of Howard University Law School, U.S. minister to Haiti, and Republican congressman. He and Douglass were fierce rivals.

a government of the people . . . all the people.] Paraphrasing the final lines of Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address.”

John Sherman . . . Governor McKinley] A roll call of Republican worthies: John Sherman (1823–1900), the brother of General William T. Sherman and U.S. senator from Ohio, 1861–77, 1881–97; former president Benjamin Harrison (1833–1901), who had commanded the 70th Indiana Regiment in Civil War; George Frisbie Hoar, see note 600.37; Henry Cabot Lodge (1843–1901) U.S. senator from Massachusetts, 1893–1924; and William S. McKinley (1843–1901) governor of Ohio, 1892–96, and later president.

like the blood on Lady Macbeth’s hand.] See Macbeth, V.i.


Words are things.] Lord Byron, Don Juan, Canto III, stanza 88.

In the great city of New York . . . in the streets] An allusion to the New York draft riots, July 13–16, 1863.

“they were the cause of the war.”] On August 14, 1862, President Lincoln invited a small delegation of Black ministers from the Washington, D.C. area to the White House. There he lectured to them that the fate of their people was at stake in the war and that their “presence” had caused the conflict, and he urged them to volunteer to lead groups of Black people into colonization abroad. The meeting provoked outrage among Douglass and many other abolitionists.

“As we sow, we shall reap,”] Cf. Galatians 6:7.

it cost us a million graves] Historians estimate that the Civil War resulted in the death of anywhere from 620,000 to 750,000 soldiers, and an indeterminate number of non-combatants.

“Let the nation try... problem will be solved.”] Douglass quotes from Senator John J. Ingalls’s January 23, 1890, “Fiat Justitia” speech in the U.S. Senate.

Dr. Godwin... to baptize a negro.] Anglican cleric Morgan Godwyn (1640–1686) argued for the education of Africans and American Indians in The Negro’s and Indians Advocate, suing for their admission to the church, or, A persuasive to the instructing and baptizing of the Negro’s and Indians in our plantations shewing that as the compliance therewith can prejudice no mans just interest, so the willful neglecting and opposing of it, is no less than a manifest apostacy from the Christian faith: to which is added, a brief account of religion in Virginia (1680).