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Raimi Olatunji Adeleke

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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE NOUS L’AVONS RECEUE
MARTIN ROBISON DELANY AND THE BLACK STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

by

Raimi O. Adeleke
Department of History

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
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ABSTRACT

The origin of the modern instrumentalist orientation in black history could be traced back to the tradition begun by W.E.B. DuBois at the turn of the century. The need to combat the historical rape of a racist establishment led DuBois and later generations of black historians to reinterpret and reassess the black experience and its historical significance to national development. This preoccupation with a more positive definition of the black past continues to inform black scholarship today.

Perhaps in no other area is this search for a positive past more pronounced than in the field of black biography. The need for a better understanding of the black past is closely tied to the reconstruction of the lives of black leaders in the nineteenth century. These leaders, many of whom remain relatively unknown, struggled for black freedom and rights. Unfortunately, the rise of the aristocratic tradition in American historiography in the second half of that century seriously undermined their historical significance. The task of reconstructing their careers, therefore, involved a confrontation with the values of aristocratic history. Consequently, in some cases, the need to acquire a better understanding of these leaders is sacrificed to that of disproving the racist conclusions of aristocratic history.

Modern scholarly responses to Martin Robison Delany (1812-1885) unfortunately suffer from this defect. A key figure in the nineteenth century black struggles, Delany remained obscure until the late 1960s.
and early 1970s. His spectacular struggles and achievements lay buried beneath the aristocratic legend until nationalist upsurges in the Third World and the radical movement in the United States focused attention on him.

Unfortunately, however, the quest for a progressive past and heroes has led to a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Delany and his values. He is defined as a radical, and a man with a consistency of purpose. He is seen as a committed crusader for black freedom who never compromised on black needs and aspirations. He is portrayed as a hero, a worthy predecessor of the modern black radical tradition.

These portraits, however, conflict seriously with the sort of values that Delany represented in his actions and writings. His strategy was cautious and flexible and changed with time and circumstances. No doctrinaire activist, he viewed affiliations, whether political or racial, as temporary. One's political connections must depend upon strong utilitarian considerations. He believed that a party that conferred no material benefits on its adherents had no right to demand their unswerving loyalty.

As a result of this "flexibility" he sometimes found himself pitted against what others perceived as the legitimate aspirations of blacks. Paradoxically, in his ever-changing perceptions of the black struggle, and in his ambivalent responses, lay some of the realities of the black experience—instability and betrayals. His was the odyssey of a man who commenced in the forefront of the movement for black freedom and ended in the forefront of the crusade for black subordination.
PREFACE

It is certain that for years after publication of this book investigators will be finding new and original material on Martin R. Delany. He was so articulate, both with his pen and on the platform, that his work is hidden in as yet undiscovered letters, news reports and pamphlets...

Victor Ullman wrote in 1971. He was right. This dissertation derives partly from recently discovered sources, and partly from a synthesis and analysis of the older ones. I do not however claim to have captured the full essence of Delany. Information on the last seven years of his life (1878-1885) is still sketchy. It is possible that vital information remains hidden in as yet undiscovered sources. This dissertation is a contribution to the task begun by a group of scholars (V. Ullman, D. Sterling, F.J. Miller, T. Draper and C. Griffiths) over twenty years ago. Further research and discoveries in the future may enhance our understanding of the man.

Attempting to understand the personality and character of a man of such complexity, talents and erudition is a gigantic undertaking. Consequently, one must acknowledge and give due credit to the pioneering efforts of Victor Ullman and the others. They laid a strong foundation for others to build upon. They inaugurated the movement to rescue Delany from historical obscurity. They restored Delany to his rightful position in the forefront of the black movement of his time. Whatever the shortcomings in their interpretations, their works remain of immeasurable value.
in understanding Delany and his time. Were it not for them, Delany would probably still be buried beneath the aristocratic legend.

Probably the greatest intuitive insight I received came from reading Peter Walker's *Moral Choices: Memory, Desire and Imagination in Nineteenth-Century American Abolition* (1978). This work first drew my attention to the tendency among historians, in interpreting the black experience, to over-romanticize and thereby misrepresent the facts in order to suit a particular social objective. As I delved deeper into the extensive and rich field of black studies, I realized how real this problem was. It was with this insight that I approached my study of Delany. The more I read his published works in conjunction with those of his modern biographers and critics, the more I grew skeptical of the sort of conclusions and definitions I encountered. There were just too many loopholes and too much ambivalence. The more I read, the stronger the conviction in me that Delany had not been adequately represented. It was therefore the need to acquire a better understanding of him that launched me on the path of this dissertation.

I have accumulated many debts in the course of writing this. I wish to acknowledge my appreciation to the following Archives and Libraries for their help in securing some of the rare letters and pamphlets of Delany: The Boston Public Library; The Wilson Library, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; The Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Massachusetts; Amistad Research Center, Dillard University, New Orleans. Special thanks go to the staff of the following Archives and Libraries for their help and cooperation during my research visit: South
Caroliniana Research Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia; The South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia; The South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston, South Carolina; the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University, Washington, D.C.; The Library of Congress and National Archives, Washington, D.C.; The Chatham Public Library, Chatham, Ontario; The Cross Cultural Learner's Centre, London, Ontario. This dissertation could not have been completed without the efficient services of the inter-library loan department of the Weldon Library, The University of Western Ontario, London.

Certain individuals provided valuable assistance along the way and therefore deserve credit. Richard J. Wolfe, curator of rare books and manuscripts of the Harvard Medical Library, provided useful information on Delany's days at Harvard. Mike Sauer and Joan Smith of the Cross Cultural Learner's Centre were most generous in allowing me unrestrained access to their Delany files. Professors Jean Mathews, Ian Steele and George Metcalf, read versions of this work and made very useful comments and criticisms. Lawrence and Barbara McDonnell made my research stay in South Carolina most wonderful and fruitful. Their love and affection left indelible impressions on me: Larry has established for himself a reputation for deep knowledge and excellence in the highly competitive field of American history. I consider it a rare privilege to have been associated with him in however remote a form. He raised critical questions that influenced my responses to Delany. He and Barb spared their time, efforts and money in order to make my research a success. I owe a great debt to them.

My colleagues in London and Toronto - Adrian Fraser, Winston
Husbands, Nicholas Fields and Malam Femi Taiwo - read drafts of this work and made valuable suggestions. Although preoccupied with his upcoming masterpiece on peasants and farm workers, Adrian never tired of the almost daily intrusion of Delany into his life. Special thanks to Adrian for useful insights.

My greatest indebtedness is to my friend and supervisor, Craig Simpson. Simple on the surface, hard inside! He in fact first suggested Delany to me as a possible dissertation subject. His hard and sometimes destructive blows, helped transform this dissertation into what it is today. Working with Craig has been a very valuable experience and training. He revealed to me a side of him that not too many people know exists.

I also wish to thank my mother, brothers and sisters back home in Nigeria for enduring my long absence and surviving the hard times. They have been my source of inspiration and moral support. Special thanks to Alabi and Gani, pillars of the family. Without their acquiescence and support, I probably would not have done graduate work.

Finally, many thanks to Gloria and Tosin for their support.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE INVISIBLE MAN

I am an invisible man....I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fibre and liquids - and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. When they approach me they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination - indeed, everything and anything except me.

Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man

"When you place the word 'American Dream' next to Black America," June Sochen observed years ago, "you immediately create tensions. The terms mock each other." After over three centuries in the "Land of Liberty," Black Americans have yet to outgrow their marginalized status. Confined to the fringes of society, Black American counter-values and culture evolved in a world of violence and poverty. The street-corner and ghettos represented, and still represent, the distinguishing mark of this evolution. Their problems often attract only token and ineffective measures from the government. The tragedy of it all is that the Black quest for the "American Dream" has been a fond and unobtained hope since the earliest of times when their forerunners, forcibly transplanted from Africa, fought and struggled side by side with the English colonists to transform the American wilderness. The American Dream held the promise of Freedom, Liberty, Equality, responsible and responsive government and a conducive atmosphere for humanity's realization of its maximum potentiality. In other words, all those "inalienable rights" entrenched in the Declaration of Independence.
The many so-called American revolutions — the Civil War and radical Reconstruction, Populism, the Progressive movement, and the New Deal — stand as living testimonies to the betrayals of black aspirations.

The nineteenth century, perhaps more than any other epoch, witnessed the strongest and most profound black struggles. Blacks welcomed the Civil War and radical Reconstruction as providing perhaps the best socio-political and economic milieu for genuine structural changes in American society. On the contrary, however, reforms were ineffective and ephemeral. Many blacks came out of the war and Reconstruction worse than before. By the 1880s, blacks were constantly under siege, their legal and constitutional guarantees eroded in the wake of the "New South Movement." This movement laid the foundation for the post-1880 new economic order.

Modern historians agree that by 1877 — the year of the famous (or was it infamous?) "Compromise" — Southern industrialism had reached an advanced stage. As C. Vann Woodward put it:

> It was toward the end of this decade of despair that there occurred that sudden quickening of life in commerce and investment in certain areas of the South that has sometimes been taken to mark the opening of a completely new era in the region's history.

As the South developed, new avenues of investments opened to Northern industrialists. Despite lingering doubts in the North about the South's racial problem, leading advocates of the New South Movement succeeded in assuring Northerners that the least serious problem of the South was race. In fact, they deceitfully propagated the doctrine of a racially harmonious South. They popularized the notion that blacks had advanced considerably both economically and socially, and were therefore contented
with their status. This sort of propaganda, the advocates felt, would guarantee an unhindered inflow of Northern capital. This happened. The North dropped all interference in, and concerns for, Southern racial issues. Thus began an era of sectional economic co-operation. Blacks and their aspirations were sacrificed in the process. By early 1890, beginning from Mississippi, a flood of reactionary laws swept over the South drowning blacks in its course. Draconian "Jim Crow" laws kept blacks in "their place" in the North. These developments, de facto, if not de jure, defined blacks as aliens to the cherished values of the American Dream.

The belief is firmly held in some quarters among black writers that the battle for black freedom was fought and lost in the 19th century. This is largely true. The failure of the black Convention movement, perhaps the most sustained effort by blacks to realize the American Dream, and also the failure of the Civil War and reconstruction to affect fundamental changes in black fortunes, confirm this view.

Perhaps no man in the 19th century embodied and personified all that was good about, and at the same time, wrong with, the black freedom movement, than Martin Robison Delany (1812-1885). He subscribed to the American Dream, and strongly believed that blacks were as much entitled to it as whites. He believed that through hard work, thrift, the cultivation of capitalist habits and the furtherance of moral virtues, blacks would achieve it. With prominent blacks like Frederick Douglass, Henry H. Garnet, Charles L. Remond, he struggled to steer the black movement along such a course.
Born to a free mother in Charlestown, Virginia (now West Virginia), Delany belonged to the "free" black class. However, in Virginia, as in many other places, being a "free" black conferred fundamentally no privileges or blessing; for American racism recognized no social distinctions within the black community. From the beginning, therefore, Delany discovered he had to struggle, like other "free" blacks, and like the slaves, for survival. His entire life was a catalogue of this struggle. What is known of him today reinforces just one side of his personality: his nationalism and black consciousness. A scholastic tradition today considers Delany a worthy occupant of the chair: "Father of Black American Nationalism." In the estimation of this school, Delany laid the foundations for later 19th and 20th century black nationalism and Pan-Africanism. With Frederick Douglass, Delany provided the nineteenth century black movement with its primary contending ideologies. From the 1840s to the end of radical reconstruction in the late 1870s, Delany's controversial views significantly influenced the course and ultimate fate of the black movement. Therefore, a critical analysis of his career could provide some useful insights into how and why blacks lost in the crucial nineteenth century.

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

Unlike his contemporaries - Frederick Douglass, Henry Garnet, and William Lloyd Garrison - and despite his spearheading of the emigrationist movement of the nineteenth century, very little was known of Delany until the black awakening of the 1960s. According to one modern scholar, "with the exception of the stray and occasional references that have slipped
into scholarly publications, very little has been done to refurbish the portrait of Delany. Writing for the Pittsburgh Courier, almost half a century ago, the historian W.E.B. DuBois lamented: "His [i.e. Delany's] was a magnificent life, and yet how many of us have heard of him?"

Although Delany and many leading blacks of his time vigorously challenged the racist biases of their society, the New South Movement, with its emphasis on sectional harmony, deliberately undermined and under-emphasized their achievements and historical significance. In the process, it relegated them to historical oblivion. Just at the time when blacks clamoured for democratic reforms, the North, according to an authority, suddenly developed innate love and respect for Southern aristocratic values. As the heroism of the Confederate soldier assumed mythic dimensions in the North, Northern sentiments began to concede that the South was right just about everything else, including the definition of black status in society. Naturally blacks and their achievements were sacrificed to consecrate this national "meeting of minds."

By the turn of the century, the New South ideology, and emergent segregation stabilized a status quo of black subordination. Consequently, the achievements and efforts of blacks like Delany were deliberately misrepresented with a view to emphasizing their irrelevance to national historical development. William Dunning, James Ford Rhodes and Ulrich B. Phillips all reflected the aristocratic ideals in their works. Historical scholarship became a vehicle of black subordination. The Dunning and Phillipsian schools questioned the historicity of the black experience and described black contributions (if any) to national developments as fundamentally negative. In the Phillipsian world blacks
were docile, childlike, servile and contented. This "tragic conception of black history" sought a persistent and institutionalized negation of black meanings, existence and values. By defining blacks as mere creatures or objects of white actions, it aimed at thwarting their desire for self-fulfillment, and at the same time, minimized their self-esteem.  

Carter G. Woodson's New Negro History Movement emerged largely in response to the Phillipsian tradition. It sought to demonstrate that blacks had been positive factors in national development and consequently their historical experience deserved attention and credit. This revolt against the aristocratic tradition received added impetus from developments in the Third World. The militancy of the 1960s, both within the United States, and in the former European colonies in Africa accelerated the movement toward a better understanding of the black experience.

The decline of European Imperialism in Africa inspired black Americans in the search for their true past. Nationalist movements in Africa destroyed the myth of a dull, submissive and essentially negative African heritage that had been popularized in America. The search for a new past, therefore, involved reconstructing one that had been misrepresented and maligned. It also meant the rehabilitation of the careers and contributions of notable black leaders whose achievements could serve as sources of inspiration to the rising generation. A significant pitfall of this Positivist tradition of black historiography has been the temptation to define almost every vocal black leader as an embodiment of progressive ideals. Delany certainly is a perfect example.

He was one of the key forgotten figures buried beneath the debris
of the aristocratic legend. His obscurity, however, was not due solely to the legend. Modern critics and even his contemporaries agree that his obscurity was also the result of his extreme race consciousness and ambiguity. One biographer found a key to Delany's obscurity in the very complexity of his personality. According to this authority, Delany "simply cannot be classified with either the 'good guys' or the 'bad guys'." One contemporary observed that Delany "was too intensely African to be popular, and thereby multiplied enemies where he could have multiplied friends...," and that because his love for his race far outweighed that he had for humanity, Delany's popularity and influence suffered. Douglass once remarked that he thanked God for making him a man simply, but Delany always thanked him for making him a BLACK man.

Whatever his associates thought or said about him, there was just one thing that mattered most for Delany: his unadulterated blackness. He acquired the reputation of a celebrant of blackness. In fact, his close friends believed that the only person to excite his envy would be one blacker than himself. The experience of growing up under the shadow of slavery reinforced his racial sensitivity. Though "free," his extreme blackness made him a first-class candidate for any and all discriminatory policies aimed at blacks. He could never mistakenly pass for a white as some of his friends could.

As he felt the pinch of American racism in the 1840s and '50s, Delany began to be impressed with the negative side of his unadulterated and extreme blackness. Frustrated, his racial sensitivity increased. But there was a positive side to his jet-like features. A pure blackman, with his level of intelligence and social and intellectual achievements,
represented a threatening indictment of the American system. He began to visualize himself, and in fact, his contemporaries also saw him as the quintessence of blackness. But he soon pushed his black consciousness to the absurd extremity of defining all and every societal problems in strictly racial terms. Addressing a crowded meeting in Rochester, New York, in 1862, he emphatically stated that his "concern was for the pure black, uncorrupted by caucasian blood." This became his obsession from the 1850s when he assumed leadership of the Emigrationist movement.

As he gravitated toward this extreme position, however, his advocacy of racial distinctiveness and emigration appeared too narrow and often-time self-centred. He gradually lost touch with black realities and became increasingly unpopular to a generation that once praised him.

Two crucial components in Delany's character were his complexion and a consciousness of his aristocratic heritage. His grandparents hailed from royal lineages in Africa. But there was also a religious and moral side to his upbringing. His mother was a most exemplary Christian, active and energetic. In both his youth and adulthood, Delany abstained from liquor and tobacco. In the early 1830s, he moved to Pittsburgh and met some of the most conservative crusaders in the annals of black history.

Delany's own writings and public pronouncements remain the most significant starting point in analyzing him. In these materials he betrayed a marked inconsistency and ambiguity with respect to the black struggle. His *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* (1850), and *The Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent* (1854) were two of the seminal
publications of the emigrationist and nationalist movement of the 19th century. In them, he advocated emigration as a solution to the black problem. In The Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploration Party (1861), he reported on his scientific trip to Africa. His Blake, or the Huts of America (1859) is acclaimed by modern critics as a revolutionary novel. These publications provide useful insights into the REAL Delany.

Frederick Douglass and John Brown both felt disappointed at what they perceived as Delany's unrealistic and sometimes cowardly responses to black problems. Delany helped organize the John Brown 1858 Chatham Constitutional convention that led directly to the Harper's Ferry attack. But he was conspicuously absent in the actual attack. This and many other ambiguities in his public life led many of his contemporaries to question his professed commitment to black freedom.

Delany's conservatism, complexity and ambiguities are conspicuously missing in modern biographical and critical responses to his career. On the contrary, modern scholars emphasize his emigrationism, nationalism, and supposedly radical orientation. They present us with the picture of a consistently radical crusader for black freedom. Portions of his writings are carefully selected to mirror this radical image. Those portions that betray ambiguities and conservatism are either carefully avoided, or if confronted at all, are handled in a manner emphasizing their superficiality and remoteness.

Delany's own authorized biographer, Frances (Frank) Rollin, set the stage for the theme of radicalism. According to her, Delany "confirmed to no conservatism for interest's sake, nor compromises for the sake of
party or expediency. His sentiment was of the most uncompromising radicalism. Throughout the book, we confront just one picture of Delany: the resolute and consistently radical fighter in the forefront of the black struggle. Rollin's book did not go beyond the Freedman's Bureau phase; had it, it would have been interesting to see how she would have handled the various crises that characterized his post-bellum career.

No major works on Delany, with the exception of his authorized biography, were published during his lifetime. But numerous, sometimes detailed references to him appeared in many newspapers and books of the time. It was not until the late 1960s and the early 1970s that lengthy articles and books dealing with specific aspects of his career began to surface. Theodore Draper's article, "The Fantasy of Black Nationalism" (1969), and his followup, "The Father of Black Nationalism" (1970) seemed to have pioneered the movement to rescue Delany from historical oblivion. Draper emphasized the nationalistic ideas of Delany, whom he defined as the ideological father of black nationalism.

Other scholars have reacted sharply to Draper's claim. Floyd J. Miller, for example, advanced Rev. Lewis Woodson of Pittsburgh (Delany's teacher) as a worthier contender for the title of "father of black nationalism." He developed this further in his doctoral dissertation, and subsequently published book. Here Miller described in detail Delany's ideological indebtedness to Rev. Woodson. He also acknowledged Delany's leading role in the nineteenth century emigrationist and nationalist movements.

the ideological inspiration for modern Pan-Africanist thoughts to the African themes and projects in Delany's works.25

Sterling Stuckey also emphasized Delany's nationalism. He argued however, that Africanist and nationalist consciousness developed at least two decades before Delany came into prominence. Delany's uniqueness, he claimed, lay in the fact that before his emergence "no recognized IDEOLOGIST of black nationalism had placed as much emphasis as he on the need for black people to have land to set aside for purpose of establishing their own nation outside the boundaries of America."26

Numerous other articles and books on black nationalism have assigned a place of prominence to Delany. In fact, it is almost inconceivable for any new book on black nationalism, or one dealing with the careers of such more recent nationalists as Henry M. Turner and Marcus Garvey, not to acknowledge Delany's pioneering efforts.27 On balance, therefore, we know more about Delany's nationalism today than we do of any other phases of his career. This is not surprising considering that the decade of the 1960s, when critical responses to Delany began, has gone down in history as the apogee of African nationalism. The emigrationist and nationalist emphasis of modern scholars is, therefore, a product of the vigorously Pan-Africanist orientation that Black American Liberation politics assumed in the 1960s. The emphasis on emigration and nationalism has, however, tended to obscure the other, and perhaps more significant side of Delany's integrationism. As Theodore Draper acknowledged, emigrationism occupied a relatively small part of Delany's career.28

For most of his life, Delany was much more preoccupied with black
integration in America. According to Draper,

the consistently emigrationist portion of his life filled only about ten years. After 1861 he went further and further away from the cause to which he owes his fame, and for almost a quarter of a century he represented reconciliation far more than emigration. His entire life was filled with contradictions and dualities.29

He further suggested that Delany's nationalism was, at the very best, fragile. It was more an expression of negative reaction to conditions in the United States than a positive identification with any external territory in Africa or elsewhere.30 This view is corroborated by Wilson J. Moses's revisionist assessment of black nationalism, which he described as fundamentally Anglo-Saxon in orientation. Whatever love the black activist might profess for Africa, Moses insists, his mind and soul remained rooted in the Anglo-Saxon world.31

Another reason that partly explains the strong emphasis on Delany's nationalism is the fact that it is perhaps easier to sustain the aura of consistent radicalism that is built around him by simply looking at his emigrationist and nationalist ideas. To focus on his integrationism is to confront his ambiguities. Little wonder that few scholars have risked ventures into this area.

Victor Ullman's and Dorothy Sterling's books are about the best available attempts to capture the full complexities of Delany's life and personality.32 Published in 1971, both books were the results of years of extensive research and travels. Both deal with Delany's entire career. Yet neither author attempted to come to grips with his complexities.
Instead they portray Delany as a personality with a marked consistency of purpose. Ullman's is the most analytical from a historian's perspective. But the usefulness and credibility of this pioneering work are unfortunately undermined by Ullman's failure to give the sources of his materials. Nevertheless, the book remains the best available modern biography of Delany. In it we confront Delany, the radical and uncompromising crusader against what Ullman termed "American Apartheid." Throughout, Ullman portrays a man who had to fight not only against the slave system, but also against the "Uncle Tomism" of his colleagues. In Delany's makeup, Ullman insists, "there was no compromise with whites." The modern black militants, according to Ullman, were the ideological descendants of Delany.

Ullman characterizes Frederick Douglass as a compromiser, an Uncle Tom, and therefore, the perfect antithesis of Delany. Ullman confronts two of the major instances in Delany's career when he markedly deviated from the path of radicalism, and sought instead escapist or compromise solutions. Rather than critically addressing these, Ullman simply attempts to excuse them by either uncritically accepting Delany's own unsatisfactory explanations, or by providing rationalizations of his own. These two instances were Delany's betrayal of John Brown (1858), and his subversion of black efforts in the South Carolina election of 1876. Those events, together with an analysis of his relationship with Douglass, and his general orientation to black problems in the 1850s, and in the 1860s and '70s in South Carolina, provide an adequate framework for assessing Delany's radicalism and commitment to black freedom.

Vincent Harding's There is a River: The Black Struggle For Freedom in America, and The Other American Revolution, both deal extensively
with Delany. Harding, a leading exponent of the black movement, strongly believes in the instrumentalist conception of black history. His works fall within the intellectual tradition of using history to effect social change. In these works, he presents black historical development in the most positive light. The central theme in his analysis is black radicalism, with Delany as its principal embodiment. Harding regretfully acknowledges that Delany's post-bellum career deviated from his radical goal of "the indisputable right of self-government for black people," and that, as a government functionary in South Carolina, he allowed himself to be pitted against the revolutionary and legitimate demands of blacks. Nevertheless, Harding places Delany in direct line of succession from Nat Turner and David Walker.

Harold Cruse in his *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual*, strongly condemns modern black intellectuals for their integrationist aspirations. They failed to recognize that the only positive approach was racial solidarity and distinctiveness, and also cultural nationalism. He blamed black leaders for rejecting Delany's brand of nationalism and racial solidarity. Had they done so, the present racial problems in the United States would have been undermined. Whether this is true or not is debatable, but in Cruse's estimation, Delany presented the most appropriately radical alternative to what he regards as the conciliatory approaches of the integrationists.

Jessie Fauset presents Delany's career as a success story. In the piece "Rank Imposes Obligations" we confront a man of courage and pride, propelled by a deep sense of mission, and a total commitment to the cause
of black freedom.

More recently, Róbert Khan in his "The Political Ideology of Martin Delany" (June 1984) argues that Delany's abandonment of emigration in the 1860s was consistent with his earlier political ideas. "Without sounding like an apologist for inconsistency," he wrote, "One can argue that Delany's earlier principles are compatible with his later life as political activist. Khan based his conclusions on two of Delany's publications: *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* (1852) and *The Political Destiny of the Colored Race* (1854). Though significant, these works do not adequately represent Delany's ideas. To reconstruct his ideas, one must read these in conjunction with his numerous articles, letters and public lectures. Because of its narrow perspective, Khan's study failed to capture the complexity of Delany's political ideology.

Significantly, a few critics have seriously questioned Delany's role in the black movement. One such and perhaps the most forceful is Bill McAdoo. In a landmark review, he described Delany as a reactionary nationalist whose ideas tended to retard and subvert black efforts. He called Delany the chief spokesman of "the dominant form of reactionary black nationalism": black Zionism. Black Zionists, he argued, did not believe that slavery could be overthrown in the U.S. Consequently, they advocated emigration to Africa. They had no faith in the revolutionary potentiality of the black masses. On the contrary, they adopted a very negative and condescending attitude toward the slaves. Their program, according to McAdoo, offered no benefits to the almost 90% enslaved blacks. On the contrary, their emigrationist program sought to
abandon the enslaved, thus making America safer for slavery. 43

Opposed to black Zionists, however, was revolutionary black nationalism, which, McAdoo argued "demanded the national consolidation of the oppressed black masses into a revolutionary army of Liberation." In McAdoo's estimation, Henry H. Garnet's Address...1843 embodied the basic tenets of revolutionary black nationalism. 44

Because McAdoo's interpretation significantly deviated from, and challenged, the traditional definition of Delany, it remained unpopular. It was as if he never wrote that review. Few scholars have seriously addressed the issues he raised. But Delany's ideas and activities, paradoxically, tend to corroborate McAdoo's thesis.

The inability of Delany's modern biographers and critics to acknowledge, and come to terms with the ambiguities of his career stems partly from a faulty methodology. It is almost impossible to balance their portrait of a radical with obvious instances of compromises, conservatism, and sometimes, sabotage of black aspirations. They approached Delany with a priori assumption that he had to be radical. Consequently, any evidence in negation of this radical conception becomes a difficult puzzle, and is more often than not jettisoned. Thus Delany represents the perfect Ellisonian Invisible Man.

He was the invisible man of the black experience in America. His invisibility, however, was twofold. First, he did not begin to receive his due recognition and respect until the late 1960s and early '70s. This he shared with most other blacks. Secondly, and perhaps more
importantly, he represents the Ellisonian model. Even when he began to attract attention, he remained largely misunderstood and misrepresented. When modern critics looked back at him, they saw every other thing around him but himself. His real personality evaded them. More often than not, what they saw was a figment of their own imagination.

What seems obvious is that because Delany's reconstruction is associated with the militant phase of the 1960s, and also in the instrumentalist orientation of modern black history, interpretations of him are largely colored by the radical predisposition of his biographers and critics, and also influenced by the use to which they hope to put such history.

Peter Walker discovered a similar tendency in the biographical sketches of Frederick Douglass by Phillip S. Foner and Benjamin Quarles. Both authors, according to Walker, in different ways, built a consistent personality for Douglass. They did this by avoiding the contradictions that characterize Douglass's career. Had they confronted these contradictions, Walker believed, it "would have resulted in the creation of an inconsistent Douglass that would take the edge off the social problem (they) advance through the device of biography." This tendency to "resolve the problem of human unruliness by avoiding it" is a significant feature of modern biographical methodology. Walker further emphasizes that behind this faulty methodology lay a biased selection, arrangement and interpretation of data.

Using the same faulty methodology, Delany's biographers succeeded in creating a consistent personality, with well-defined goals and
strategy. Biased handling of data, however, is not the only problem associated with modern historiography of Delany. Much of the characterization of him is also the product of a fundamentally "isolated" perspective of analysis. He has not been adequately appraised within the larger context of the entire black community of his time. How did he relate to this community? How popular or otherwise were his views, and how representative were they of the community at large? There is a dire need to go beyond the mere redemption of Delany. My approach will critically question his ideas and motivations within the context of the dominant social, cultural and ideological trends of his time. This will facilitate a better appreciation and understanding of the ambivalent and fundamentally conservative components of Delany's thought as reflected especially in his writings during the 1850s, and also in his actions during Reconstruction. Such an analysis, that attempts to grapple with what Peter Walker aptly termed "human unruliness," is conspicuously missing in the biographical sketches of Ullman, Sterling and others.\textsuperscript{48}

This dissertation will not only attempt to capture the complexities of Delany's public career, but also come to grips with them. Very little is known of his private life, since there are no extant sources on this. This was probably the result of the loss of a large collection of Delany's personal documents resulting from the burning of Wilberforce College in 1866. His personal library on the third floor was completely destroyed.\textsuperscript{49} Much that is presently known about his private life derives from his authorized biography. Consequently, this dissertation will utilize mainly materials bearing on his public career. Fortunately, these are legion.
Unravelling the mysteries of human motivation, in many circumstances, is perhaps one of the most difficult and intriguing of problems. Fortunately, Delany did not belong to that ambiguous and mysterious "silent majority." He was an extrovert. He wrote prolifically and published and lectured widely. His ideas touched the hearts of many, black and white; and in the process, he made friends and enemies. In his public speeches, writings and publications, he left behind a rich legacy which contained significant clues to the motivations for his actions.

A critical analysis of this legacy within the context of the ideological trends of the nineteenth century will establish that Delany was not radical. That he did not belong to the black radical tradition. That he was accommodationist and conservative, and consequently, for the greater part of his life, found himself at odds with the black radical movement. This dissertation will also attempt to establish that some of his inconsistencies, especially his rapprochement with the South Carolina conservatives in 1874 and 1878, were in fact logical results of his ideas and should have been anticipated.

The failure of black reconstruction in the Palmetto state remains an intriguing issue among historians. The story of why blacks failed to convert their numerical superiority into a concrete political power base is still incomplete. Undoubtedly, Ku Klux Klan violence and Southern intransigence played key roles in undermining black political power. However, some historians also blame the rather limited and narrow perspective of federal policy. The federal government, according to this
school, failed to recognize what Kenneth Stampp called "the sociology of freedom," that is, the fragile nature of political rights when not built on a solid economic foundation. More recently, attention has rightly shifted to the morphology of the black community. To what extent were blacks themselves responsible for the ephemeral nature of their political power? Examining the black community, structurally, some historians discern divergence in interests and aspirations (or class conflict in Marxian terms) between the elite leadership of the black movement and the masses. Consequently, the demands made upon the establishment by the elite did not necessarily reflect the needs of the masses. Some also blame the existence of structural conflict within the elite leadership — a product of conflicting social and economic backgrounds. One class, however, remains a mystery: the black Democrats/conservatives.

What role did these play in undermining black reconstruction? Most historians of reconstruction, in one form or another, acknowledge their existence. Yet relatively little is known about them. Delany's political activities from 1870 on, put him in consciousness, if not in name, in the camp of the state conservatives. He was perhaps the most important black conservative in the entire state. He propagated ideas that significantly undermined public confidence in black political power, and, in the process, helped ensure its overthrow in 1876.

This study will demonstrate that the internal conflict within the black community was much more complex than hitherto assumed. It was not just a conflict over means and ends; but also over whether blacks should have been given political power at all. Paradoxically, there were blacks who questioned the legitimacy of black political power and
advocated instead a restoration of white rule. Prominent among these was Martin Delany.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER ONE


2. The question of whether there was a compromise in 1877 is a subject of controversy among historians. C. Vann Woodward in his classic book Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction (Boston, 1951) argued that Republicans and Southern Democrats, drawn together by a common economic interest, worked out a compromise in 1877 which officially marked the end of Reconstruction. This view did not go unchallenged. Allan Peskin argued that since the major components of the "compromise" were never fulfilled, it is incorrect to call it a compromise. As he put it "A deal whose major terms are never carried out appears suspiciously like no deal at all." See his "Was There A Compromise of 1877?" Journal of American History, Vol. 60, 1, June 1973, p. 65. Woodward countered, however, by insisting that there really was a compromise. The South got home rule with the withdrawal of federal troops. "Yes, there was a compromise of 1877," ibid.


4. C. Vann Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974). However, the nature and extent of discrimination before the 1890s is a controversial issue among historians. In this study, Woodward argues that the 1870s and 1880s were noted for flexibility in race relations, that public facilities in some parts of the South were integrated and that not until the two decades after 1890 did racial lines become rigidly enforced. The most outspoken critic of this view is Joel Williamson. In his After Slavery: The Negro in South Carolina During Reconstruction, 1861-1877 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), he argues that the segregation of nearly all facilities was widespread from the onset of reconstruction and that exceptions were too insignificant to matter. In his estimation, the Jim Crow legislation of the late 19th and early 20th centuries merely codified a system of customs and attitudes that had always existed in the South. He made precisely the same argument in his "Introduction" to The Origins of Segregation (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Co., 1968) which he edited. Most historians seem to agree with Woodward that there was a definite hardening of racial lines after 1890; but, at the same time, it remains true that integrated social relations and facilities were the exception rather than the rule before 1890. Woodward has, however, modified his position and suggested new ways of looking at this significant subject in his "The Strange Career of a Historical Controversy," American Counterpoint (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971). The
truth seems to lie between the two extreme positions of Woodward and Williamson. In his most recent work, Williamson reveals the very depths of white sadism, violence and racial chauvinism which by the turn of the century steadily disengaged blacks from the mainstream of Southern society. The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation (London: Oxford University Press, 1984).... Idus Newby also deals extensively with the forces and processes of marginalization of blacks in post-reconstruction South Carolina. Black Carolinians: A History of Blacks in South Carolina From 1895 to 1968 (Columbia: Univ. of South Carolina Press, 1973). All these seem to suggest some fundamental turn in race relations in the 1890s.


10. All these historians treat the black presence in America as insignificant, and blacks as mere passive objects. Addressing the American Historical Association in 1929, Phillips claimed that the central theme of Southern history has been the white man's determination to maintain a biracial society. Southernism, he maintained, arose from "a common resolve indomitably maintained" that the South "shall be and remain a white man's country." See his The Course of The South to Secession (New York: Appleton-Century, 1939), p. 152.


Blassingame, Lerone Bennett Jr., Leon F. Litwack, Eugene Genovese and Herbert Gutman, to mention a few.

13. The myth of a progressive past, Louis Harlan rightly observed, is a significant feature of modern historiography of the black experience. Interpretations of the black past tend to overemphasize the theme of progress at the expense of the far more realistic one of failures and betrayals. Though this is true to a large extent, it is significant to remember that it developed in reaction to the traditionally racist historical scholarship, which treated blacks as invisible, passive and negative objects in the American historical development. See Louis R. Harlan, "Tell It Like It Was: Suggestions on Black History" in James C. Curtis and Lewis L. Gould (eds.), The Black Experience in America: Selected Essays (Austin: The Univ. of Texas Press, 1978), pp. 172-185.


17. Ibid., p. 22.


21. This will be the subject of Chapters Four and Five.

22. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 23. Frank A. Rollin was the pen name of Frances Rollin. Originally from Santo Domingo, Frances was one of five sisters prominent in the South Carolina black society. She taught at a Freedmen's Bureau school in Beaufort. Delany had helped her file complaints against the captain of the Pilot Boy, a steamer that ran from Charleston to the Sea Islands. In violation of an order against discrimination on railroads and steamboats, the captain had refused her first-class ticket. Through Delany's help, Frances filed a complaint and the captain was fined $250. Delany became a hero to Frances. When later she confided in him that her


29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.


32. V. Ullman, op. cit. Dorothy Sterling, op. cit.

33. V. Ullman, ibid., p. 516.
34. Ibid. D. Sterling emphasizes the same themes with Ullman. In fact, there really isn't any fundamental difference in their interpretations of Delany. Both works are complimentary, and resulted from the joint efforts of the Delany aficionados of the late 1960s and early '70s — Victor Ullman, D. Sterling, Floyd J. Miller and Cyril Griffith.


36. There is a River, ibid., pp. 149-150.

37. Ibid., p. 321. Despite immense evidence to the contrary, Harding insistently defines Delany as belonging to the same tradition as Nat Turner. He also interprets his major works as revolutionary documents.


42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., pp. 44-50. Garnet's Address... is no longer universally acclaimed a revolutionary document. Harry Reed claimed that "the most militant assertions of Garnet were quickly followed by disclaimers of the expediency of an armed revolt." According to Reed, Garnet's intentions were misconceived and misrepresented. Harry A. Reed, "Henry Highland Garnet's Address to the Slaves of the United States of America Reconsidered," in The Western Journal of Black Studies, Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1982, pp. 186-192.


47. Ibid., p. 222.

48. Ibid.

49. F. Rollin, op. cit.


52. Thomas Holt, ibid.
CHAPTER TWO
1830s-1846: HOPE AND FRUSTRATION

The reality of Jeffersonian Virginia was harsh and bitter for blacks. Structurally, it was a potentially explosive world that pitted the leisure, affluence, and elegance of the aristocratic slavocrats against the dull, poverty-stricken and dehumanizing modes of black existence. From the very beginning, therefore, Delany encountered a hostile world. He acquired first-hand knowledge of the slave system through the experience of his slave father, Samuel. His grandparents, too, were slaves. His maternal grandparents, Shango and his wife Graci, captured in Africa, were transported across the Atlantic and finally sold to a planter near Richmond, Virginia. In Africa, Shango had been a prince and had probably looked forward to the day he would become chief. Enslavement, however, sealed this ambition.1

While in bondage, Shango and Graci learned English and became devout Christians. They soon won their freedom. How this happened, however, remains unclear. After freedom, both moved to Norfolk, a seaport city, hoping to find their way to Africa. The dream of one day returning to Africa survived their years of bondage. The realization, however, seemed almost impossible since they lacked the necessary financial wherewithal to pay their way. Consequently, Shango took a job as a shipboy on a vessel heading for the West Indies. He calculated that it was easier to get to Africa from there. Once in Africa, he would easily raise money to come back and collect Graci and their little daughter, Pati. Thus he departed. They never saw him again.2
Because Pati had been born to free parents, Virginian law recognized her free status. She grew up in a world of crisis. She was only seven when Patrick Henry made his famous "Give me liberty or give me death" speech in Richmond. Soon the colonies revolted against Britain. Through the revolutionary years, mother and daughter struggled to survive. It was a very difficult time for blacks. But it was also an optimistic age for those who sought freedom in the revolutionary crisis.

Disturbed already by the disappearance of Shango, and burdened with the responsibility of raising a daughter, the instability of the revolutionary period increased Graci's hardship. She took solace, however, in the revolutionary promises of freedom and equality. The end of war, however, brought little change in black reality. Taking her daughter, Graci left for Charlestown where Pati met Samuel Delany; who later became her husband. His parents, too, had been slaves. His father had been a village chief in Africa before captivity and enslavement. His Scotch-Irish master then bestowed the name Delany upon him. When Pati met Samuel, he was still a slave. His master however allowed him to hire his time out, and thus he was able to earn money with which he hoped to purchase his freedom. Samuel and Pati soon got married and had seven children. The youngest was Martin, born May 6, 1812.

Charlestown, situated in the valley of the Shenandoah River, held fewer than a thousand inhabitants when Martin was born. They were simple folks: blacksmiths, saddlers, wagoners, shoemakers and fishermen. Pati worked as a seamstress, and all the children, except young Martin, worked to sustain the family. Grandma Graci was too old to work. Samuel was still a slave.
Being the youngest, Martin was Graci's favorite. They spent a lot of time together. Martin may have acquired his first knowledge of Africa from Graci. She presumably passed on to him information about his royal ancestry. Martin very likely also received his first understanding of the slave system from his grandmother. His father's incarceration for resisting violence from his master further impressed upon Martin what it meant to be black.

Martin's boyhood companions were the white children of the neighborhood. As he grew up, however, he noticed fundamental differences in societal responses toward white and black children. Gradually, he withdrew into himself and developed a critical stance toward society. He could not comprehend why blacks were treated differently. As he wondered about this, his thirst for knowledge increased. His greatest shock, however, occurred when he attempted to "help himself" to the Virginian educational system. He accompanied his white playmates to school one day only to be refused admission by the teacher. Undeterred, Martin spent the next few days outside the window from where he listened to the teacher's instructions.  

His chance finally came with the arrival of the itinerant peddler. Among the items that Jonathan Dwight of Connecticut gave the Delanys, was a copy of the New York Primer and Spelling Book. Since it was a crime under Virginia law for blacks to read or write, the Delanys kept their treasured acquisition a secret and held only nocturnal study sessions. Very soon every member of the family had gained literacy. Rumors soon spread, however, that the Delanys had violated the law against black education. Prosecution seemed imminent. On September 22,
Pati escaped with her children to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Samuel joined them a few years later after he had completed his prison term and purchased his freedom.\(^7\)

Chambersburg was little better than Charlestown. Despite a more permissive atmosphere, racism persisted there. Martin attended the African Church on Sundays and went to school with white children on weekdays. They had lessons on the history and geography of Africa, among other subjects. Initially delighted to learn more about his ancestral homeland, Martin's enthusiasm soon declined as he observed that almost everything about Africa revolved around the themes of barbarism, ignorance and heathenism. His imagination and interest fired, he read Jefferson's Notes on The State of Virginia. The same themes persisted. Could these be true? His thirst for knowledge increased.\(^8\)

Pursuing a high school education in Chambersburg was, however, problematic since it was expensive and exclusively for whites. On July 29th, 1831, therefore, Martin bade goodbye to his parents and set out on the one hundred and fifty mile journey to Pittsburgh in search of higher education.\(^9\)

At nineteen when he made the momentous decision to leave home Martin had matured physically. He was of medium height, compactly and strongly built, with broad shoulders. Everything about him, but especially his sharp and piercing eyes, suggested energy and determination.\(^10\) He possessed a conspicuously imposing physique, and seemed to have retained this throughout his life. After their first encounter, the abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison described Martin as "black as jet, and a fine
fellow of great energy and spirit." Another contemporary described him as "fine looking, broad-chested, full of life and energy, shining like black Italian marble."12

Though born into a violent, insecure and unstable world, Martin received a fundamentally conservative upbringing. A strong tradition of religious orthodoxy and moral purity passed from Shango and Graci to Pati. Pati was "a most exemplary Christian" and she seemed to have passed on to young Martin that same religious and moral tradition.13 In early youth, he "espoused total abstinence" and throughout his life avoided liquors and tobacco.14 One of his major preoccupations in life was the furtherance of moral virtue and temperance among blacks. When Martin entered Pittsburgh in the 1830s, therefore, he came with strong religious and ethical values. These values, however, would receive additional reinforcement from the equally conservative ideas of his teachers and associates in Pittsburgh.

He encountered there a black community excited and agitated by Nat Turner's abortive insurrection in Southampton, Virginia. Though it failed, the episode itself took on mythic proportions in the black community. Martin immersed himself in the excitement. Recalling the humiliating experience of his background, Martin, according to a reliable source "consecrated himself to freedom, and registered his vow against the enemies of his race."15

His experience in Pennsylvania was central to his ideological development. He came in contact with blacks from diverse backgrounds who nevertheless shared a common determination to further the cause of black
freedom. The intelligent and articulate among them constituted the vanguard of the black movement. Since their ideas significantly shaped Martin's outlook, it is necessary to examine in more detail the society's dynamics — personalities, ideas and events.

BLACK PENNSYLVANIA IN THE 1830s: SOCIETY AND PERSONALITIES

The hundred and fifty mile journey through the Allegheny Turnpike to Pittsburgh was a catalogue of hardship and endurance. Most times Martin [hereafter referred to as Delany] travelled on foot. On a few occasions, however, he got rides in the stage coaches. Though he had recently lived in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania remained a strange land, and as he passed through the state with its unaccustomed scenery and unfamiliar faces, he probably felt lonely and powerless. But in another twenty years practically everyone in the state would have heard his name. His abiding sense of responsibility would have secured for him a strong reputation as a dedicated crusader for black freedom. To those who chanced to meet him in the course of his journey, he must have appeared no different from the other young blacks who drifted along the same route. But he differed from most of them, for, as a descendant of a royal lineage, he represented the offspring of an elite that once ruled a portion of the African continent. This aristocratic consciousness strongly informed his perception of black reality. He geared his efforts and achievements toward making himself as much a part of the American elite as possible.

In the 1830s, Pennsylvania represented a "Mecca" for black Americans. Migrants streamed into it from all over the country. Its long tradition
of liberalism constituted a strong pull mechanism. According to W.E.B. DuBois, immigrants made up almost 50% of the black population of Philadelphia. In fact, the leading men in the black struggle in the entire state had almost all immigrated from other Northern and Southern states. 16 Their goal was to make Pennsylvania a model state. Many were imbued with a deep sense of responsibility, and, like blacks elsewhere, realized that the ultimate fate of the enslaved depended very much on how "free" slaves utilized their freedom. They were therefore determined that the liberal tradition of Pennsylvania, albeit on the decline, should constitute the foundation for effecting real freedom.

The earliest abolitionist movement had begun in Pennsylvania. Also, the first efforts at the gradual emancipation of slaves started there in 1780. As a recent historian observed, "the pre-eminence of Philadelphia in the abolitionist movement together with the city's central location made it a natural meeting place for national organizations." 17 Another pull mechanism was the tradition of self-help and mutual aid activities that characterized the community of black Pennsylvania going back to the mid-eighteenth century. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, several temperance and self-help societies had emerged in Philadelphia alone. 18

A declining white liberal tradition, and expanding self-help and mutual aid activities among blacks happened against the backdrop of increasing violence. Although the visiting Englishman, Thomas Hamilton observed that almost everything in Philadelphia "seemed influenced by a spirit of quietism," native Philadelphians, however, emphasized more the turbulence and outrages of the age. 19
The geographical proximity of the state to a key slave-holding state, Virginia, made it all the more significant. Frederick Douglass spoke for many when he observed that the numerical strength and the great proximity of Pennsylvania blacks to slavery, gave them a mighty lever of influence in the question of black freedom. Make the colored people of Philadelphia what they ought to be; and there is no power in the land which can long oppress and degrade us. 

In the 1830s and '40s blacks in Pennsylvania adopted two approaches in their quest for freedom. First, they gave high priority to the economic, educational and moral development of the black community. This was the internal reform movement based on the assumption that American racism was largely a product of the moral, economic and educational decadence of blacks, and that the walls of racism would come crumbling down as blacks reformed themselves. Largely political, the second approach involved the petitioning of state legislatures for citizenship rights and the franchise. Since "free" blacks everywhere confronted similar problems, they adopted these same strategies. Though in the colonial period many blacks acquired the franchise, such rights were abrogated when the various state constitutions were written.

By the third decade of the nineteenth century life for "free" blacks was little better than slavery. Because their presence threatened the existence of slavery, pro-slavery forces mounted a severe counter-offensive. The leading institution in this offensive was the American Colonization Society, established in 1816 by slave-owners and their sympathizers. It advocated the colonization of blacks in Africa, on the ground that their economic and moral decadence rendered them unfit for
It was obvious therefore that blacks were alien to the benefits of Jacksonian America. For them, the age of the common man meant poverty, legal and physical violence, and a denial of citizenship. This however only strengthened the determination of many of them to fight on. To counter the colonization offensive, they attempted a common front through the convention movement.

The practice of holding meetings for concerted efforts, though an old tradition among blacks, did not acquire the regularity of a movement until the 1830s. This regularity developed partly in response to the colonization movement, partly in recognition of the need to counter intensified anti-black violence, and perhaps more importantly in response to the rise of immediatism within the abolitionist movement.

Five such colored national conventions took place between 1831 and 1835. In all, blacks vehemently condemned colonization and demanded citizenship and political rights. They also advocated social, economic and moral reforms within the black community. Theirs was an integrative vision. Their efforts, however, did not attract any fundamental concessions from the government. This notwithstanding, the convention movement remained perhaps the most effective avenue of black protest at this time.

Though Delany's arrival in Pittsburgh coincided with this momentous upsurge of the black community, there is no indication that he participated in any of the five conventions. It took some time before he
actively involved himself in the social and political ferment of the time. However, the society of those who did influenced and shaped his outlook.25

Modern critics tend to over-emphasize the impact of Rev. Lewis Woodson on Delany. Woodson was not the only acquaintance Delany made, neither was he the single source of his ideological development, nor in fact, was emigration his only legacy to Delany.26

John Vashon was the first black Delany met in Pittsburgh. Delany lived in his house, sharing a room with his son, George. A mulatto, originally from Virginia, Vashon was a dedicated Garrisonian and served as Pittsburgh agent of the Liberator. His lucrative barber business and ownership of the city baths made him one of the most economically successful blacks.27 While with the Vashons, Delany met Lewis Woodson, a fugitive from Virginia. Both Woodson and Vashon participated actively in the anti-slavery movement. The Vashons' home served as a nerve-center. Though an immigrant, Woodson succeeded economically, owning several barber shops. He soon combined with another black, "Daddy" Ben Richards, a wealthy butcher and real estate agent, to establish the school of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. This was the only institution accessible to blacks. He also wrote prolifically in the columns of The Colored American. Published in New York, The Colored American was one of the leading anti-slavery newspapers of the time. It provided one of the few outlets for the ideas of leading blacks.28

Woodson published on a wide range of issues: moral reform, economic elevation, Christian virtue, education and non-violence. Because he
believed that the problems confronting blacks were largely the result of
their degraded moral and economic conditions, he strongly endorsed the
internal reform initiatives. Racism, he felt, would diminish as blacks
improved their condition. He also advocated the furtherance of "useful
knowledge" through the schools, churches and newspapers. He called
for a general convention that would adopt policies capable of bringing
"the greatest amount of good for the greatest number." His idea of a
convention however was elitist. Only men of lawful character and a rea-
sonable pecuniary condition could attend.

Because he strongly believed that Jacksonian America was funda-
mentally an open society, he urged blacks to cultivate moral virtues and
business skills as prerequisites for acceptance and integration. In his
opinion, the low level of business initiatives was significantly respon-
sible for black under-development. Separatism was only justifiable
where prejudices proved insurmountable. Since "his experience" convinced
him that a good man of moral virtue could live under bad laws, he urged
blacks to fight racism through moral reforms. Any man of moral purity,
he argued, would escape the worst excesses of racism. Condition, he
argued, not color was the chief cause of prejudice.

He however left some room for emigration. He acknowledged that
racism could be more rampant and vicious in some places. Blacks in such
areas should simply emigrate to the "West" which he defined as Ohio,
Indiana, Illinois and Pennsylvania, where, he argued, great potentialities
existed. Writing under the pseudonym "Augustine" Woodson described
his "West" as the promised land, if only blacks developed two significant
qualities: high moral virtue and business skill. He had high praise
for what he termed the "non-discriminatory" policy of banks in the "West". Failure to secure a loan by any black usually resulted from deficient business skills and not racism, he argued. 37

Should blacks, however, confront the dilemma of choosing between violence and emigration, Woodson would support the latter cause. In a series titled "Death vs. Expatriation" he maintained that it was divine to seek escape from life-threatening situations. Non-violence was godly. After all, he argued, Christ ordered his disciples to flee from any persecuting situations. 38 Emigration, therefore, from life-endangering conditions becomes a mandate from heaven. To reinforce his abhorrence of violence, Woodson maintained that should blacks choose to remain rather than emigrate, God's policy "shows that it is better to bear our wrongs in silence than to aggravate them by fruitless attempts at their overthrow." 39

Woodson's ideas did not go unchallenged. The Colored American accused him of being selfish, elitist and escapist. The paper contended that the issue of violence had no relation to religion. It was a secular question over the propriety or otherwise of fighting for fundamental principles. 40 For instance, could a small minority of individuals hazard their lives for the inalienable rights of the masses of the people? The paper accused Woodson of being overtly concerned with the safety and comfort of a minority of individuals at the expense of the masses. 41 Woodson countered that since the free blacks were crucial to the redemption of the enslaved, their own personal safety and comfort deserved priority. "Strike from the list of the living, the freemen, and what becomes of the slave?" he asked. 42 The elevation of free blacks elsewhere
he argued, would have positive effects upon slavery in the United States.

Another important personality in Delany's formative years in Pittsburgh was William Whipper. A founding member of the American Moral Reform Society, like Woodson and Vashon, he was wealthy. He ran a prosperous lumber business in Columbia, Pennsylvania. In 1834, he opened a free labor and temperance store in Philadelphia, and for over thirteen years he contributed $1,000 annually to the anti-slavery crusade. He also owned a fleet of streetcars. As a founding member of the American Moral Reform Society he advocated universal love and peace. The society's objectives included the advancement of temperance, economy, moral virtue and the universal brotherhood of mankind. It also propagated the notion that condition not color was responsible for black problems. 43

Whipper's universalism offended those who wanted the color line clearly drawn. The representatives of *The Colored American* to the first annual Moral Reform Convention in Philadelphia condemned universalism. Although the paper advocated a narrowing of the focus, it too accepted the notion that condition not color was responsible for black degradation. 44

Later in 1837, Whipper ran a series titled "Non-violence to Offensive Aggression" where he also argued that violence was ungodly. He literally advised blacks to turn the other cheek rather than respond violently to any external aggression. 45

Charles Lenox Remond and Abraham D. Shadd were two other important personalities Delany knew in Pittsburgh. He held both in high esteem. An eloquent anti-slavery lecturer, Remond had for years toured England
and Ireland. He hailed from a wealthy New England background and led the struggle against segregation in Massachusetts railroads. Shadd came originally from Wilmington, Delaware. A shoemaker, he was also wealthy. He served in the Board of Managers of the American Anti-Slavery Society at its founding meeting in 1833. He later moved to Chester County, Pennsylvania where he became a leading advocate of black freedom.

Delany also met John Peck and Robert Purvis. The former was a successful barber and wigmaker. The latter was a mulatto son of a rich South Carolina merchant. He was educated at a private school in Philadelphia. A founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society, he strongly supported Garrison.

The anti-slavery terrain of black Pennsylvania would be incomplete without a mention of Garrison. His anti-slavery commitments won the respect and confidence of many blacks. His leadership of the abolitionist movement went almost unchallenged in the 1830s. At least up to the mid-1840s he served as a "godfather" for many black abolitionists. Many of those mentioned above were either active members of his organization or agents of his paper, The Liberator. His philosophy of non-violence and moral suasion influenced the orientation of the black movement in the 1830s and 1840s.

Those were the men into whose circle Delany entered in the 1830s. Some were from wealthy backgrounds. Others had to work their way up from poverty. They all belonged to the emerging black middle class. They shared a common conviction in the potency of the economically
self-made man. They believed that in business lay the answer to black poverty. They also strongly believed in the necessity for moral and character reforms. Their voice, their vision and strategies were fundamentally integrationist and conservative. But their schemes envisaged structural changes that could potentially undermine the racist establishment. Herein lay the radical dimension of their integrationism. A strong Garrisonian orthodoxy sustained their ideological identity and laid the foundation for group discussion. Since their ideas and life-styles significantly shaped Delany's, it is important at this juncture to examine his interactions with them in the anti-slavery movement.

**DELANY AND THE ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT IN PENNSYLVANIA, 1831-1847**

From 1831 to 1847 Delany participated actively in the anti-slavery crusade in Pennsylvania. Whites and blacks knew his name, and he won their respect and admiration. While with the Vashons, he came in contact with leading members of the black community. For the first time, he saw copies of *The Liberator* and David Walker's *Appeal*. Gradually he found himself in the web of the reform movement. By the time he arrived in Pittsburgh, two crucial meetings had taken place, one in Philadelphia and the other in Pittsburgh. In both, blacks made basically integrationist demands. They demanded political rights and emphasized their claims to the provisions of the Declaration of Independence. 49

On January 6, 1832, Delany participated in a meeting chaired by John Vashon, with Lewis Woodson as secretary. The issue was black education, and the outcome was the establishment of the African Education
Society of Pittsburgh. Its purpose was to fill the gap created by white negligence of black education.50

Meanwhile his parents had joined him in Pittsburgh. He worked part-time on the waterfront, loading coal and pig iron into barges. He soon rented a room which he shared with Molliston Clark, a black student in Jefferson College. Delany registered in the A.M.E. Church Cellar School. He studied geography, history, ethics, metaphysics and natural philosophy. History was his favorite, because he believed it held the answers to some of the questions that had been engaging his mind. He strongly believed that the battle for black freedom had to be fought on both the physical and intellectual fronts. He supplemented his school work with regular debates with Clark. An intelligent student, a linguist and well versed in the classics, Clark also possessed impressive oratorical power. Delany could not have chosen a better partner.51

He soon outgrew the horizon of the Woodson School, and concentrated more on independent study. He and Clark then decided to broaden their discussions by involving more students. In 1831, they formed the Theban Literary Society, opened only to young men with some interest for "mutual enjoyment." They met regularly to assess and criticize each other's literary and intellectual endeavors.52

At a convention in Pittsburgh in 1834, a split developed between supporters of moral suasion and those of more militant political demands. Delany sided with the moral suasionists who advocated temperance and non-violence. He became the recording secretary of the newly established Temperance Society of the People of Color in Pittsburgh.53 That same
year, he helped found the Young Men's Moral Reform Society of Pittsburgh. Temperance and moral suasion activities were just two aspects of Delany's engagements. More dramatic however was his involvement in the plight of the fugitive slave.54

Fugitives had been part of the nightmares of slaveholders from time immemorial. Delany contributed to the transformation of Pittsburgh in the 1830s and 1840s into a safe haven for fugitives and dangerous one for slave-hunters. As secretary of The Philanthropic Society of Pittsburgh, an organization dedicated to aiding fugitives, he participated actively in the Underground Railroad. Within one year the society had spirited close to three hundred fugitives across the border to safety in Canada.55

While actively engaged in the cause of freedom, Delany also chose a career. After high school, Lewis Woodson, John Peck and John Vashon, all established barbers, offered to hire him in their business. But the profession of barbering had acquired an unsavory reputation. Because urban free blacks virtually monopolized it, whites shunned it as "nigger work."56 Precisely for this reason, Delany rejected the offers. He wanted a profession that would put him, if not above, at least at par with others, especially whites. He had his mind on medicine. There were no black doctors in Pittsburgh, and of the few whites available, none would treat blacks, except slaves. Fortunately for Delany, three of the leading physicians in Pittsburgh—Dr. John Le Moyne, Joseph Gazzam and Samuel McDowell—had anti-slavery sentiments. With the little he had saved, Delany apprenticed himself to Dr. McDowell in 1833.57 Here
he mastered the standard medical techniques of blood-letting, cupping and leeching. He also learned how to sew wounds, set broken legs and deliver babies. 58

Financial misfortune, however, cut short his medical training. First, he ran out of money. Second, in the wake of the general economic depression that hit Pittsburgh in the mid-1830s, his father and older brother both lost jobs in a factory. It was thus impossible to continue his training. But it seemed he had learned enough to enable him to practice independently, for, on the advice of McDowell, he began private practice as a doctor's assistant specializing in "bleeding, cupping and leeching." 59

In 1837, the Pittsburgh business directory listed after the names of the city's physicians "Delany, Martin R., Cupping, Leeching and Bleeding." 60 Not much income accrued from this since his patients were mostly poor blacks.

But medicine occupied only a fraction of Delany's time. In 1837 the Theban Society expanded its scope. It became the Young Men's Literary and Moral Reform Society of Pittsburgh. Its objectives now included the literary and intellectual development of the "rising generation" of blacks. Delany was elected its first librarian. 61

This dynamism and widening scope of the black movement is significant. It suggested flexibility on the part of blacks in their choice of means. Undoubtedly, underpinning this flexibility was the strong determination to destroy racist stereotypes about black inertia and decadence. The crusade for moral reform succeeded. The moral and economic triumphs of the likes of Whipper, Woodson, Vashon, Peck and others confirmed the
blackman's moral capacity for self-elevation. But would these change white perceptions?

W.E.B. DuBois argued that blacks improved their economic status at this time (late 1830s and early '40s). Many went into real estate while others established private businesses. A forty page pamphlet published by the Pennsylvania Abolition Society maintained that blacks made worthy contributions to the economic and social development of the entire community. According to Bruce Laurie, blacks monopolized several categories of unskilled work, and some black workers earned good incomes and accumulated worldly possessions. But this was just a minority. The black masses remained poor.

Ironically, whites conceived these limited economic successes as preludes to claims for social and political equality, and therefore, dangerous. The result was increased anti-black violence. A state reform convention in 1837 amended Pennsylvania's Constitution by granting suffrage to many poor whites while excluding blacks who owned property and paid taxes. The introduction of the word "white" into the third article of the Constitution eliminated blacks as citizens.

Réacting to this constitutional rape, black Philadelphians, at a hastily convened meeting on March 14, 1838 issued an "Appeal of Forty Thousands" condemning the "reform". They reaffirmed their rights to citizenship and equal rights in exactly the language of the immortal Declaration of Independence. Five days later in Pittsburgh, Delany joined the colored men of Allegheny County to deliberate on the "best means of averting the violence emanating from the reform convention...."
He and John Vashon served as secretary and president respectively during its last two crucial sessions. The Declaration of Sentiments expressed deep concern over the disfranchisement of "free" blacks and advocated a state convention.\(^6\) This convention did not materialize until three years later. Meanwhile, whites intensified efforts to keep blacks permanently subordinate. Ohio followed the lead of Pennsylvania and gradually almost all the free states "reformed" their constitutions.\(^6\)

The constitutional "reforms" had traumatic impacts on many blacks who firmly believed in the potency of moral suasion and economic elevation, and hoped that successes in these areas would undermine racism. They were wrong. Their successes only further strengthened racism. For Delany, the impact must have been more traumatic. He had spent the last few years struggling to qualify as a physician. Just at the peak of his endeavors, when he seemed to be gaining the confidence of those around him, the constitutional "reform" suddenly defined him as a non-citizen. Ullman suggests that Delany's conversion to emigrationism began with the "reform".\(^7\) This is not entirely true. Frustrated though he was, Delany remained hopeful. After all, by 1838 he was gradually gaining entry into the middle-class world of his colleagues, and like them, he was still hopeful that concerted efforts and pressures from a state-wide convention would undo the damage.

Meanwhile, anti-black violence increased in Pittsburgh in 1839. Black settlements, churches, schools and other visible institutions were targets. Delany quickly organized a black resistance movement to protect black institutions and settlements.\(^7\) The resulting racial tension disturbed almost everyone but the perpetrators of violence. Perhaps because
of his increasing popularity in the community, the mayor sought Delany's aid in organizing a bi-racial vigilante committee for law and order.\textsuperscript{72} That same year, he was elected to the board of Managers of the Pittsburgh Anti-Slavery Society. Though the vigilante committee reduced racial tensions, blacks did not abandon their demands for constitutional rights, and they eagerly sought a convention for that purpose.\textsuperscript{73}

Over one hundred and forty delegates assembled in Pittsburgh between August 23 and 25, 1841 to push forward demands for suffrage. John Peck presided. Delany, Woodson and John Vashon served in the business committee. Suffrage, according to the preamble, is a right which gives political existence to those who possess it and political annihilation to those deprived of it... a right, paramount in vitality and importance to all political rights, and to obtain which... no labor should be counted too severe, no sacrifice too great....\textsuperscript{74}

The business committee recommended education, temperance, total abstinence and agriculture as means of black elevation. It sponsored resolutions condemnatory of racism and slavery. The delegates unanimously agreed to establish a newspaper adapted to the needs and aspirations of blacks. Realizing that the cost of running such a press was staggering, they launched a general appeal to every black for contributions.\textsuperscript{75}

The next two years were relatively uneventful. The concerted efforts of the convention did not budge the state authorities into granting any political concessions. There was no immediate heed to the call for a black newspaper either. The Colored American remained the leading organ of black freedom.
It was Delany however, who first single-handedly responded to the call for a newspaper. The year was 1843, a very crucial one for him. Two interrelated events occurred. His marriage to Catherine A. Richards, mulatto daughter of Charles Richards, son of "Daddy" Ben Richards; and his founding of the Mystery. Delany's venture into the risky and expensive business of black journalism remains itself a mystery. As Ullman correctly noted, there was no large "negro market" in those days, mainly due to the high rate of illiteracy among blacks. Black newspapers relied heavily upon white philanthropy and patronage. How did Delany get his initial capital?

It is not enough to commend Delany's efforts without acknowledging his sources of support. His marriage was the decisive factor. Catherine was the product of a mixed marriage involving a black man and an immigrant woman of Irish extraction. Her father belonged to the wealthiest class in Pittsburgh. At one time his father's land was estimated at a quarter of a million dollars in value. Ullman is puzzled by Delany's "strange choice of bride" since he paraded his unadulterated blackness as a badge of superiority. Sexuality and just plain attractiveness might have compelled Delany to compromise on his race consciousness. Catherine was supposedly energetic and intelligent. Of medium height, slender and with glossy hair, she was one of the most beautiful ladies Pittsburgh offered. But there was another significant dimension: money. Since poverty was a common denominator among blacks, the prudent, shrewd and calculating among them would be quick to exploit every favorable opportunity to establish a link with the wealthy class. Delany did just that. Catherine inherited one of the best properties in Pittsburgh, valued at nearly
$200,000.79

They had eleven children, seven of whom survived. The names of the children testified to the consciousness of both parents. They named the first son Toussaint L'overture, after the black Haitian revolutionary. The second, they named Charles Lenox Remond after the New England black activist whom Delany very much admired and respected. A third son, they called Alexander Dumas, after the black French author. Then they had Saint Cyprian, after the third century black bishop. The fifth son, they named Faustin Soulouque, after a Haitian emperor. Their last son, they called Rameses Placido after an Egyptian king and a Cuban revolutionary poet. Their only daughter they named Ethiopia. If names alone qualified one for a revolutionary, certainly, the Delanys would have been in the forefront.80

Barely five months after the marriage, Delany started the Mystery. No one has unravelled the choice of name. Delany himself did not provide any clue. The prospectus simply stated that it shall be independent and untrammelled and shall work for the moral elevation of blacks. However, it recognized no racial or geographical distinctions, but worked for the "universal benefits of man." Here we encounter the enduring influence of Whipper's universalism.81

His editorials acquired a reputation for "fearlessness and indepen-
dence."82 Although, professedly universalistic, Delany felt that unless blacks were adequately sensitized to the true nature of their condition, all efforts at amelioration "must fall as pearls cast among swine."83 He proceeded to describe blacks as nonentities, denied the respect and
protection of the law; robbed of the elective franchise and the right of representation, and excluded from all the rights and privileges of citizenship. Blacks merely existed as objects of degradation: "... crouching in servility at the feet of insolence and usurpation." 

The functions of the Mystery, therefore, he conceived as twofold. First, it would work for the "universal benefits of man" and serve as a vehicle of enlightenment, educating blacks as to their true condition and the means of elevation. Secondly, it would vehemently attack slavery.

Only two copies of the paper exist. It is possible, however, to gain useful insights from references to it, and clippings from it, in the white press. Subscriptions sold for $1.50 a year, and the initial copies sold over a thousand in Pittsburgh alone. Delany had agents in twenty-seven towns and cities of Pennsylvania. He had eighteen representatives in Ohio, five each in Indiana, Massachusetts, New York and Illinois. He also had agents in Virginia and Iowa. These helped circulate the paper. He supplemented this with periodic promotional tours. During one such tour in Cincinnati (1847), he delivered a public lecture on the moral elevation of free blacks. An eyewitness testified to his oratory:

"His voice was both full and clear, his lowest whisper was distinctively heard... when he elevated his voice to its highest pitch, the house was completely filled with the volumes of the sound... He spoke nearly three hours and nobody seemed fatigued."

After about three lectures in Ohio, Delany boarded the stage coach for home. No sooner had he taken his seat, however, than he was ordered out for his color. He was shaken. On November 28, 1844, the Pittsburgh
Chronicle, a traditionally prejudiced white newspaper, condemned the act. It described Delany as "a gentleman of talent and ability who was doing much to place his brethren on a higher elevation than they had hitherto stood in society in respect of education and morals." This first direct encounter with Jim Crow had a tremendous impact on Delany. However, while it reinforced his sensitivity to racism, it also strengthened his resolve to fight on. He intensified his war on slave-hunters and kidnappers whom he exposed in the Mystery.

The black community of Pennsylvania appreciated Delany's efforts. At a public meeting in Bethel Church, Philadelphia, July 9, 1846, blacks unanimously endorsed the Mystery. At a similar meeting in Shiloh Baptist Church, two days later, members resolved to tender to Delany and George Vashon their hearty thanks "for the course of able, eloquent and instructive lectures which we have been favored during their sojourn in this city..." They also acknowledged the paper as a "powerful instrument in effecting the social and political disenthrallment and elevation of blacks," and pledged to aid its circulation.

In Pittsburgh, the black community rallied around the paper. Each winter, ladies held fundraising soirees, and in the summer, they organized picnics and festivals, with the proceeds directed to the Mystery. Praise for Delany and his paper also came from the white press. The Pennsylvania Freeman, the Chronicle and The Annual Business Directory, all acknowledged Delany's ability and the noble deeds of his paper for the black community. A further testimony to his popularity and influence was the invitation by the Pittsburgh Topographical Society (an exclusively white organization)
to attend the centennial anniversary of Benjamin Franklin. 94

One of the most dramatic events of this period occurred in the course of his war on slave-hunters. In an article in the Mystery, he accused Thomas "Fiddler" Johnson of treachery to his race for assisting slave-hunters. "Fiddler" denied the charges and sued for libel. An all-white jury returned a verdict of guilty. Delany was fined $150 plus costs. Almost immediately, two white papers, The Chronicle and the Daily Dispatch, launched appeals for funds. Black and white citizens of Pittsburgh organized and appealed to the governor for a remission of the fine, which eventually occurred. 95 In another suit, even the presiding judge could not restrain himself from publicly voicing sentiments aimed at swaying the jury in Delany's favor. An all-white jury acquitted him before he even left the box. 96

Delany's fame also rested on concrete personal achievements. An article he had published on the utility of female education influenced the Rev. Mr. Avery in establishing the Avery Institute. When the Reverend gentleman died in 1858 he bequeathed large sums of money for the education and elevation of blacks. 97 Delany's greatest recognition occurred, however, in October of 1847, when the National Black Convention, meeting at Troy, New York, adopted a resolution recommending, among other newspapers, the Mystery "as worthy the encouragement and support of the people." 98

Undoubtedly, these accomplishments ensured Delany's acceptance by some white Pennsylvanians. But how deep and real was this acceptance? He soon found out: The same white society that showered praises on Delany dealt him a crushing blow in 1847. A white family put forward
claims to the land Catherine had inherited from her father. The Delanys lost this land "simply by a turn of the law, in consequences of the unwillingness of attorneys to litigate so large a claim in favor of a colored against white families." The very next year, Delany gave up the Mystery.

His racial sensibility reinforced, he developed a gradual loss of faith in white liberal pretensions, and in white America. But personal experiences alone did not account for Delany's changing perception. According to a recent authority, all social indicators—race riots, disfranchisement, residential segregation, per capita income, ownership of real estate, family structure and occupational opportunities—pointed toward socio-economic deterioration within the entire black community at this time. Despite the economic achievements of a few, blacks generally were not progressing. Even the wealthy middle class blacks who constituted the 10% of the entire black population that owned about 70% of the wealth of the black community, did not fare better than the vast poverty-stricken majority. Racism respected no social distinctions among blacks. By 1847, blacks had been displaced even in their traditional semi-skilled and unskilled jobs by Irish immigrants.

Into this atmosphere of failure and disillusionment arrived a ray of hope. The same year that the Delanys lost their land, two of the leading anti-slavery men in the nation arrived in Pittsburgh: William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass. This opened a new chapter in Delany's career. As a co-founder of the North Star, he extended his anti-slavery crusade into the national scene.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER TWO


3. D. Sterling, ibid., pp. 3-5. F. Rollin, op. cit. Life for "free" blacks in Jeffersonian Virginia was little better than slavery; and in fact, some thought it was worse. A host of regulations established for "free" blacks an inferior status in society: They had no legal protection and were easily re-enslaved. Though a few weathered the storm and achieved some economic successes, the overwhelming majority, however, remained poverty-striken. Robert McColley, Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia (2nd Edition) (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1973).


5. Ibid., pp. 6-7.


7. Ibid.

8. D. Sterling, Chapter 4.

9. Ibid. Also F. Rollin, op. cit.

10. F. Rollin, p. 22.


15. Ibid., p. 40.


25. His name does not appear in the records of any of the conventions.


28. D. Sterling, op. cit., pp. 39-45. F. Rollin, op. cit., pp. 38-39. The Weekly Advocate began in January 1837, and changed to The Colored American one month later when Samuel E. Cornish assumed the editorship. Published in New York, it ran from 1837 to 1842 and was one of the few anti-slavery newspapers of the time.

29. The Colored American, Dec. 9, 1837, p. 2; Feb. 10, 1838, p. 2.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., Dec. 16, 1837, p. 2.

32. Ibid., Feb. 16, May 2, 1839. "From my own limited experience, it seems to me that if I were possessed of millions, I could find ample means of 'investing the whole,'" he claimed.

33. Ibid., May 3, 1838; Aug. 15, 1839, p. 2; Feb. 16, 1839, p. 2.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., May 3, 1838, p. 54.

36. Ibid., Feb. 16, May 2, 1839.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., Oct. 6, 1838, p. 2.

39. Ibid., March 13, 1841, p. 6. Neither Floyd Miller nor any other who had studied Woodson emphasized this conservative response to the socio-economic realities of his time.

40. Ibid., Oct. 6, 1838, p. 2.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., Nov. 10, 1837, p. 2; Oct. 27, 1838, p. 142.

44. *The Colored American*, August 26, 1837, p. 2; Sept. 9, 1837, p. 2; Jan. 8, 1837, p. 2. A significant theme in the ideas of both Woodson and Whipper at this time was the concept of the universal brotherhood of mankind. Blacks, they contended should confront their problems with moral weapons. They depreciated the need for distinctively black organizations. Influential though these men were, their ideas generated heated controversy among blacks. There were those like the Rev. Samuel E. Cornish, editor of *The Colored American*, who wanted the color line 'clearly delineated.' As Whipper himself felt the pinch of American racism, he began to favor voluntary emigration to Canada. He participated actively in the convention movement of the 1830s and 1840s — a movement that signified black consciousness and identity. Though as the years progressed, the reality of racism tended to erode his universalistic values: "My country is the world — my countrymen are all mankind." remained the cornerstone of his thought. See Richard P. McCormick, "William Whipper: Moral Reformer," *Pennsylvania History*, 43, January, 1976.

45. Ibid., Sept. 16, 1837, p. 1.


47. Ibid., p. 118.


54. Ibid. D. Sterling, op. cit., pp. 42-43. He was also an active member of the Bible Society and became manager of the Moral Reform Society.
55. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 43.


59. Ibid., pp. 53-55.

60. Ibid.


67. The Colored American, April 12, 1838, p. 3.

68. Ibid.


70. V. Ullman, Ibid.

71. B. Laurie, op. cit. E. Getten, op. cit.

72. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 44.


75. Ibid., pp. 110, 114.
76. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 46. D. Sterling, op. cit., p. 80. Delany described Ben Richards as "one of the leading businessmen of the place (i.e. Pennsylvania) who carried on business extensively...and held a heavy contract with the United States, supplying the various military posts with provisions." He possessed a large property in real estate...which he lost by mismanagement. The Condition, op. cit., pp. 101-102.

77. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 45.


79. F. Rollin, ibid.

80. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

81. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 66.


84. Ibid.

85. D. Sterling, op. cit., p. 82. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 49.

86. V. Ullman, ibid.

87. D. Sterling, op. cit., p. 84.

88. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 57.

89. Ibid.

90. D. Sterling, op. cit., pp. 89-91 - details on Delany's war against slave-hunters. The Pennsylvania Freeman, August 20, 1846, p. 3.

91. The Pennsylvania Freeman, ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. D. Sterling, op. cit., pp. 82-83.


95. Ibid., pp. 51-53.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., pp. 49-51.

99. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 28. The record on this significant event is unfortunately very scanty. Neither Delany's authorized biographer nor his modern critics go beyond the mere mentioning of the episode. There are absolutely no details as to the circumstances that led to it. One can only suggest that in such a strongly racist environment, and at a time when, and in a place where, black economic advancements generated hostilities from whites, it was just a matter of time before fraudulent claims on their property came up. The Delanys should have expected this. After all, they had a precedent to learn from. Catherine's grandfather, Ben Richards, had also lost his estates to white claimants. The Condition, op. cit., p. 102.


102. Ibid.

103. Ibid.
CHAPTER THREE

THE NORTH STAR YEARS: 1847-1849

The experience of these two years almost completed Delany's alienation from America. He fought hard, travelled widely and lectured vigorously. It was a continuation of his quest for the American Dream. Yet the harder he fought and struggled, the further the dream receded. His break with Frederick Douglass signalled another phase of his disillusionment.

A mulatto ex-slave who fought his way to freedom, Douglass like many other blacks started his anti-slavery career under the tutelage of Garrison. In the 1830s and 1840s, William Lloyd Garrison's New England based American Anti-Slavery Society constituted a strong ideological vanguard of the abolition movement. Apart from the ideals of moral suasion and non-violence, there were two other significant components of Garrisonism. First, Garrisonians opposed any union with slaveholders. Secondly, they interpreted the Constitution as a pro-slavery document and consequently rejected it. Initially, Douglass accepted these ideas and lectured widely as a Garrisonian. His faith, however, declined gradually as the years progressed. The final split occurred with the founding of the North Star, a move Garrison opposed.

Douglass constituted a strong asset for Garrisonism. As a graduate of the Peculiar Institution, his lectures provided Garrisonians with first-hand accounts of the evils of slavery. In the wealth of his experience and in his strong oratorial power, Garrisonians found further
evidence for the moral indictment of slavery. Douglass worked closely with Garrison in organizing anti-slavery activities in the East. Since developments in Pennsylvania were of strategic importance, both he and Garrison watched with keen interest the organized efforts and activities of blacks in the state. When in 1847 they decided to expand their scope beyond the East, Pennsylvania seemed the logical place to visit.

The visit of Douglass and Garrison occurred at the very peak of their relationship. Considering Delany's popularity in Pittsburgh, it is reasonable to assume that they were both acquainted with his activities, and most eager to meet him. Since most of Delany's friends in Pittsburgh were Garrisonians, it could reasonably be expected that they sent copies of the Mystery to their mentors in the East. Delany too had for years been following Garrison's Liberator. Eight years earlier he had been appointed to the executive board of the Pittsburgh Anti-Slavery Society, a local chapter of Garrison's movement. This visit brought all three together for the first time. Douglass came with definite plans for Delany, for, as he descended from the stage-coach, he exclaimed, "Martin Delany, you're the man I want to talk to!" The talk had to wait a few days. Meanwhile, the trio organized several anti-slavery meetings. According to Garrison, they had tremendous success in the "busy, though dingy and homely city" of Pittsburgh. From Pittsburgh, they headed for the village of New Brighton. During this trip Douglass revealed to Delany his plan for a colored newspaper and solicited his assistance. Delany reportedly addressed the meeting at New Brighton on the subject of prejudice against color "in a very witty and energetic manner." He
returned to Pittsburgh while Douglass and Garrison proceeded to Ohio.  

Historians have yet to appreciate the significance of this visit. For the first time, three staunch abolitionists came together. Perhaps more importantly, a distinctively black movement emerged. The grounds for this had already been fertilized by past failures. Because the white leadership of the Abolitionist Movement failed to divest itself completely of the racist and paternalistic assumptions of the time, blacks soon resented continued participation in a movement they perceived replicated the wider racism of the Society. Gradually, the idea of an independent black movement won adherents. The result was the founding of the *North Star*.

This independent move, however, did not suggest a complete rejection of Garrisonism. Delany held Garrison in very high esteem. His willingness to join Douglass in hiving out a separate black movement reflected a general disillusionment with white leadership. Although he had absolute faith in Garrison and his ideas, Delany also felt that American racism would always undermine the realization of Garrisonian ideals. If all whites were like Garrison, things might have been different, he reasoned. Douglass, on the other hand, did not have absolute faith in Garrisonism, and very soon questioned its basic tenets. Their conflicting responses to Garrisonism notwithstanding, mutual dissatisfaction with the orientation of white leadership effected a fragile relationship that led to the birth of the *North Star*.

Delany took up permanent residence in Rochester, New York, headquarters of the *Star*. The *North Star* editorial urged blacks to assume
the leadership of their movement. It strongly assured those still in bondage of the fidelity and continued assistance of the 'free' blacks. As a leading lecturer for the paper, Delany travelled widely and held anti-slavery meetings in cities and counties in Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, and Delaware. The pages of the Star are replete with his regular reports on his activities.

The key question among blacks, according to Delany, was "what shall we do to better our condition?" He interpreted his mission as basically one of providing answers to this question. He believed that racism was the result of the degraded conditions of blacks. Consequently, he urged blacks to strive to improve their condition as a prelude to elevation. Their elevation, he maintained, depended on economic development, moral upliftment and practical education. He implored them to abandon domestic and menial occupations, in favor of industrial ones, real estate, agriculture and general business. He also emphasized the need for blacks to assume control of their destiny, and become more self-reliant. One eyewitness reported that Delany consistently taught blacks that "self-exertion was the mainspring of human action and development." He especially stressed the need for a sound practical and industrial education. He urged black capitalists to train their children in the industrial arts. This, he insisted, was indispensable if blacks were to become producers rather than consumers. Collegiate education was fine, he maintained, as long as it was not given priority over the industrial, or pursued to extremes, for "too much learning makes men mad."

Wherever he went, Delany had his eyes on three things: the level
of economic development among blacks, their moral condition, and their education. Almost everywhere he found encouraging signs. The spectacular economic achievements of certain blacks impressed him. He discovered that blacks made tremendous advancements in these fields through community efforts, and in a few cases, through individual initiative.\textsuperscript{13} He met many highly respectable and economically successful blacks whose achievements, he claimed, indisputably established black capability for industry and enterprise.\textsuperscript{14} But these were still relatively unimpressive. Consequently, he urged blacks to become more capitalistic, and re-invest their resources in the community. The more widespread and extensive black capitalism became, the quicker the pace of elevation, he maintained.\textsuperscript{15} He even challenged blacks to counter European economic imperialism by moving quickly into the lucrative West Indian and West African trade.\textsuperscript{16}

In a few places, however, he found disturbing signs. In Wilmington, Delaware, for instance, anti-slavery consciousness was at its lowest ebb among blacks. Instead, they exhibited many "slave characteristics."\textsuperscript{17} In Ohio, he found blacks less business-oriented. Though wealthy, many of the 5,000 colored residents, he claimed, had not "lived up to standard or kept pace with the spirit of the age," which was capitalism.\textsuperscript{18} They lacked the capitalist education necessary for sound investment. He emphasized the crucial importance of thrift and wealth-accumulation to the elevation and survival of blacks.\textsuperscript{19}

He was equally critical of black Philadelphians for paying less attention to business and trade. He also criticized what he termed "the ridiculousness and absurdity of prejudice against color" and maintained
that it was nothing but prejudice against condition. 20 Change the condition and prejudice will cease, he believed. In May, 1848 he addressed the Friendship Division No. 2 of the Philanthropic Order of the Sons of Temperance in Pittsburgh on the need to strengthen the cause of temperance. 21

In certain places, he discovered that the number of black churches outnumbered schools. This disturbing phenomenon, according to him, had been responsible for black economic backwardness. A certain providential determinism, he insisted, permeated black consciousness. 22 Blacks had transformed religion into the Alpha and Omega of everything. They had pushed the divine injunction "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and all else will follow" and the prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" to the absurd extremity of sitting and waiting for God to do everything for them. Consequently, while blacks prayed and hoped, whites worked and produced. 23

In a twin-series titled "Political Economy" and "Domestic Economy" he condemned this providentialism and urged blacks to become more materialistic. 24 Religious determinism was a pro-slavery instrument of strengthening black bondage. "Our masters have been so accustomed to teach us how to live in the world to come" he argued, "that they have forgotten to teach us how to live in this world, but (they) are always very careful to teach their own children and themselves, however religious they may be, how to make a living here, while in this world." 25 If religion was the key to economic salvation, he wondered why slaveholders, with their evil way of life succeeded economically while blacks, with
their religious zeal and dedication, remained poverty-stricken. 26

The key issue was "Political Economy", which he defined as the "science of the wealth of nations - practically the daily application of industry for the purpose of making money." 27 Blacks needed this in order to "live in this world." 28 Man's mission, he emphasized, is an earthly one "and God intended that we should take an equal part in the discharge of its various duties...." 29 To accomplish this, however, blacks must have the means, and pursue the same course that others did. The most effective way to change the existing racist and dehumanizing system was for blacks to "cease looking to providence and to assume full responsibility for the shaping of their destiny." 30

God, according to Delany, works by means and not by miracles. He had placed within the reaches of humanity adequate resources for the accomplishment of specific ends. 31 These means were in the form of three fundamental laws for the resolution of societal problems — the moral, spiritual and physical. These laws were distinct and fixed. 32 A spiritual law (prayer), for instance, could only solve a spiritual problem. By praying incessantly for a change in their condition, blacks, he maintained, were applying the wrong solution to their problem. "Prayers and praises" he claimed, "only fill one's soul with emotions, but can never fill his mouth with bread, nor his pocket with money." 33 The despotism and inhumanity of the peculiar institution he insisted was a temporal and physical problem that required temporal and physical means. 34 "The master and slaves are both human beings, endowed with the same faculties, a corporal or physical system, with limbs having bones, muscles, and tendons, which give strength to the system," he argued, [consequently]
"as the punishment of the slave was physical, inflicted by strength, so should it have been met by physical force and prevented by strength."\textsuperscript{35} Instead of praying, the slave, Delany insisted, must either seize his master, hold him fast, thrust him aside, or take to his heels. Delany thus suggested two possible strategies for freedom: revolt or escape.\textsuperscript{36}

Instead of pressing ahead, he lamented, blacks chose to "stand still and see the salvation of God," honestly believing that He endorsed this passivity and indifference.\textsuperscript{37} But more binding on blacks, according to Delany, was the equally divine injunction: "Now is the accepted time, today is the day of salvation."\textsuperscript{38} "Stand still and see the salvation of God" he claimed, originated from Moses, whereas "Now is the accepted time..." came from God himself. "Who then shall we obey, God or Man?" he asked.\textsuperscript{39}

Delany wanted immediate action! This, however, had very little to do with revolt or escape, but with self-help and economic elevation. As he put it,

We want businessmen and women among us and must have them in every place. We have been heretofore taught that these things were unfit for us, as they interfered with our prospects for heaven.... This our oppressors taught us to prevent us from competing with them in business, and being ignorant we believed it. Let this henceforth be no longer the case. Industry as much belongs to us, as to them.\textsuperscript{40}

In Delany's estimation, black problems were fundamentally existential. His strong attack on religious determinism stemmed from his frustrations over how blacks had been duped into turning their thoughts and actions away from the realities of this world to those of a heavenly
world.

He also exposed and condemned the rampant racism in the North. In one letter, he lambasted the Pittsburgh bar for refusing to admit George Vashon. He also reported the indictment of Dr. Mitchell of Indiana County, Pennsylvania, for giving aid and employment to fugitives. During a stay in Detroit, he attended a trial session in the state Supreme Court. The case involved one Dr. Comstock, a white man of "respectability and wealth" arraigned for aiding and abetting the escape of a black fugitive from Kentucky. Dr. Comstock had no direct involvement in the escape, but was charged because he publicly said that he "hoped that the slave family would never be found." The presiding judge, John McLean, ruled him guilty as particeps criminis, arguing that "it was the duty of all good citizens to do all they could to prevent the escape of slaves."

Startled, Delany reported the incident to the North Star. His report coincided with the Free Soil Party's Presidential Convention of 1848. Justice McLean happened to be running. Delany proceeded to Buffalo, site of the convention. His report had already stirred up discussions among the delegates and many were anxious to probe its authenticity. Though the Free Soilers were not committed abolitionists, their party won the hearts of blacks because of its support for the Wilmot proviso, which banned slavery from territories acquired during the Mexican War.

A member of the executive committee approached Delany holding a copy of the North Star and pointing to the McLean article. He asked:

"Are you Dr. M.R. Delany?"
"I am, sir" replied Delany.
"Are you one of the editors of the North Star?"
"Yes, sir, I am," he answered. "Are these your initials and did you write this article concerning Justice McLean...?" inquired the stranger. "That is my article and those are my initials, sir" Delany responded. "I've but one question more to ask you. Did you hear Judge M'clean deliver this decision, or did you receive the information from a third party?" "I sat in the court room each day during the entire trial and reported only what I heard..." Delany replied. "That is all, sir, I am satisfied" concluded the stranger.

After a long deliberation, Salmon P. Chase, President of the convention emerged to announce that for reasons best known to the executive committee, the name of Judge McLean had been dropped as a candidate and Martin Van Buren substituted.

Delany's article had thus influenced the outcome of the Free Soil Convention. Could this mean a positive change in the national mood? He soon found out otherwise. Near Buffalo, he was ordered out of a stage coach again because of his color. Undeterred, he fought on. On September 6, 1848, he attended a colored National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. Over fifty delegates assembled. Frederick Douglass served as president.

Delany chaired the Business Committee responsible for the preamble and resolutions. The preamble contained the now familiar admonition to blacks to struggle for self-elevation from menial and domestic occupations. It urged them to endeavor to "transcend the conventional order of society" in order to attain "equality with the dominant class." There were thirty-two resolutions in all advocating moral reform, economic elevation, temperance and education. The delegates unanimously condemned the Colonization Society. They also forcefully restated their claims to
American citizenship. Almost all the resolutions were adopted except number twenty-two, which was indefinitely postponed. It called on free blacks to acquire military knowledge to enable them "measure arms with assailants without and invaders within." 51

Delany antagonized some delegates when he suggested that "he would rather receive a telegraphic dispatch that his wife and children had fallen victims of a loathsome disease, than to hear that they had become servants of any man." 52 This was definitely an abrasive comment in a convention composed of delegates from all walks of life — engineers, editors, blacksmiths, dentists, shoemakers, barbers, painters, farmers, masons and servants. One delegate retorted that those in the editorial chair [like Delany] and other responsible persons "must not cast slurs upon those who were in such places [i.e. servants] from necessity... We know our positions and we feel it." 53 Delany denied any intention to cast slurs at servants or other unfortunate persons. He simply wanted to emphasize the need for blacks to abandon marginalized and demeaning professions.

After the convention, he proceeded to Philadelphia where he addressed a temperance celebration organized by about two hundred Temperance Unions. In December, 1848 he attended, as an honorary member, a state convention of the colored men of Pennsylvania, in Harrisburg. His old colleagues were all present. Robert Purvis and John Peck served as president and secretary respectively. William Whipper, Abraham D. Shadd and five others constituted the board of Managers. There were about eighty delegates in all. There were also many distinguished whites
of the city in attendance. 54

The purpose of the convention was to petition for suffrage rights. The delegates adopted a constitution and established a state executive board in Philadelphia with auxiliaries in every county. Each member was taxed $1 per annum for the establishment of a political newspaper, to be called "Campaigns" which would be issued every year during elections and the session of the legislature "for the purpose of agitating the great question of enfranchisement and political rights of the colored free men of Pennsylvania." 55 Delany later joined a delegation led by John Vashon and Robert Purvis to the state governor, William M. Johnson. Robert Purvis, the spokesman, impressed upon the governor the determination of blacks to become "participants in all the privileges enjoyed by others." 56

On the last day of the convention, the delegates unanimously agreed that blacks suffered discrimination largely because of "complexional intolerance" rather than "conditional basis." 57 Consequently, they deemed it useless for blacks to continue to adhere to the doctrine of "conditional elevation before equality." No amount of social, economic and intellectual achievements, they maintained, would ever win equality for blacks. 58

Black Pennsylvanians thus rejected the basic philosophical rationale for the moral and self-efforts movement of the decade, which assumed that prejudices were the result of the degraded conditions of blacks, and consequently, they would cease in proportion to how blacks improved themselves. The experience of these black Pennsylvanians, and of blacks generally, showed something different. White prejudices deliberately
created those degraded conditions as a means of justifying the subordi-
nation of blacks ad infinitum. Significantly, the very same black
leaders who spearheaded the movement for moral reforms and self-efforts,
after years of repeated frustrations, realized how incompatible black
freedom was with Americán Herrenvolk democracy. 59

Considering the place of Pennsylvania in the black struggle at this
time, could this change of consciousness mean a change in strategy? How
widespread was this new consciousness? If blacks in other states felt
the same way, it did not feature dramatically in their deliberations.
Neither in fact was there any fundamental change in strategy. Generally,
blacks continued to emphasize the need for improvement in their condition
in their quest for real freedom and elevation.

Delany shared the frustrations of black Pennsylvanians. The North
Star project had exposed him to certain realities of the black community.
He discovered, contrary to racist assumptions, that blacks were not
generally docile and indolent. He found many evidences of industry.
Many blacks were striving to improve their condition, and they were
succeeding. White America, however, refused to take cognizance of this.
No matter your achievements, he discovered, the color of the skin had im-
prisoned blacks in the dungeon of white society.

His own personal experience illustrated this phenomenon perfectly.
His voice, vision and strategy all threatened the status quo. He advo-
cated fundamental changes in the established order. He urged blacks to
outgrow their marginalized status. The values of the American Dream
belonged as much to blacks as to whites, he emphasized. He commenced
with high hopes and enthusiasm, and ended with despair. As American racism crystallized into a rigid orthodoxy, even in the face of obvious black economic, social and moral improvements, Delany's conception of the black struggle also gradually ossified into a race consciousness. One significant factor underpinning Delany's perspective, however, was his extreme blackness, which made him more susceptible to racism. As race dominated his thought, his relationship with Frederick Douglass deteriorated.

When Douglass wrote in the *North Star* of June 29th, 1849 that "...by a mutual understanding with our esteemed friend and coadjutor, M.R. Delany, the whole responsibility of editing and publishing the North Star will devolve upon myself...", it was obvious to most observers that something had gone wrong. Neither Delany nor Douglass provided any further clue as to the cause of the split. A recent biographer of Douglass suggests that the split resulted from Delany's inability to raise sufficient funds for the paper. Though there is some truth in this, it does not adequately explain their separation.

Throughout 1848, the tone of Douglass's letters to Delany suggests that the paper was going through hard times. There was, however, nothing unique or traumatic about this. Black journalism had always been a financially risky business. Both knew this from the start. Therefore, more central to the split than the financial difficulties of the *North Star* was their ideologically conflicting responses to America at the end of the 1840s.

Though equally frustrated and disillusioned, Douglass would not give
up on America. He held firmly to his integrationist ideals. He intensified his war against ardent colonizationists like Henry Clay. In a lengthy article, he outrightly rejected colonization and reaffirmed the determination of blacks to stay and fight. As he strongly suggested, "Humble as we are, degraded, imbruted and enslaved as we have been, if Henry Clay or anyone else should propose to remove us, he would have his insolence rebuked, and if he should force us, it would be force against force." For Douglass, there was no going back. Blacks must realize their destiny in America.

Not so for Delany. Exactly one week after Douglass's article, he published a critical review of American civilization. "There appears to be a fixed determination on the part of our oppressors in this country," he declared, "to destroy every vestige of self-respect, self-possession and manly independence left in the colored people." There seemed to be no prospects for blacks, since even the present generation of white children imbibed the racist values and norms of their parents. Blacks, he emphasized, suffer oppression and unmitigated outrages because of their color. Although, he had yet openly to advocate emigration, this review established that his consciousness was not too far away from it. It was, therefore, a question of time before such conflicting responses split the coadjutors of the North Star.

While Delany felt outraged by the rampant racism, he did achieve success in a way he least acknowledged. His personal accomplishments presented one of the best living refutations of all the entrenched stereotypes about the capability of blacks. To many blacks, he was a
reference personality and a source of pride. No tribute was more revealing of this than that by John I. Gaines, a black Ohioan and member of the temperance movement. He commended Delany’s contributions to the temperance movement and the entire black struggle. Comparing Delany to those he called "the immortal never-dying reformers of the sixteenth century—Melancthon, Zwingli, Erasmus and Luther," he wrote:

Sir, we feel proud that one like you, so well qualified, both by nature and education should represent our cause, one who has not a drop of Anglo-Saxon blood, running in his veins. Not that we are prejudiced to color...but for the simple reason that whenever a mind of a higher order is exhibited among us, some gossip or goose is ready to attribute it to a little speck of white blood...cursing through our veins.67

Gaines spoke for many.

However highly regarded by others, Delany saw no cause for optimism. His frustrations notwithstanding, he had not completely given up on America. In the next decade, however, the Fugitive Slave Law and the increased offensive of Southerners in national politics completed Delany’s alienation first from America, and then from other black leaders, like Douglass, who interpreted events differently.


3. Ibid., p. 511.


6. Ibid.

7. The North Star, Nov. 17, 1848, p. 2; April 7, 1848, p. 2; Jan. 7, 1848, pp. 2, 3.
8. Ibid., Dec. 15, 1848, p. 3; April 28, 1848, p. 2.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., Jan. 2, 1848, p. 3.

11. Ibid., Dec. 15, 1848, p. 3.

12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., Dec. 15, 1848, pp. 2-3.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., June 5, 1849, p. 2.

18. Ibid., May 6, 1848, p. 2.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., Oct. 6, 1849, p. 2; April 7, 1848, p. 3.

21. Ibid., Jan. 2, 1848, p. 3.


24. Ibid., April 13, 1849, p. 2; March 16, 1849, p. 2.
25. Ibid., April 20, 1849, p. 2.
26. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Ibid., April 13, 1849, p. 2.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., June 28, 1848, p. 2.
42. Ibid., Feb. 4, 1848, p. 2.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
47. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. It is noteworthy that as chairman of the Business Committee, Delany reported to the House on most of the resolutions, except 22 which was reported by one G.W. Tucker. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.


56. Ibid.

57. Ibid., p. 125.

58. Ibid., p. 124.

59. Perhaps the most detailed analysis of Herrenvolk Democracy is in George Frederickson's The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). Also relevant to the Old South, is the concept of "egalitarian racism" which William L. Barney uses in his The Road To Secession: A New Perspective on the Old South (New York: Praeger, 1972). More recently, Pierre Van den Berghe in Race and Racism: A Comparative Perspective (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), uses the term Herrenvolk Democracy to describe regimes like those of the United States and South Africa that are democratic for the master race but tyrannical for the subordinate group.

60. The North Star, June 29, 1849, p. 1.


62. In a letter dated (Rochester) Jan. 12, 1848, Douglass complained that "Subscribers come in slowly and I am doing all I can by lectures and letters to keep our heads above the water. Ohio does not respond in anything like the number which I had a right to expect. Do all you can for us in Pittsburgh," he urged Delany. Douglass then reported that expenses far outran income and further urged Delany to "send on subscribers and money." Philip S. Foner (ed.), The Life
and Writings of Frederick Douglass, Vol. V, Supplementary (New York: International Publishers, 1875), pp. 70-71. A week later, Douglass acknowledged the receipt of $20 from Delany, and complained again that subscriptions were still very small, adding "the work is uphill just now, but I hope there is a good time coming." Ibid.


64. Ibid.


66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., June 2, 1848, p. 3.
CHAPTER FOUR

1850s: NON-VIOLENCE, EMIGRATION AND CAPITALISM

1850 was a particularly significant year for Delany. The year of the Fugitive Slave Law also marked the birth of his second son, Charles Lenox Remond. The proscriptive world of Jacksonian society, however, rendered family maintenance increasingly difficult. The burden of responsibility as a husband and father reinforced Delany's determination to struggle for acceptance and equality in America. As his fatherly responsibility increased, his perception of the black struggle also changed. It was no longer just a struggle for blacks in general, but specifically for the destiny of his family.

Reacting to an invitation by Ohioans to help found a newspaper, Delany presented a gloomy appraisal of his past efforts on behalf of blacks. First, he doubted the success of such a project, since black journalism had always been a financially risky venture. Second, and more importantly, he regarded as fruitless his past efforts as a black journalist. "I have labored for nought, and received nothing" he maintained. For several years, he had had to sustain his family on charity and borrowed money. Consequently, he emphasized,

I am fully persuaded that to embark in a new enterprise of this kind, would be heedless in me, and the last precipitous stride and gasping struggle to the certain starvation of my family, whom I am bound by all the ties of consanguinity and self-respect...of conjugal and filial affection to protect and support. My ardent desire for the elevation of our race has caused me to sacrifice more than I was able to bear - more than my share.
He therefore strongly urged Ohioans to rally round the North Star.

For over a decade Delany lectured blacks on the values of thrift, economic development, education and moral virtue. In the course of this, he witnessed the successes and achievements of some of his friends and colleagues. George-Vashon qualified as a lawyer, and after being rejected by the Pittsburgh bar, went to New York and got accepted there. Also relatively wealthy were Rev. Lewis Woodson, William Whipper and John Vashon. What had Delany to show for his endeavors? Nothing. In the last two years as a North Star agent, he had subsisted on charitable donations and borrowed money. It was time he gave some attention to improving his personal fortune. He remained convinced that the prospects existed in the United States. But his experience was a catalogue of one failure and frustration after another. By 1852 he had reached a point of total alienation from America. He turned to emigration.

The Fugitive Slave Law was perhaps the most pernicious legislation in the annals of the black experience. It came as part of a package of compromises meant to diffuse the mounting sectional conflict over the admission of new states. It sought to strengthen slavery by facilitating the return of fugitives to their owners. To thousands of "free" blacks, it spelt doom, since it prima facie defined all blacks as slaves. It confronted them with either of two dread alternatives: re-enslavement or colonization. Paradoxically, the law effected a coup-de-grace on non-violence. Increasingly convinced that safety lay in strength many "free" blacks began seriously to consider violent alternatives. In various state conventions "free" blacks emphasized their determination to resist both re-enslavement and colonization.
Delany shared the dissaffection of other blacks. At a public meeting in Allegheny County, he vowed to resist the law till death. The right to resist tyranny was inherent in the American revolutionary tradition, he reminded his listeners. Consequently, he would resist tyranny of any sort from any quarter, he assured the distinguished guests.

However, the need for personal social and economic betterment had now become for Delany a crucial component of his day-to-day resistance against tyranny and degradation. With this motivation, he entered the Harvard Medical School late in the fall of 1850. He had previously been refused by four medical colleges. With recommendations from prominent Pittsburgh physicians and clergymen, Dean Holmes could not refuse him. It seemed at last that the gate to economic security had just opened. But disappointment awaited him.

A controversial protest movement organized by a few students demanded the expulsion of the blacks on the grounds of inferiority and threats to academic excellence. The faculty initially agreed to allow the students to complete the semester they had paid for, but refused them further lecture tickets. In the end, however, they expelled the students.

The admission of Delany, and two other blacks (Daniel Laing and Isaac Snowden), plus a woman, radically departed from tradition. Harvard Medical School had been exclusively a white institution. The admission, however, was hardly an enlightened move. The blacks were accepted on the understanding that on graduation they would proceed to practice in Africa. But their presence threatened the lily-white values and male chauvinism of the time. Whether the black students completed all requirements for
the degree is uncertain. What is certain, however, was that none of them was awarded a Harvard diploma. 8

The experience devastated Delany. He had expected that white abolitionists, and some Boston liberals would come to the aid of the black students. He scanned the pages of the Liberator for weeks, but found nothing. Instead, the Boston Journal published a letter signed "Common Sense" justifying the exclusion of the blacks and the white woman on the grounds that "amalgamation" of the races and sexes was wrong.

Dorothy Sterling blamed the silence of the abolitionists on two factors. First, the factionalism which plagued the abolition movement at this time, and second, since the Garrisonians despised the Colonization Society, they were less inclined to fight on behalf of Laing and Snowden, who were sponsored by the society. Neither were they inclined to fight for Delany, who until recently, had co-edited and worked for Douglass's North Star; an independent black newspaper, the establishment of which they had opposed. 9

Sterling, however, ignored perhaps the most significant factor, the ideological one. Leading blacks in fact deplored the racist and paternalistic outlooks of white abolitionists and liberals. Delany was very critical of these. According to him, white liberals and Garrisonians were reluctant abolitionists. Because they imbibed the racist values of their society, they accepted the colonizationist view that a multi-racial social order was impossible in the United States. Consequently, all white abolitionists, he emphasized, started out as colonizationists. However, William Lloyd Garrison, Arthur Tappan, Benjamin Lundy and other white
liberals abandoned the colonizationist path after attending the first National Black Convention in Philadelphia in 1830. The deliberations and declarations of this convention impressed upon them the strength of black abhorrence of colonization. Abolitionism, therefore, as a movement for the transformation of the American social order, according to Delany, originated among blacks. Garrisonians seriously object to this interpretation. 10

The silence of the abolitionists and liberals reinforced a doubt gradually developing in Delany about their reliability. With a depressed but not entirely broken heart, he returned to Pittsburgh to continue his usual low-paying cupping and bleeding job.

The Harvard experience impressed on Delany the ubiquity of racism. The realization that his color had been responsible for his predicament made him increasingly pessimistic about prospects for blacks in America. The rampant "scientific" theories of black inferiority particularly disturbed him. In response, he undertook a series of lectures in the West on the comparative anatomical and physical conformity of the cranium of the caucasian and black races. Adopting equally "scientific" methods he discovered that the pigment responsible for black complexion was essentially the same as that of white, except that it was more concentrated in blacks; hence the darker complexion. 11 Since he did not expect his findings to make a dent in American racism, he combined his intellectual battle with practical anti-slavery politics.

In 1851, as a Pittsburgh agent for Henry Bibb's *Voice of the Fugitive*, he accompanied a U.S. delegation to a great anti-slavery convention in
Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The convention condemned colonization and urged blacks to cultivate habits of thrift, industry and temperance.\footnote{12} The delegates adopted two key resolutions originating from a proposal by Theodore J. Holly. One advocated a North American Colored League to protect and further the interests of blacks. The other called on blacks to emigrate from the U.S. to Canada.\footnote{13} Delany and three other U.S. delegates objected to the latter. They argued that "it was impolitic and contrary to our professed policy...of opposing the infamous Fugitive Slave Law and the scheme of American colonization."\footnote{14} However, both resolutions passed.

Delany rejected the distinction implied in the proceedings of the convention between colonization as a negative force and emigration as a positive good. In his estimation, emigration was synonymous with the colonization scheme. More importantly, however, emigration would undermine the resistance against the Fugitive Slave Law.

He returned to Pittsburgh satisfied that even if his objection to emigration had not carried the day, at least he had publicly voiced it. Determined to continue his search for better economic fortune, he spent the early part of 1852 absorbed in a scientific invention that would facilitate the movement of locomotives over mountainous terrain. It was a monumental piece of ingenuity, and he was anxious to obtain a patent from the government.\footnote{15} He applied to "a distinguished patent attorney" in Washington, who, after all the necessary arrangements had been completed, suddenly described the project as being "unsatisfactory." After another abortive effort Delany abandoned the project. His inference from this episode was simply that his application had been refused because he was not considered a U.S. citizen.\footnote{16}
This was his dress rehearsal for Dred Scott. Here was a clear-cut evidence of America's lack of interest in, and appreciation for, black industry. It reinforced his racial sensitivity. The silence of his white liberal "friends" once again left an indelible impression on him. Projecting his own personal experience, he foresaw doom for blacks in America. Their destiny lay elsewhere. With this realization, he "emigrated" from the mainstream of the black movement.

He was not alone in this. Other black Americans had come to similar conclusions. One group had in fact emigrated and established an independent black state in part of modern-day Nicaragua, and they invited Delany to come and head the government. But he was expected to come with members of his Cabinet. Enthusiastically, Delany travelled for about eight months around the country in search of supporters of emigration to accompany him. He found none. He was, however, saved further troubles when the U.S. navy attacked and destroyed the tiny Republic. This did not destroy his emigrationist consciousness. On the contrary, it seemed to have reinforced it for he forcefully assumed championship of the movement.

As old as the institution of slavery itself, emigrationism had manifested itself in various forms. Its synonymy with the obnoxious colonization scheme, however, undermined its popularity among blacks. Consequently, it maintained an unorganized and largely ghostly existence. In the 1850s however, Delany revived and transformed it into a strong ideological movement. The publication of his The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States (1852), seriously opened the debate over emigration which lasted up to the Civil War.
THE CONDITION, ELEVATION, EMIGRATION....

Perhaps one of his most important publications, The Condition, in content and context, testified to Delany's erudition. In writing this book, he simply wanted to put before the public in general, and the colored people in particular "great truths concerning blacks which appear to have been heretofore avoided." 19

The book, containing twenty-three chapters, and an appendix, deals with almost every facet of the black experience: racism, abolitionism, the contributions of blacks to American development, non-violence and emigration. The four key concepts in the title; Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny, are interrelated. Because blacks were degraded, they needed to elevate themselves, but since this was impossible in the U.S., they had perforce to emigrate in order to realize their destiny.

The history of the black experience, he insisted, had been bastardized and misrepresented, and therefore, must be corrected. Even those who professed to understand the black experience, and who, ipso facto, arrogated to themselves the right to "think for and dictate to" blacks, were fundamentally ignorant, he maintained. Consequently, blacks must themselves assume control of their destinies. 20

On both grounds of nativity and natural law, blacks qualified for American citizenship, he asserted. But an oppressive white ruling class had deprived them of this right, and subjected them to a reign of terror. 21 Blacks, he continued, constituted a distinct nationality within the American nation—one that merely exists at the periphery, far removed from the ruling element of the society. Like the Poles, Italians and
Húngarians, blacks, he emphasized, experienced ruling class oppression and consequently they desperately needed salvation.22

He identified two other factors responsible for black degradation: religion and lack of industry. The two were interrelated. Overemphasis on religion had tied blacks strongly to a providential Weltanschauung that promised salvation in an after-world. This significantly subverted their zeal for self-improvement in this world. Unlike whites, he emphasized, blacks had erroneously given religion priority over materialism. This was self-destructive in an age of materialism.23 The result? White economic success, black economic failure. As he put it:

White men are producers, we are consumers. They build houses and we rent them. They manufacture clothes and wares and we garnish ourselves with them. They build coaches, vessels, cars, hotels and we deliberately wait until they had got them in readiness, then [we] walk in as though the whole thing was bought by, paid for and belong to us.24

The black past, he concluded, was static, uneventful and without historical significance.25

He rejected colonization as a solution. Like other blacks, he considered it a pro-slavery scheme. Blacks do not need to go anywhere. They must realize their destiny in America. This was possible only if they applied the divinely ordained laws — spiritual, moral and physical.26 Blacks had erroneously applied spiritual solutions (prayers) to their essentially physical problem (condition). They must now seek to change their condition through industry and self-efforts. He urged them to "Go to work with muscles, hands, limbs, might and strength." This is Physical Law.27
According to one of his fixed laws of nature, there could only be equality of persons where there is equality of attainments. Consequently, if blacks wanted equality with whites, they must become more productive. They must adopt "Political Economy" – knowledge of wealth or how to make money. This was the only secure route to elevation and the means are available in the United States, if only blacks were willing to use them.

His major concern, however, was for the "free" blacks. He believed that their struggle for elevation was hamstrung by their obsession with a sense of solidarity with the enslaved. Early in the book he deplored the connectedness in the way the government treated both "free" and slave. He urged "free" blacks to endeavor to assert their superiority over the enslaved. If "free" blacks distinguished themselves from the enslaved, achieved economic successes, and won the acceptance and respect of whites, this, he believed, constituted a significant milestone in the entire black struggle.

He maintained that citizenship rights in a democratic polity belonged to those with contributions and investments in the country. Contradicting his earlier assertions, he credited blacks with the economic, social, scientific, cultural and intellectual development of the U.S. and the New World. These spectacular achievements, however, have failed to earn blacks acceptance and recognition. Consequently, he urged them to seek "a new country and a new beginning." Migration was nothing new, he emphasized. It was a legitimate response of all oppressed people. He rejected the now familiar argument that emigration was tantamount to a betrayal of the slaves. "All should not remain in degradation because a part are degraded," he insisted. He ignored the numerical significance
of the degraded part (see Appendix I). Instead, he considered the safety and comfort of the few "free" blacks as deserving priority, since the ultimate salvation of the slaves depended on the prior elevation of the "free". He described the stick-to-the-slave mentality as fallacious. 36

He called the Constitution a pro-slavery document. The Fugitive Slave Law testified to the overriding power of the slavocrats in national politics, he emphasized. The ubiquitous nature of racism, he claimed, made it impossible for blacks legitimately to use violence in resisting tyranny. Whites would all unite against any black radical resurgence. 37

Abolitionism itself had failed blacks. Though a black inspired movement, it had become an instrument of oppression. Whites who shared the fundamentally racist biases of their society controlled the movement. He also condemned white liberals for their unreliability and called upon blacks to turn away from them. "A people capable of originating and sustaining such a law as this" (i.e. the Fugitive Slave Law), he insisted, "were not the people to whom blacks should entrust their liberty at discretion." The issue was racial: black vs white. Therefore, blacks had no choice but to emigrate. 38

He advocated a great representative gathering of a few intelligent and wise blacks to deliberate on the propriety of emigrating to, and exploiting the eastern shore of Africa. The ultimate objective would be the development of a strong trans-continental and trans-Atlantic commercial empire based on the cotton trade. This, he hoped, would ultimately undercut Southern cotton production and render slavery uneconomic. The restriction of the gathering to a very few "intelligent and wise"
individuals clearly indicates a significant shift in his conception of
collection politics. Mass conventions no longer seemed fruitful. To
achieve anything positive, the black movement had to be a function for
a few "wise, intelligent and wealthy" individuals. 39

Most of the ideas in The Condition he had already espoused in The
North Star in the 1840s. A striking feature of the book, however, is
its thematic and chronological inconsistency. On the one hand, Delany
advanced strong arguments for black integration in America, but he later
contradicted this with an equally strong call for emigration. No matter
what blacks did, acceptance into America seemed forlorn.

One paradox of Delany's thought was that his ideas tended to negate the
very strength of his crusade. From the time he enmeshed himself in the
vortex of the black movement, his ideas envisaged radical structural
changes in America. But at the same time, he was always careful to acknow-
ledge, usually with explanations, that blacks were economically and socially
backward. Such acknowledgements, however, tended to reinforce the legiti-
macy of the status quo. This inconsistency, however, mirrored significant
conflicts within Delany himself. These conflicts existed at two levels.
First there was the one between the African and American in his conscious-
ness. Second, and perhaps more importantly, an inner conflict between his
black consciousness and commitments to black freedom on the one hand, and
his de facto acceptance of a hierarchical conception of society as re-
lected in his "fixed" law of nature — there could only be equality of
persons where there was equality of attainments.

The thematic ambivalence in The Condition, in fact reflected the
cruel dilemma that confronted blacks as a group. Undoubtedly, the
processes of Afro-Americanization, however complex, had advanced by the early 1850s. Their African heritage though indestructible, blacks had over the years developed a strong consciousness of belonging to, and identity with, the American terrain. This sense of belonging and its attendant demands for equity and justice conflicted strongly with an establishment countervalue that still treated blacks as aliens, and therefore, objects of degradation. With the Fugitive Slave Law, therefore, every black had to confront this conflict between his consciousness of belonging to America and a reality that denied the realization of that consciousness. Delany effectively represented this dilemma in his work. He loved America. He wanted full acceptance and integration. He was convinced that by all standards of eligibility blacks deserved to be accepted as equals and necessary constituents in the society. He strongly represented this integrationist consciousness in The Condition. Developments in the 1850s, especially the Fugitive Slave Law, unfortunately, seemed to deny the reality of integration. Blacks had either to emigrate or contend with the likelihood of re-enslavement. This explains the emigrationist theme in the book.

Reactions to the book were mixed. Garrison described it as containing many valuable facts capable of undermining prejudice. However, he objected to Delany's characterization of abolitionism as a black-inspired movement, and also deplored what he called, Delany's "tone of despondency and spirit of caste." Finally, he described Delany's emigrationism as synonymous with colonization and, therefore, inimical to black interest.

Delany denied advocating caste, and emphasized that he was prepared
to live among whites, if "he had an equal possession and enjoyment of privileges." But he maintained that he had completely lost hope in America.42

The most critical review came from the editor of the Pennsylvania Freeman, Oliver Johnson. According to Johnson, Delany presented

Many facts which are in themselves interesting and valuable, which if they were less bunglingly and egotistically presented and not mixed up with much that is of questionable propriety and utility, might be beneficial to the reader. We could wish that for his own credit and that of the colored people, it had never been published.43

Delany objected to the charge of egotism. As to the stylistic and contextual errors, he intimated that he was judged too harshly. He claimed he wrote when he was "poor, weary and hungry" and did not expect to be judged as a professional writer, but as a layman. But he also accused Johnson of trying to damage his reputation and hurt the sale of the book. Perhaps because of the strongly nationalistic consciousness of blacks today, The Condition has found a more favorable audience among modern scholars.

Modern response to the book is characterized by a strong element of romantic hero-worshiping. Critics tend to overemphasize the emigrationist dimension, usually at the expense of the integrationist. Applauding Delany's use of the published word as an act of struggle, Vincent Harding places the book "in a line of succession from David Walker's Appeal." He described Delany's emigrationism as a radical movement.45 This interpretation represents the popular perception among
critics today.

In the 1850s, however, the book was unpopular and unacceptable to most blacks. Delany's capitalistic ideas did not offend his black colleagues. But his attempt to divorce this from the overall struggle in America did. They viewed as preposterous and visionary his assumption that a few blacks could successfully launch a commercial Eldorado elsewhere capable of destroying American slavery. It was not only uncertain and unrealistic, but equally dangerous since it relegated to the background the fate of almost four million slaves. Delany seemed to be unconsciously championing the cause of the hated Colonization Society.

Emigration was unpopular among blacks. Emigrationists/colonizationists shared a common assumption: that racism was unconquerable. Colonizationists strongly believed that innate inferiority rendered blacks totally unfit for civilized society. Without really knowing it, Delany's advocacy of emigration strongly tied him closer to the dreaded colonizationists. To most blacks, however, racism was neither invincible nor were blacks innately inferior. As Frederick Douglass emphasized:

For blacks to accept emigration is to stab their own cause. Is to concede a point which every black man must die rather than yield - that is, that the prejudice and maladministration toward us are invincible to truths, invincible to combined and virtuous efforts for their overthrow.46

Many blacks believed that race per se was not the issue. Condition also constituted a crucial factor. Consequently, they pursued measures aimed at improving their social and economic condition.

Emigration came under attack in various black state conventions.
Only in very few instances did it attract sympathy. In the estimation of many blacks, no distinction prevailed between emigration and colonization, and they applied equal force in combating both. A New York State Colored Convention (1851) published statistics showing the unpopularity of colonization among black Americans. In the thirty-year period (1820-1850) the Colonization Society and the American government colonized only 7,160 blacks; out of a total "free" black population of almost half a million (see Appendix II).

Even in what was now Delany's home state, Pennsylvania, his proposal won few adherents. The popular mood among blacks was to "remain and fight" in the U.S. for as long as one black remained in bondage. Perhaps the most vicious attack emanated from a colored convention in Illinois, 1853. The delegates accused Delany of advocating disunion, a scheme they considered fatal to the hopes and aspirations of blacks.

This nationwide opposition to emigration crystallized around Douglass. He did not believe that the crucial factor was Race. If it were, he argued, then the slaves too would have been equally detested by whites. It was not slaves whom whites wanted to get rid of, but "free" blacks. The crucial factor, then, in his estimation, was the aspirations and ambitions of "free" blacks. The more they sought to improve themselves, the more pro-slavery forces felt threatened; for a successful "free" black represented an unassailable indictment of slavery. The destinies of the slave and "free" blacks were inseparably linked, he emphasized. At the national free soil convention in Pittsburgh, August 11, 1852, Douglass advocated a violent extermination of slavery.
Delany objected strongly to the widespread accusations and rejections and reiterated his commitment to black interests. However, he blamed these rejections and accusations on a plot by those he called "the superior among us" to impugn his motives. \(^{53}\) The condemnations notwithstanding, he remained in Pittsburgh for the greater part of 1853 fighting slave-hunters, and practising medicine as well. \(^{54}\)

One of the critical issues he raised in his book had been the reliability or otherwise of white liberals and abolitionists. He suggested that they were unreliable and dangerous. Consequently, he urged blacks to turn away from them. Douglass thought differently. Sometime in 1853, he solicited the aid of Harriet Beecher Stowe in furthering his scheme for black elevation. \(^{55}\) Delany condemned this move, arguing that neither Mrs. Stowe, nor any other white person knew enough about blacks to contrive any successful plans for their elevation. \(^{56}\)

Though growing increasingly unpopular among blacks, Delany stood his ground. He had strong faith in God and strongly believed that events would ultimately vindicate him. He proceeded to predict that slavery would soon transcend sectional boundaries. This would happen through "a solemn convention where the North would voluntarily agree to accept slavery inorder to preserve the Union:...AND IT WILL COME MARK IT! MARK ME!" he emphasized. \(^{57}\)

The Fugitive Slave Law, and what he perceived as the complacency and impotence of white liberals and abolitionists, strengthened his convictions. Consensus not conflict characterized national politics, he maintained. He was convinced that blacks would soon be sacrificed to sustain
the Union. In fact, he was wrong. But in view of the strength of concern about the Union, his fears were not unrealistic.58

The ideological debate he generated soon entered the platforms of two national conventions. There had not been a national colored convention since 1848. The controversy over emigration in the 1850s, however, made the summoning of one imperative.

Two conventions, originating from diametrically opposed sources debated emigration and the destiny of blacks. Historians often define these conventions as struggles between a radical and a conservative movement. The first convention (Rochester, 1853) was the brainchild of Douglass and the integrationist movement. It is often portrayed as a conservative movement that sought compromises with the status quo. Conversely, the Cleveland convention (1854) which Delany planned, is defined as more purposeful, decisive and radical.59 According to one historian, the platform of the Cleveland convention assumed the inevitability of struggle thus placing it at par with the Communist Manifesto. This interpretation, though shared by many, is far from the truth.60

The call for the Rochester convention emphasized the need for concerted efforts on the part of blacks. It restated the now familiar argument about the connectedness in the destinies of the "free" blacks and slaves. It strongly condemned the Fugitive Slave Law, which it described as "a wily and dangerous effort of the American Colonization Society to employ the arm of the government to expel us from our native land."61

In an Address to the People of the United States, the delegates
described American revolutionary ethics as universal axioms that recognized no racial distinctions. Consequently, blacks had as much right to this tradition and its values as whites. Emphasizing their nativity and Americanness, the delegates demanded all the rights of American citizenship. They condemned slavery as unconstitutional and called for its unconditional abolition and the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law.  

To enhance the economic and social development of blacks, the convention established a National Council, with auxiliary committees on protective unions, business relations and publications. It also drew up a plan for a manual labor school that would encourage more practical education among blacks. Increased economic, industrial and educational developments, it hoped, would undermine racist propaganda about black decadence and depravity. The establishment of a National Council, according to Floyd Miller, epitomized a consciousness of racial distinctiveness. It was largely to foster this awareness that they set up "national" institutions to cater specifically to black interests.

No sooner had the Rochester convention met than plans began for an emigration convention. The call also emphasized the need for blacks as oppressed people to meet and respond to present and future challenges. The emigrationists demanded "a position of entire EQUALITY and UNRESTRICTED RIGHTS" for blacks. Blacks, they insisted, must become "an acknowledged NECESSARY part of the RULING ELEMENT" of their country. The call also condemned the colonization scheme and restricted attendance to emigrationists and their sympathizers only.

The President of the convention, William Munro, reiterated its
raison d'être as follows:

To consider the expediency and devise practical plan of emigration to Central and South America...to establish an independent and free colored republic, which would set an example of black capability and win respect.68

Delany chaired the twelve-member business committee and also served on the credential committee that screened prospective delegates to ensure that no anti-emigrationists attended. The attempt to keep anti-emigrationists out completely failed. John Mercer Langston stunned the convention when he spoke vehemently against emigration.69

The entire platform and declaration of sentiments bore the mark of Delany's scholarship. It did not call for emigration. It condemned white liberals and parties for failures to address adequately the interests of blacks. It advocated full equality, the elective franchise and the right of self-determination. The delegates demanded "every political right, privilege and position to which whites are eligible in the United States, and we will either attain these or accept nothing."70

The delegates pledged to "use all honorable means, to unite as one people, on this continent."71 They also condemned the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and vowed never to be satisfied until they occupied a position that acknowledged them as necessary constituents in the ruling element of the country.72 Since no oppressors had ever voluntarily conceded the rights of the oppressed, they argued, blacks should not expect much from their white oppressors. Freedom must come through struggle; and they were willing to pay any price for it.73
The language of most of the demands seemed to have been borrowed from The Condition.... For instance, in devising measures for the elevation of the colored population, the platform suggested in precisely the words of Delany's fixed law of nature that the equality of persons is only justified by their equality of attainments. Consequently, for blacks to attain equality with whites, they must be properly "qualified in EVERY respectable vocation pertaining to the industrial and wealth accumulation occupations." Finally, the platform called upon blacks to support and sustain themselves and to cherish their identity of race and origin.

The highlight of the convention was Delany's presentation of his The Political Destiny of the Colored Race on the American Continent. He descended harshly on the prevalent social and political discriminations. He further deplored black political impotence. "As a great principle of political economy" he asserted, "no people can be free who themselves do not constitute an essential part of the RULING ELEMENT of the country in which they live." The denial of the franchise, he maintained, had deprived blacks of the power of inherent sovereignty. Without this, blacks could not delegate responsibility to anyone in government. The present government, therefore, in his estimation, was a white man's and perforce must serve white interests. Race was the crucial factor. As he emphasized:

It would be duplicity longer to disguise the fact that the great issue sooner or later upon which must be disposed the world's destiny, will be a question of BLACK and WHITE and every individual will be called to identify with one or the other.
The main ambition of the white race, he insisted, was the subjugation and ultimate destruction of blacks. Whites were already taking over parts of the world—Asia, Africa, North and South America. He urged blacks to counter white imperialism by asserting claims to the West Indies, Central and South America.

Change in black reality required the "inevitable force of some irresistible internal political pressure," he maintained. Therefore, he urged blacks to "make an issue, create an event." Unfortunately, he lamented, blacks were incapable of forcing change. The chances of success were slim. Though slavery was sectional, racism was national, and this doomed any black radical resurgence. Northern complacency and feebleness was already guaranteeing the ascendancy of slavery, he suggested. He referred to the Kansas-Nebraska Act, plus intensified anti-abolitionist violence as ominous signals vindicating his position. In fact, anti-abolitionist violence was directed mostly at integrationists.

Delany's apprehensions were therefore well-grounded. To avert further suffering, he did not advocate violent revolution but emigration. He first suggested Canada. But her proximity made her vulnerable to U.S. designs. Blacks could never be completely safe there. Therefore, he favored the West Indies, Central and South America.

Delany's address lasted seven hours and it drew favorable responses from some delegates. H. Ford Douglass, a free black from Louisiana, spoke in favor of Delany's scheme. Douglass in fact was one of the ardent emigrationists. One of the few dramatic moments of the convention was his passionate rebuke of John Mercer Langston's integrationist address.
Another delegate, Augustus R. Green of Cincinnati, Ohio, also favored Delany's proposal but preferred Canada to Central and South America. 86

Their conflicting origins notwithstanding, both conventions made fundamentally similar demands and neither advocated violence or revolution, whether overt or covert. They both called for justice and the democratization of society. They both condemned the Fugitive Slave Law. Their solutions to the problem of black degradation were similar. Both recognized the need to strengthen the industrial, commercial and agricultural capacities of blacks.

The resolutions of the Cleveland convention were, however, couched in more radical terms. For instance, in most of the thirty-one articles, the delegates "DEMANDED" changes, while the resolutions of Rochester simply "ASKED" that certain things be done. Another difference was that the concepts of black identity and solidarity came out strongly in Cleveland. Except for the language, therefore, both conventions made basically integrationist demands. None of the resolutions at Cleveland specifically suggested emigration. This, however, is not to suggest, as Bill McAdoo did, that emigration failed completely at Cleveland. As already established, there were delegates who supported emigration. However, they seemed to have been in the minority as reflected in the declaration of sentiments and resolutions. To keep the emigrationist option alive, the convention established a National Board of Commissioners. The Board had subcommittees on Foreign Relations, Financial and Domestic Relations. 87 As President of this Board, Delany immediately opened correspondence with agents of foreign governments in Central and South America.
Both conventions received favorable coverage in the white press. In both Rochester and Cleveland, the white press commended the Parliamentary decorum and calibre of the delegates.\textsuperscript{88} The Cleveland Leader, observed however, that the raison d'être of the Cleveland convention "met with but little favor from blacks."\textsuperscript{89} This is true. Whether emigration failed or not at Cleveland mattered less to blacks. The fact that the convention started \textit{ab initio} as an emigration movement made it all the more detestable. In subsequent state conventions in New York, Massachusetts, California, Ohio, Illinois, blacks condemned the Cleveland convention, and in some places, described its scheme as a pro-slavery plot.\textsuperscript{90}

Délany was not unduly bothered by these condemnations. He held strongly to his convictions. Events, he felt, would prove him right. His pessimism, however, blinded him from one reality that sustained the optimism of his integrationist opponents. Instead of consensus, they perceived conflict as a reality. The Compromise of 1850 in fact bore within it the seeds of its destruction.

As Southern offensives intensified, Northerners grew resentful of legislation that required their assistance in propping up a power they now perceived as dangerous. Their resentment increased with the nullification of the Missouri Compromise. A strong anti-Nebraska movement emerged dedicated to the overthrow of slavery.\textsuperscript{91} The Whig, know-nothing and Free Soil parties declined into oblivion. Out of this kaleidoscopic political arena emerged a new "anti-slavery party"—the Republican. Though it did not advocate full equality and freedom for blacks, Douglass and other leading blacks responded positively to its anti-slavery rhetoric.
One year after Cleveland, Delany's convictions seemed to have strengthened. In his first annual report to the Board of Commissioners, he strongly condemned his opponents for their myopia in failing to perceive the dangers of white liberalism. He presented a gloomy analysis of the federal and state constitutions, concluding that no fundamental differences existed between the so-called free and slave states. They all shared a common feature: racism. No state in the entire nation recognized and protected the rights and privileges of blacks. Emigration remained the only viable option.

There was no indication that the Board undertook any significant steps in the direction of emigration at this time. It expanded its scope, however, with the addition of two auxiliary boards; one for trade and the other for publication. The board of trade was expected to operate a new North American and West Indian Trading Association. The board of publication would publish the projected Afric-American Quarterly Repository. Neither of these boards actually took off successfully.

Hemmed in and incapacitated by the anti-emigrationist tide, members of the National Board sought a more supportive atmosphere. In 1856, the Board moved its headquarters from Pittsburgh to Chatham, Canada West. For Delany, however, the decision to move was also related to family considerations. With two additional children, the issue of education and upbringing weighed heavily on him. There seemed to be no prospects for his children in the U.S.

As a terminus of the Underground Railroad, Chatham had over time developed a commercially viable and relatively prosperous black community.
Though discrimination existed, the society was more permissive. Delany purchased a plot of land and resumed his medical practice. His past anti-slavery activities had already established a wide reputation for him in Chatham. He played a key role in the Kent County provincial election of 1856, campaigning for a white liberal, Archibald McKeller. But local Kent politics was the least of his priorities. Developments in the United States concerned him much more. What he saw further strengthened his pessimism.

In his second report to the Board, he observed that a commercial conspiracy, involving the big commercial houses in England and the United States, seriously threatened the liberties of mankind. Commerce now ruled the world, he emphasized. He described commerce as the "omnipotent and omnipresent invader of human rights," and called upon all the nations of the world to rise against it. Despite this sudden surge of anticommunism, Delany did not advocate the destruction of commerce. Paradoxically, the only effective remedy against the threat of commerce was the cultivation of capitalist values. Use commerce to fight commerce. Undoubtedly, he meant this to reinforce his earlier calls for a commercially powerful black state. Commerce held the key to survival. Should blacks remain less commercially inclined, then they undermined their liberties and survival by rendering themselves vulnerable to the whims and caprices of white economic power. This seemed to be Delany's cardinal message.

As President of the Board, he opened correspondence with interested parties in the West Indies, Central and South America, with a view to laying the foundation for an exploration to Africa. However, the
increasing radicalization of the black movement in the United States seriously disturbed him. It was largely in response to this, and to the need to sway public opinion in favor of emigration, that he wrote and began serializing his only fictional work *Blake or The Huts of America*.

*Blake* represented Delany's responses and reactions to the increasing radicalization of the black movement. As slaves grew restless, "free" blacks equally seriously considered violent/revolutionary strategies for freedom. Especially after the *Dred Scott* decision (1857) denied blacks citizenship, some "free" blacks even advocated joint efforts with slaves for a revolutionary overthrow of slavery. The entire South was like an armed camp as planters developed siege/fortress mentality in anticipation of servile insurrections. The serialization of *Blake* at this time could not have been coincidental. Delany had a clear message: insurrection or revolution was futile and inappropriate.

**BLAKE OR THE HUTS OF AMERICA**

There is a strong ground for defining *Blake* as Delany's most significant work. In *The Condition... and Political Destiny...* he espoused his political ideas in straightforward political fashion, but won few adherents. By turning to fiction, he sought a wider audience, beyond the politically conscious few who attended conventions. Fiction allowed him access to the world of ordinary newspaper readers. But perhaps more importantly, fiction allowed him to better express and represent himself, than pure political essays. As Ronald Takaki rightly observed:
Much more than editorials, letters or autobiographies, fiction reflects the imagination or the fantasy of its creator. It permits the writer to express the dreams and the deeply felt emotions he may not have been able or willing to articulate in his speeches or non-fictional writing. Under the guise of fiction, Delany may have felt less intimidated in telling the truth, especially to whites and perhaps even to themselves. Delany's Blake...seems to reveal more about the father of Black Nationalism, than all of his political essays and tracts.103

Like his other works, most modern critics define Blake as a revolutionary document. Modern interpretations emphasize two significant dimensions: first, that it is a revolutionary work, and an answer to Harriet Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. Second, that it also espoused Delany's nationalistic and economic ideas.104 While the second is true, the first is a gross misrepresentation of the book. Blake is appropriately an anti-revolutionary work. In rejecting revolution, Delany forcefully restated the basic tenets of his philosophy: emigration and black economic imperialism.

The hero Henry Blake vowed to destroy slavery violently after his master (Col. Frank) sold his wife away from him. Infuriated, he rejected the pleas of his in-laws (Daddy Joe and Mamy Judy), who implored him to leave everything to God and "stand still and see his salvation."105 Religion had failed him, he emphasized. He was going to strike his own blow at slavery. His plan was to spread ruin throughout the South by instigating servile insurrections.106

He journeyed through the South and held secret meetings with slaves. In almost every plantation he visited, he found the slaves receptive to his scheme. Very soon revolutionary cells mushroomed all over the South. He urged the slaves to strive to accumulate as much wealth as possible,
even if they had to steal from their masters. "Money," he told them, "is your passport through the white gap to freedom." 107

The enthusiasm of the slaves was unimaginable. In many places, they had long been ready for revolt, but were held back by the anticipation of a coming messiah to assume leadership. In such places, Henry quickly assumed the messianic role. 108 To the utter dismay and disappointment of these slaves, however, the "Messiah" himself later cautioned against revolution and urged them to wait for God's time and his salvation. "Stand still and see God's salvation." 109 Henry advised the dumbfounded slaves. "How long me són, how long we got wait this way?" interjected Daddy Luu, an old slave.

"I can't tell exactly, father," replied Henry; "but I suppose in this, as in all other good works, the Lord's own appointed time."
"An' how long dat gwine be, honey? Case I's mighty tied waiting dis way!" Daddy Luu insisted.
"I can't tell you how long, Father," Henry replied. "God knows best." 110

By advising blacks to wait for God's time and salvation, Henry endorsed passivism and indifference. Since modern critics all agree that Henry was Delany, this endorsement contradicted a position Delany took back in 1849. At that time, he told his North Star readers that the injunction "Stand still and see God's salvation" was a Mosaic one that encourages complacency and therefore should not be heeded. 111

Blake differed from Uncle Tom's Cabin, no doubt. The portrait of blacks here completely negates the Sambo myth. The fact that in almost every plantation Henry visited, his ideas were well received, demonstrates that blacks neither represented an extension of someone else's will nor
docilely internalized any paternalistic ethics. They were dissatisfied and constantly sought avenues of escape. But Henry was not the perfect antithesis of Uncle Tom. Although he felt sufficiently alienated from the slave system to organize against it, he could not strike at it. Explaining this inability to strike at his master and the entire Southern system, Henry admitted that violence was not in his nature. Even though "maturer reflections" convinced him of the need for violence, he still could not find it in his heart "to hurt an individual."\textsuperscript{112} All he could do was emigrate to Canada, with his in-laws, son, and other slaves he could induce to accompany him.\textsuperscript{113} A more perfect antithesis of Uncle Tom was Frederick Douglass's \textit{The Heroic Slave} (1850), a fictional work based on the 1841 mutiny on board the slave ship Creole. The hero, Washington, affirmed his manhood and led a successful revolt that brought freedom to himself and his fellow slaves.\textsuperscript{114} Henry, on the contrary, is a perfect representation of Phyllis Klotman's "Running Man" - a protagonist who rejects the values of the society or culture in which he finds himself by birth, compulsion or volition and literally takes flight.\textsuperscript{115}

Henry's search for his wife brought him to Cuba, where he helped organize a "revolutionary" movement among free blacks. They held a series of meetings and Henry was unanimously appointed commander-in-chief of the revolutionary army. As in the U.S., however, no revolution materialized in Cuba. Blacks' efforts collapsed under the crippling power of the state.\textsuperscript{116} Two conflicting schools developed within the revolutionary movement. The radicals called for immediate violent revolution. The conservatives, however, counselled caution, moderation and Christian love. They rejected violence on both practical and moral grounds. First, it had
the least chance of success. Secondly, hatred and violence were ungodly acts argued one conservative. Thirdly, violence would hurt blacks the more, said another. Finally, "there were some good ones among them" (i.e., whites), another conservative insisted. All through this debate, Henry remained a passive participant; he just sat there "grave and sober, saying nothing." The conservatives won.

What triumphed in Cuba were the concepts of emigration and African naturalism. The "revolutionaries" looked to a rejuvenated and economically powerful black Africa as the key to black elevation.

Directly at the beginning of the book, Delany confronts the reader with his now familiar theme of consensus in national politics. Mrs. Arabella Ballard, wife of a prominent Northern judge, during a visit to Natchez, assured Col. Frank and his wife that especially on the issue of slavery Northerners were one with Southerners. Her husband, Judge Ballard, owned plantations in Cuba and consequently had a strong economic interest in sustaining slavery. He later visited Mississippi to explore the prospect of acquiring more plantations. He also assured Col. Frank and his other Southern friends of his fidelity to Southern principles. He declared, in the language of the Dred Scott decision, that blacks had no rights which whites were obliged to respect. In fact, ALL blacks, he maintained, were liable to enslavement by any white at will. The Dred Scott decision seemed to corroborate Delany's notion of consensus. The fact that the decision was not unanimous, and was also condemned by whites, mattered little to Delany.

Using the Ballards, Delany underlined the moral and economic
obligations that, he felt, the North had in upholding the Peculiar Institution. In his thought, the ubiquity of racism and slavery could never be overemphasized.

Given such a scenario, revolution seemed, at best, suicidal. It could not even be argued that Henry was a radical revolutionary incapacitated by forces beyond his control. There had always been revolutionaries who defied such forces. What Delany purposefully set out to accomplish inBlake was to create a hero whose life experience would demonstrate the inappropriacy of violence as a strategy for social change. Emigration and black economic nationalism seemed the only viable strategy.

Therefore, in 1859, under the auspices of the Board of Commissioners, Delany set out on his exploration of the Niger Valley. This constituted a significant step in the establishment of that economically powerful and externally based black state which, in his estimation, represented the only force capable of undermining American slavery and racism.

Many blacks questioned the notion that an externally based and economically powerful state could significantly affect race relations in the U.S. Although Delany attempted to present emigration as a positive good whose long-term implications would destroy slavery, his opponents were more concerned about its likely short-term implications. It seemed to them that emigration would inadvertently strengthen slavery in the short-run in order to destroy it in the long-run. And they were not even sure that in the long-run it could destroy slavery. They were particularly concerned that emigration would only remove free blacks from the scene, thus accomplishing a long-time objective of the pro-slavery
colonizationists.

In Delany's estimation, however, the few intelligent and wealthy free blacks were a special breed upon whose shoulders rested the entire salvation of the slaves. Therefore, their interests and safety deserved priority and should be safeguarded through emigration. Specially gifted men of intelligence, wealth and high morality held the key to social development.

Delany's idea at this time in fact reflected the enduring influence of the ideologically conservative atmosphere of Pittsburgh of the 1830s. The ideas of Rev. Lewis Woodson and William Whipper shaped his outlook to society. Ironically, however, he had alienated many of his mentors and colleagues. Few of them participated in his Cleveland convention. In fact, Woodson, Whipper, John and George Vashon participated actively in the Rochester convention. George Vashon called emigrationists "new men, who apparently rushed upon the arena of public life, solely for the purpose of giving ECLAT to the grand exodus which they were planning...." A further demonstration of this unpopularity occurred in the course of Delany's search for funds to sponsor his African trip. He applied to the American Missionary Association for grants from the Avery fund. When the Association referred to Pittsburgh for information on Delany, it received a shocking reply. Information derived from John Peck suggested that Delany could never be trusted. The Rev. Charles Avery, it became known, had vehemently opposed appointing Delany to the Board of Trustees of his Institute. Concluding his recommendation to the Association, William M. Shinn, a prominent Pittsburgh citizen, wrote "AFFIRMATIVELY he [Delany] has the reputation of being"
visionary and officious and NEGATIVELY he is said to lack some of the indispensable requisite of such a character as you seem to be in search of. 125 This sealed his hopes.

One of the driving forces behind Delany's emigration was his fear of violence. In his Weltanschauung, self-preservation ranked high. 126 The integrationist option, however desirable, in Delany's estimation was as unrealistic as it was dangerous. The signs of the time clearly established that blacks were not wanted in the United States. Most whites, he believed, abhorred the "free" blacks' presence, and would never acquiesce in any integrative social order. The only black presence whites would entertain was one in which blacks docilely accepted a servile status. With these convictions, Delany consequently regarded the position of Douglass and other blacks who insisted on staying and fighting as unreasonable, dangerous and more likely to result in violent confrontation. Violence was never a viable option for Delany. The correlation of forces convinced him that blacks would come out the ultimate losers in any violent confrontation with whites. Even if violence was capable of yielding positive results, Delany would still have avoided it. His ideological upbringing stressed the supreme importance of survival, of self-preservation and of the need to avoid violence at all cost. In Delany's makeup violence had no place, as John Brown found out.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER FOUR


2. Ibid.

3. The acquisition of new territories had always been a source of conflict between pro- and anti-slavery forces. In 1820 the Missouri Compromise struck a balance between the "free" and slave states by excluding slavery from the territories north of latitude 36° 30'. In 1850, however, the problem surfaced over the disposition of territories acquired during the Mexican War. The Compromise of 1850 abolished the slave trade in the District of Columbia. It admitted California into the Union as a free state. Settlers in New Mexico and Utah would decide, on the principle of popular sovereignty, whether slavery would be allowed or not. John A. Krout, United States to 1877 (New York: Barnes and Noble Inc., 1966), pp. 124-126. A more authoritative analysis of this is found in Don E. Fehrenbacher's The South and Three Sectional Crises (Baton Rouge: L.S.U., 1980), pp. 25-44. See also his The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978).

4. William and Jane Pease, They Who Would Be Free: Blacks' Search For Freedom, 1830-1861 (New York, 1974). Part IV deals with the increasing radicalization of the black movement. See also their "Confrontation and Abolition in the 1850s," Journal of American History 58, March 1972. Vincent Harding, There is a River: The Black Struggle For Freedom in America (New York, 1983), Chapters 7 and 8. Reactions from various black state conventions show a general condemnation of the Fugitive Slave Law. For more on black protests against the Law, see Benjamin Quarles, Black Abolitionists (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), Chapter IX. What the mainstream of the black movement wanted was to achieve acceptance and equality in America. The reactions also included a strong condemnation and rejection of colonization. At Cazenovia in 1850, "free" blacks overwhelmingly expressed their determination to stand by their brethren still in bondage. Blacks voiced similar commitments and determination in conventions in Ohio (1851) and California (1855), Massachusetts (1854). The proceedings of these conventions reveal a strong desire for integration into America, a determination to resist colonization and finally a recognition of the need to continue to strive for economic, social and moral reforms within the black community. The convention in Ohio (1851) debated the issue of whether the Constitution was pro- or anti-slavery. A compromise approach suggested by Charles H. Langston was adopted. Even if the Constitution was pro-slavery, he

5. Delany's rage over the Fugitive Slave Law spared no one. He vowed to destroy anyone who dared to approach his house in search of slaves. This included law enforcement officers like constables, sheriffs, magistrates, judges of the Supreme Court, the President himself and any member of his Cabinet. Frank A. Rollin, Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany (Boston, 1868), p. 76.

6. Ibid., pp. 68-69.


8. The Cash article, perhaps the most recent and authoritative on the subject, suggests that none of the three black students acquired a Harvard medical degree. Laing and Snowden completed their studies elsewhere, while Delany returned to Pittsburgh. Harvard did not produce its first black doctor until 1869. The present curator of rare books and manuscripts of the Boston Medical Library, Richard J. Wolfe, in a personal letter, corroborates Cash's conclusion that the three blacks were allowed to complete the courses they paid for. It is still uncertain, however, if these courses completed the requirements for the degree. While Delany might have satisfied some of the basic admission requirements — age, character and apprenticeship — it is not certain that he met all the requirements for the degree. For instance, there is no indication that he submitted a dissertation to the faculty on some medical subject, which was a prerequisite. See Montague Cobb, "Martin R. Delany," Medical History, May 1952, Vol. 44, No. 3, p. 235. However, if Delany's subsequent success in the field of medicine is anything to go by, he probably satisfied all the requirements but was denied a diploma for racial reasons.

10. In one of his regular reports to the North Star, Delany had described William L. Garrison and other white abolitionists as colonizationists who were converted to abolitionism by blacks at the National Colored Convention in Philadelphia, 1830. The North Star, June 5, 1849, p. 2. Garrisonians generally objected to this claim.


12. Voice of the Fugitive, August 13, 1851, p. 2; July 30, 1851, p. 2; September 24, 1851, p. 2:

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. F. Rollin, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., pp. 78-80.

18. Ibid.


20. The Condition..., ibid., p. 10.

21. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

22. Ibid., p. 11. A man of his time. Undoubtedly the experience of the Italians, Hungarians and other European ethnic groups struggling for independence at this time shaped Delany's response to the relative condition of blacks in America.


24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.
26. Ibid. He deals extensively with these laws on pages 38-49.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., pp. 44-48, 194, 205. Using this law as a yardstick, Delany found blacks miserably wanting in material attainment. Everything visible testified to white skill and industry.

29. Ibid., p. 46.


31. Ibid., pp. 49-50α.

32. Ibid., Chapters VI-XV. Blacks possessed love of country or what he termed Amor Patria. This was why they had steadfastly defended the nation in times of crisis in the past. They had also contributed immensely to the economic, literary and scientific development of the country. He mentioned such notable figures as Benjamin Banneker, Phillis Wheatley, James Forten, William Whipper and Daddy "Ben" Richards.

33. Ibid., p. 205α.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid., pp. 205-206.

36. Ibid.

37. He argued that the Constitution was pro-slavery. He quoted the Fugitive Slave Law in its entirety. This Law, he insisted, completely divested blacks of any rights. It transformed them into slaves in the midst of freedom awaiting claims by any whiteman. The Law constituted a significant foundation upon which the Union was built. Consequently, whites would fight to sustain the Law and the Union at all cost, he argued. Ibid., pp. 147-158.

38. Ibid., pp. 23-29, 155-156.

39. Ibid., pp. 210, 212-213. Actually, Delany's loss of faith in "mass" conventions first became apparent in 1851 when he opposed a call by a committee of blacks for a national convention on grounds that the black masses were not prepared for, and in fact, unfit for such a function. Only the best brains, the intelligent, mature and prudent-minded should undertake such responsibilities. The North Star, April 3, 1851, p. 2.

40. The Liberator (Boston), May 7, 1852, p. 14.

41. Ibid.
42. Ibid., May 21, 1852.

43. Ibid.

44. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 81.

45. Vincent Harding, op. cit., pp. 173-176. Victor Ullman, The Beginnings of Black Nationalism: Martin R. Delany (Boston, 1971), pp. 141-147. Most modern critics of Delany rightly emphasize "emigration" as the central theme in the book. However, this almost monolithic interpretation neglects other equally important but complex issues Delany advanced. This approach succeeds in presenting a thematic consistency that is completely alien to the work. From this emphasis on emigration is derived Delany's characterization as a nationalist and radical. Howard H. Bell described emigration as a radical movement, and he called Douglass and the integrationists, conservatives. To strengthen his argument, he deliberately confused the chronology of the two movements in the 1850s to create the impression that emigrationism was the strongest movement with an early start while integrationism developed later to catch up with and respond to the emigrationist momentum. (He dealt with the Cleveland convention of 1854 first, before that of Rochester, 1853. He thereby presented the latter as responding to the former, instead of vice versa.) Bell claimed that the emigration/colonization momentum of the late 1850s and early '60s swept many ardent integrationists along its course, but he failed to acknowledge that the Civil War equally drove many ardent emigrationists (e.g., Delany) into the integrationist camp, thus revealing how fragile their emigrationist/nationalist sentiments had been. Adam D. Simmons also characterized the emigrationist movement as radical. He even described Lewis Woodson, in relation to Charles Ray, editor of The Colored American, as a radical. See his "Ideologies and Programs of the Negro Anti-Slavery Movement, 1830-1861," Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1983. One way of ascertaining which movement was radical and conservative in the 1850s and early '60s is to establish how far each threatened the pro-slavery establishment. This establishment, if it had its way, would want to get rid of the "free" blacks [colonize them in some distant places]. The integrationists rejected colonization and urged blacks to struggle for their rights in America. As a result, they were victims of anti-abolitionist violence. The emigrationists, on the other hand, wanted "free" blacks out; precisely what the pro-slavery establishment wanted. Howard H. Bell, "A Survey of the Negro Convention Movement, 1830-1861," Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1953. In the estimation of blacks generally in the nineteenth century, the emigrationist alternative was conservative since it sought an escapist path for the very few "free" blacks. This solution, as even the pro-slavery forces acknowledge, would make America safe for slavery. Nineteenth century black nationalism was, however, not necessarily emigrationist, neither was emigrationism a radical movement. Perhaps because of the colonial experience, black nationalism today is rightly conceived as radical. In the
nineteenth century, however, it was a complex phenomenon that never completely divorced itself from Anglo-Saxon values. Wilson J. Moses, The Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925 (Archon Books, 1978). Leonard Sweet made precisely the same point in his Black Images of America, 1784-1870 (New York, 1976). Black leaders in the nineteenth century, whether they espoused integrationist or emigrationist ideas, were also nationalistic, in that the reality of slavery and racism developed in them a sense of identity with one another. Many blacks, as the Peases demonstrate, preferred to develop this sense of identity into a strong territorial power base within the confines of the United States. Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiment in America (Madison, 1972). Delany's emigrationism was part of this complex phenomenon, and at no time was he completely antagonistic to Anglo-Saxon values.


47. At a state convention of blacks in Cincinnati, Ohio, Jan.: 1852, only two out of sixty delegates favored emigration. "Minutes of the State Convention of the Colored Citizens of Ohio," in Foner and Walker (eds.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 276, 279. "Cazenovia Fugitive Slave Convention, August 21-22, 1850," ibid., Vol. I, p. 45. "Maryland Free Colored People's Convention, July 27-28, 1852," ibid., Vol. II, p. 43. Throughout the 1850s, the consciousness of identity with those still in bondage was pervasive among "free" blacks. See the Proceedings of the Black State Conventions as recorded in the twin Foner and Walker volumes. This consciousness was real. It was neither artificial nor the result of abolitionist propaganda as Howard Bell claimed. See his A Survey..., op. cit., p. 224.


52. Delany was conspicuously absent in this convention, even though it took place in his home town of Pittsburgh. "National Free Soil Convention," Frederick Douglass's Paper, August 20, 1852, p. 2.

54. By mid-1853 a strong anti-Fugitive Slave Law committee had emerged in Pittsburgh, organized by Delany, John Peck and others. Its major objective was to frustrate the designs of slave-hunters by physically interfering to release fugitives. The cause célèbre of this was the case of a Jamaican boy decoyed and brought as a slave to the United States. As his captors took him through Pittsburgh en route to Tennessee, Delany and other members of the committee forcibly rescued him. "The Case of Alexander Hendrikure," Frederick Douglass's Paper, June 17, 1853, p. 1.


56. "Letter From M.R. Delany" Frederick Douglass's Paper, April 1, 1853, p. 2. Delany urged blacks to turn instead to the intelligent, mature and experienced in their midst for aid.

57. Ibid.

58. Stanley W. Campbell maintained that the need to preserve the Union was largely responsible for Northern acquiescence to the functioning of the Fugitive Slave Law up to 1854. The Slave Catchers: Enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law, 1850-1860 (Chapel Hill, 1968), pp. 55-79. At least in cases brought before the courts, the Law worked, he argued. Delany also had other legitimate grounds for apprehension. Only about ten years earlier, the federal government had put its force behind the slavocrats in the celebrated Prigg vs. Pennsylvania (1842), which sought to strengthen the Fugitive Act of 1793. Paul Finkleman, "Prigg v. Pennsylvania and Northern State Court's Anti-Slavery Use of a Pro-Slavery Decision," Civil War History, Vol. 25, March 1979. Finkleman argues, however, that Prigg vs. Pennsylvania failed in the Northern states. The enactment of personal liberty laws, denied state judges any jurisdiction in fugitive cases and prohibited state officials from cooperating in enforcing the Fugitive Law.


60. V. Harding, op. cit.


63. Ibid.


66. Ibid.


68. The Liberator (Boston), Sept. 29, 1854, p. 156.

69. H. Aptheker, op. cit., pp. 366-368. F.J. Miller, op. cit., pp. 157-162. The debate between John Mercer Langston and H. Ford Douglass was the most heated. John was originally a slave in Louisa County, Virginia. He was freed after the death of his father and owner, and later entered Oberlin College, Ohio. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1854. His life-experience thus far had been one of progress. With his brother Charles, he participated actively in the freedom struggles in Ohio and in the entire nation. In 1852, the Ohio Convention of Colored Freemen commissioned him to draw up a Memorial to the general assembly of the state. The Memorial did not reach the state assembly until June, 1854. In it he condemned social and political discrimination, arguing that blacks had as much right to American citizenship as any white. He advocated the restoration of all political rights to blacks. Earlier in 1852, John had supported emigration; but by July 1853 he had changed his position, and was very active at Rochester. The demands in his "Memorial" were essentially integrationist. Somehow he got invited to Cleveland, and stirred up controversy with his anti-emigrationist speech. For his "Memorial" see "Memorial of John Mercer Langston For the Colored People of Ohio to the General Assembly of the State..., June, 1854," in Foner and Walker (eds.), op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 297-303, 217, 238-239. For H. Ford Douglass's response, see H. Aptheker, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 366-368.


71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., p. 366.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid. For over two thousand years, argued Delany, whites had nursed just one ambition; to crush blacks completely. The issue was plainly black v. white he emphasized. Ibid., pp. 335-336.

80. Ibid., pp. 335-338.

81. Ibid., p. 355.

82. Ibid., p. 338.

83. Ibid., p. 355. The "numerical feebleness" of blacks rendered any radical/revolutionary solution unviable. Ibid., pp. 360-365. In 1854 the Kansas-Nebraska Act nullified the Missouri Compromise of 1820 by permitting slavery in Kansas even though it was North of 36°30'. Many saw this as a prelude to unlimited expansion of slavery. The bug-bear whites dreaded most was amalgamation, and very few, if any, favored a racially integrated society. Leonard L. Richards, "Gentlemen of Property and Standing": Anti-Abolitionist Mobs in Jacksonian America (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 30-32. George M. Frederickson, op. cit., especially Chapter 5.


85. Ibid., pp. 332, 336-337. Even if Canada escaped U.S. imperial designs, Delany believed that the ruling elements there would forever exclude blacks.


88. Excerpts from these papers reprinted in The Liberator, Sept. 29, 1859, p. 156.

89. Ibid.

90. The New York State Council of Colored People in a hastily convened meeting resolved to "most earnestly and determinedly oppose every scheme of colonization...whether by the American Colonization Society, or the more dangerous and equally detestable scheme, the Emigration Convention." Foner and Walker (eds.), op. cit., Vol. I,
p. 84. In Massachusetts, blacks similarly condemned emigration as "tending to promote the Colonization's nefarious plan of expatriation..." ibid., Vol. II, p. 93. In other conventions in Ohio 1854, 1856, 1857, 1858, California 1855, Connecticut 1854, Illinois 1856, blacks put forward basically integrationist demands in rejection of emigration/colonization. Foner and Walker, ibid., Vols. I and II.

91. Many Northerners soon came to resent the Fugitive Slave Law. Lary Gara, "The Fugitive Slave Law: A Double Paradox," Civil War History 10, 3, Sept. 1964, p. 324. Also his "Slavery and Slave Power," ibid., 15, 1, 1969. The emergence of personal liberty laws in some Northern states undermined the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. Paul Finkleman, op. cit. Finkleman also argued that the doctrine of comity that had effected some modus vivendi between Northern and Southern states collapsed in the 1850s. Long before secession, the Union had split into two irreconcilably opposed groups of states. An Imperfect Union: Slavery, Federalism and Comity (Chapel Hill, 1981). One of the resolutions of the anti-Nebraska movement maintained that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise freed the North from any implied pledge to permit slavery in the territories South of 36°30', and therefore, it called on all the free states to unite and destroy slavery wherever it existed. The New York Times, Wed. August 9, 1854, p. 4.

92. The Provincial Freeman, Oct. 13, 1855, pp. 97-98.

93. Ibid.

94. Ibid.


97. Ibid.


99. The Provincial Freeman, July 5, 1856, p. 46.

100. Delany and Campbell, op. cit., pp. 36-37.


106. Ibid. At a secret meeting in New Orleans, Henry rejected a call to lead a prayer on the ground that religion had failed him. "My warfare is not heavenly, but earthly," he told the slaves, "I have not to do with angels, but with men....I feel like cursing than praying." Ibid., p. 103. This notwithstanding, Henry was not an atheist. He strongly believed in God and remained a devout Christian. What he condemned was the corruption of Christianity for pro-slavery ends. Also ibid., pp. 29-30, 44.


108. Ibid., p. 122. The introduction of the word "insurrection" among slaves was like the application of fire to a drought-seasoned field. The harvest was ripe," Henry claimed. Yet he deliberately discouraged insurrection.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid.

111. The North Star, April 20, 1849, p. 2.


113. Ibid.


116. The whole of part II of Blake deals with the Cuban "revolutionary" movement.

117. Ibid. The last chapter titled "American Tyranny: Oppression of the Negro" deals with this debate.
118. Ibid.

119. Ibid.

120. Placido, a cousin of Henry's and a poet urged the "revolutionaries" to endeavor to prove to the world that "not only that the African race is the principal producers of the greater part of the luxuries of enlightened countries...but that Africans are among the most industrious in the world, and before long, must hold the balance of commercial power...." Ibid., pp. 261-266. He further emphasized that Africa possessed in abundance the basic prerequisite for all great nationalities - Territory, Population and Resources. Ibid.

121. Ibid., p. 4.

122. Ibid., pp. 56-61.


CHAPTER FIVE

"NOT MARKED FOR MARTYRDOM": OF JOHN BROWN AND VIOLENCE

CHATHAM, 1858

If there was any doubt about Delany’s abhorrence of violence, his relationship with John Brown dispelled it. When Brown crossed the border into Canada in April 1858, he had given up in his search for an effective constituency in the United States for his revolutionary scheme. Brown grew up an inveterate enemy of the Peculiar Institution. In 1856, he manifested this anger against pro-slavery forces in Kansas. Though many blacks and white liberals shared Brown’s hatred for slavery, very few were prepared to transform this hatred into overt violence. Moral and financial support they would readily give, but if Brown wanted men he had to turn elsewhere.

In May 1858, Brown contacted Delany in Chatham and requested his aid in organizing a constitutional convention that would ratify his Constitution and provide the needed mandate for his revolutionary scheme. Delany played a leading role in the convention, but was conspicuously absent in the actual raid. Many accused Delany of cowardice, and of betraying Brown. Delany, however, denied any explicit knowledge of Brown’s violent intentions. He intimated that Brown misinformed him. Delany’s denial suggests a conflict between what transpired during the convention and the actual raid. In attacking Harper’s Ferry, Brown, Delany suggested, violated the declarations of the convention.
This denial is understandable, coming especially at a time when accomplices were being hunted down and prosecuted. But it is not true. Firstly, Brown did not make his violent intentions secret. Secondly, the raid resulted directly from the convention and, thirdly, evidence suggests that Delany knew much more than he admitted.

Because he denied being privy to the fundamentals of Brown's scheme, Delany left no significant records or clues that would aid a reconstruction of his actual role. However, the testimony of several of Brown's associates seriously implicates him.

Ironically, ten years after Brown's death, in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War when blacks became more appreciative of Brown's movement, Delany's authorized biographer, Frank Rollin, attempted to claim for him part of the credit for the movement. According to Rollin, it seems remarkable that the man whom providence had chosen to warn a guilty nation of its dangers, and through whom the African race in America received the boon of freedom, which is but a prelude to the entire abolition of slavery, . . . should be sent first to Major Delany in Canada, through whom alone he considered himself able to perfect the plans necessary to begin the great work! 4

"Certainly," as Rollin aptly observed, "the ways of Providence are beyond mortal comprehension." 5 Delany turned out to be the wrong person for the difficult and hazardous task Brown set out to accomplish. This attempt by Rollin to give credit to Delany for something he earlier dissociated himself from further testifies to the gross ambiguities in Delany's career.

All that Brown proposed at the convention, according to Delany, was
a scheme for reorganizing the Underground Railroad (UGR), such that Kansas would replace Canada as a terminus. Brown's scheme, Delany claimed, "was nothing more than to make Kansas instead of Canada, the terminus of the Underground Railroad, instead of passing off the slaves to Canada, to send them to Kansas." The Constitution that the convention ratified, therefore, according to Delany's interpretation, would govern this new black community in Kansas. He claimed that he suggested to Brown that the new movement be named the Subterranean Pass Way (SPW), to distinguish it from the UGR. No one ever mentioned the idea of Harper's Ferry, Delany maintained. Had Brown made his violent intentions known, "it is doubtful of its being favorably regarded," he insisted. Whatever turned Brown's mind to Harper's Ferry was known only to him and perhaps to Kagi, "who had the honor of being deeper in his confidence than anyone else," Delany concluded. Evidence exists, however, which suggests the contrary.

In accepting Delany's account, Ullman writes: "Delany's accuracy concerning the objectives of anything with which he was connected and against slavery cannot be challenged." The only discrepancy in Delany's account, according to Ullman, lay in his claim of credit for naming the new scheme, the Subterranean Pass Way. This name, Ullman discovered, had existed long before John Brown came to Chatham. "Otherwise," he insists, "Delany's report must be considered valid. Except for the bare minutes of the constitutional convention found in Brown's effects, there is no complete eyewitness report of what was discussed at the meeting. All were sworn to secrecy and after Harper's Ferry, the question was academic in a literal sense." Ullman further quotes Boyd Stutler to
corroborate his suggestion that John Brown may have convinced Delany that he had no violent purpose in mind, but (only) intended to take his men south to run off slaves and establish a separate independent black state. This was just what Delany endorsed in 1858; not Harper's Ferry. 12

Vincent Harding added his weight to this argument when he wrote, "it appears that much of the presentation and discussion at Chatham focused not on the daring military action (still being organized in Brown's head) but on the constitution and legal status of the new territory." 13 Harding also accepts Delany's other often cited excuse about his preoccupation with the emigrationist movement. While Delany may have been momentarily tempted to join forces with Brown, his emigrationist commitments made it impossible. 14

Ullman's argument is untenable. There are as many discrepancies in Delany's account as there are in his entire public career. The minutes of the convention are not "bare" as Ullman chose to describe them. These minutes, plus the testimony of some members, and survivors of the raid, provide the strongest evidence for the indictment of Delany.

By the time Brown came to Chatham to seek Delany's aid, his friends in Boston, New York and other parts of the United States already knew what his scheme was all about. Brown had the moral and financial backing of the so-called "secret six": Smith, Howe, Higginson, Parker, Stearns and Sanborn. Such black leaders as John Mercer Langston, William Still, Jermain W. Loguen and Frederick Douglass, already knew that Brown was on a war path. 15 In fact, Douglass claimed that during a visit to his
home, Brown specifically mentioned Harper's Ferry as a possible point of attack. 16-

However much these men sympathized with Brown's objectives, none was prepared to plunge into what they perceived as suicidal adventurism. Money and moral support they would readily provide. But if Brown wanted to raise an army, precisely what he wanted, he had to turn elsewhere. By early 1858 Brown already had a small core of eleven ardent supporters undergoing military training in Springsdale, Iowa. But he needed many more than these. Consequently, the above "distinguished friends" advised him to turn to Canada. 17 What better place to seek recruits for his daring scheme than the emigre community in Canada West? Anyone who dared the hazardous journey through the Underground Railroad to freedom was more likely to regard Brown's scheme favorably. This proved wrong. 18 And what better person to approach than Delany, who, within a short time of arrival in Chatham, won the respect and admiration of all, and was already making an impact on provincial politics? Brown came to Chatham, therefore, with high hopes. As he told Delany on their first meeting "I came to Chatham expressly to see you, this being my third visit on the errand. I must see you at once sir." 19 He then proceeded to tell Delany what he wanted:

> It is men I want, and not money; money I can get plentiful enough, but no men. Money can come without being seen, but men are afraid of identification with me, though they favor my measure. They are cowards, sir! Cowards. 20

Brown wanted not only recruits but also a convention to ratify a constitution he had already drawn up for his future state. Delany
admitted he found no fault with Brown's demands and, therefore, aided in calling a convention. Before the convention met, however, several preliminary meetings took place in the home of the Shadd family, where Brown lodged, and also in the office of The Provincial Freeman. Since Delany was a close friend of the Shadds, and since Brown held him in such high regard, it is likely that he was present at most, if not all, of the preliminary meetings. During one such meeting early in 1858, Brown explicitly revealed his revolutionary intentions. As he angrily told his listeners:

For twenty years we have used constitutional methods and got—where? I hate these milk-and-water agitators. The situation demands force. Money? Our friends in the East will give it. Arms? The Missouri-Kansas Committee will supply them. For use in the South? Why not? In God's war, I use whatever comes to my hand. Why should not the battles of bleeding Kansas be fought in the South? Where else in America are four million slaves waiting to rise against their masters?

The convention, which finally met on the morning of May 8, 1858 coincided with the close of the annual Canada Colored Conference (C.C.C.) during which influential blacks from all parts of Canada met to deliberate on critical issues affecting them. Tradition has it that Brown knew of the C.C.C. meeting in Chatham and timed his convention to coincide with its termination, upon which he was able, through Delany, to reach the black delegates, some of whom he attracted to his convention.

When Brown's convention finally met, about forty-six people showed up, thirty of whom were blacks. There were twelve whites: Brown and his eleven followers from Springdale, Iowa. William C. Munro, a noted
emigrationist, chaired the sessions. Richard Realf and Osborn P. Anderson, among the few survivors of the raid, claim that Delany formally introduced Brown to the members, and, on his motion, Brown then proceeded to speak at length on his scheme. In his opening address, Brown revealed in no uncertain terms that he wanted to destroy slavery through violent confrontation. In his testimony before the Senate Investigating Committee, Realf gave the substance of Brown's speech:

Brown, on rising, stated that for twenty or thirty years the idea had possessed him like a passion, of giving liberty to the slaves. He stated immediately thereafter, that he made a journey to England in 1851...during which period he made a tour upon the European continent, inspecting all fortifications, and especially all earth-work forts which he could find, with a view, as he stated, of applying the knowledge thus gained, with modifications and inventions of his own, to such a mountain warfare as he thereafter spoke upon in the United States.

Brown then proceeded to inform them that he had studied and mastered the strategies of past revolutions like those of the Romans, Spaniards and the Haitians. He assured his listeners that upon the first "intimation of plans for liberation," slaves would desert their plantations in large numbers and join him. With more and more slaves joining, he would set up a base on the mountainous regions. The line of mountains which cuts diagonally through Maryland and Virginia down through the Southern states into Tennessee and Alabama would constitute this base from which to render slavery dysfunctional. Brown emphasized that he would forcefully respond to any acts of reprisal from either the militia of the separate states or the federal government, both of which he hoped to defeat in battle. After their defeat, he would "then organize the
freed blacks under his provisional constitution, which would have jurisdiction over the mountainous region." The existence of this big free state, Brown hoped, would have an osmotic effect on the neighboring slave states, gradually undermining them. 30

Brown did not make his intentions secret. He enthusiastically expected all blacks, free and slave, North and South, and in Canada, to stand by him. 31 In his enthusiastic response, Delany suggested that all members take an oath of secrecy not to divulge the substance of any of the proceedings. 32 According to J.H. Kagi, secretary of the convention, Delany proposed that the following parole of honor be taken by all members:

I solemnly affirm that I will not in any way divulge any of the secrets of this convention, except to persons entitled to know the same, on the pain of forfeiting the respect and protection of this organization. 33

When asked by the Senate Investigating Committee whether any Canadian at the convention participated in debating Brown's plan after he laid it on the table, Raelf answered, "Yes sir. Dr. Delany was one of the prominent disputants and debaters." 34 Then, the questioner proceeded, "Will you state as far as you can recollect, anything that fell from Delany showing a coincidence of purpose with John Brown?" In response, Raelf intimated that Delany repeatedly urged blacks to support Brown unequivocably, and "aid in the overthrow of the government as a measure that could succeed." The whole tenor of Delany's speech left Brown with the impression that he could rely on the unflinching support of Canadian blacks. 35
Another member of the convention, J. Monroe Jones, a gunsmith from Chatham, recollected that Brown called daily at his gun shop "and spoke of the great subject that lay uppermost in his mind, plans etc." and that he presented these plans to the convention. 36 Although Jones denied attending all the meetings, he seemed to have attended the crucial ones. During one such meeting, Jones spoke against the plans, suggesting that they were bound to fail. The Southern slaveholders were too powerful, he maintained, and added that American slaves were too ignorant to respond favorably to Brown's scheme. The Southern slaves "were different from slaves in the French West Indies and San Domingo," he informed Brown. 37

Delany played an ambivalent role. While he may have favored the overall scheme, he seemed also to have voiced misgivings about the chances of success. According to Rollin, Delany "is remembered by those who attended the Councils of Chatham as having objected to many propositions favored by Captain Brown, as not having the chance of success." 38 In fact, at one point in the debate, Brown reacted to Delany's repeated objections with the words, "Gentlemen, if Dr. Delany is afraid, don't let him make you all cowards!" 39

When the meeting reconvened on the 10th of May, Delany, according to Osborn Anderson, spoke in favor of Brown's scheme and urged the adoption of the Constitution for the provisional government. Despite the objections Delany earlier raised, he seemed, on the whole, to have favored the scheme. His name appeared in the list of those who endorsed the Constitution. 40
In its preamble, the Constitution described slavery as "a most barbarous, unprovoked and unjustifiable war of one portion of its citizens upon another." Therefore, members of the convention bound themselves together better to protect their "persons, property, lives and liberties." The Constitution demanded absolute faith from the members, "who shall agree to sustain and enforce the provisional Constitution and ordinances of the organization." 42

Furthermore, all persons connected with the organization could carry arms openly, but concealed weapons were forbidden. 43 Brown was nominated Commander-in-chief, and on the seconding of Delany, elected unanimously. Kagi became the secretary of state. 44 Article forty-six of the Constitution is especially significant. It declared that the organization did not mean to encourage the overthrow of the government of any state, or of the United States, or even of the Union, but simply to "amend and repeal." 45 But as Garrison Villard rightly observed, "Brown sought to oppose the authority of the Union by force of arms, while denying that anyone could construe his actions as, treason or disloyalty." 46 A plausible explanation for this exists. The entire Constitution, as W.E.B. DuBois noted, was a triumph for moderation. 47 It perforse had to be.

G.I. Reynolds, representing the minority radical wing of the convention, objected to the inclusion of article forty-six, arguing that he owed no allegiance to a country that had robbed and humiliated him. 48 But his was a lone voice in a convention dominated by blacks who had serious misgivings about the success of the movement, and were obviously disturbed by the possibility of United States government reprisals. In fact, it should have been clear to Brown even before the convention ended that
these blacks would ultimately desert him. Like many other blacks, Delany refused to serve in any capacity.49

Brown did not restrict his activity in Canada to the convention. He paid several visits to St. Catharines, where the indomitable "General" Harriet Tubman lived, and solicited her support in recruiting men and raising funds for his movement. She readily obliged and soon became a key part of his recruiting network in Canada West.50 Evidence also indicates that "a large John Brown army" was recruited in Ingersoll and Buxton. The fate of this "large army" may never be known, since only one Canadian, Osborn Anderson, reached the firing line.51

Delany's modern critics tend to underestimate the significance of a letter he wrote to Kagi dated Chatham, August 16, 1858. This letter was discovered in a trunk found in a house shortly before being deserted by Brown and his men. It strongly ties Delany to the network of agents, supporters and correspondents of Brown's movement. "Uncle" as he referred to Brown, had left Canada for the United States, obviously to gear up support for the movement. In this letter, Delany betrayed anxiety, hope and enthusiasm for the "good time coming out of "Uncle's movement."52

Considering what transpired at the convention, and Brown's subsequent recruitment efforts in St. Catharines, Ingersoll and Buxton, it is ludicrous for anyone associated with the movement to deny any knowledge of its raison d'etre. In fact, Raelf's testimony indicates that Brown made the details of his plan known at the convention. None of Brown's intimate followers possessed "more than barely sufficient information, and none [was]
cognizant of more than the general plan of his design," Raelf maintained, "until the time we reached Chatham."\(^{53}\)

Therefore, the attempt by Delany to separate what transpired at the convention from the subsequent raid, and the claim of Jones that he knew nothing "about when or where the attack was to be made," are untenable. Brown's activities in Canada West clearly established that he was not preparing for a picnic with slaveholders. Another member of the convention, George B. Gill, acknowledged that Brown's intentions were obvious from the method of his organization, and that members "had almost precise knowledge of this." What perhaps no one knew about, according to Gill, was the "locality selected."\(^{54}\) Brown did not need to divulge his locality. That would have been suicidal.

Those who attended Brown's constitutional convention knew precisely what they were up against. When they ratified his Constitution, they provided a de facto approval for his entire scheme. As Boyd Stutler emphasized, when Brown launched his attack on Harpers Ferry,

he was acting as Commander-in-chief, regularly elected, of a government not yet established, backed by the solemn pronouncements of a duly organized Convention and with all the powers that could be derived from a Provisional Constitution and Ordinances for the People of the United States which had been adopted by that Convention.\(^{55}\)

Delany's conflicting role in the convention, and his attempt, in the immediate aftermath of the raid to dissociate himself from it, plus Rollin's attempt ten years later to claim some credit for him, testify to his ambivalence toward violence as an instrument of social change.
But he was not alone in this. He was a product of his time. While many leading blacks, as earlier suggested, sympathized with Brown's scheme, they also knew it had the least chance of success, and cleverly avoided direct involvement. Unlike Douglass, for instance, who boldly told Brown he would not go along with him, Delany did not. Instead, he left Brown with the impression that he would support, and urged other blacks to do the same. When Brown finally made his move, however, Delany was nowhere in sight.

There was a strong element of egotism in Delany's inability to turn down Brown's demand. In the passage noted earlier, Brown categorically told Delany how much everything hinged on his support, and how "distinguished friends" in the United States had advised him to seek his aid. Delany obviously felt flattered. But he was more surprised at the conclusions of both Brown and those "distinguished friends." He knew he was not made for violent revolutions. After all, Rollin once admitted that nature did not mark Delany for martyrdom. If he had any intentions of turning Brown down, these were subverted when Brown complimentingly remarked, "Why should you be surprised? Sir, the people of the Northern states are cowards. Slavery has made cowards of them all. You can effect nothing among such people." In Brown's estimation, Delany was the man for his scheme.

In this, Brown displayed a tragic misconception of Delany. Delany had already made it clear in his writings how he felt about violence. It would never succeed. The slave power was too formidable. Brown's misunderstanding, notwithstanding, Delany cannot escape blame for his own
prevarications. To say that he had foreknowledge of the raid is a gross understatement. He helped plan it. In his own defense, Douglass rightly underlined, "of all guilty men, he is the guiltiest: who lures his fellow men to an understanding of this sort, under promise of assistance which he fails to render." Douglass may well have had Delany in mind; for after helping Brown plan his scheme, he set sail for Africa.

About four months after the Brown convention Delany received a mandate from the executive council of the National Board to explore Africa. The very next year, he departed. But the mandate severely restricted his scope of action. The new president of the Board, William H. Day, and other members, being now opposed to emigration beyond North America, simply mandated Delany to make

a topographical, geological and geographical examination of the valley of the Niger...and an inquiry into the state and condition of the people...together with such scientific inquiries as may...be deemed expedient...with the Board being entirely opposed to any emigration there as such.58

The depth and strength of opposition to emigration among black leadership, and the decline of emigrationist impulse even within his own organization severely handicapped Delany. Financing the trip became problematic. His appeals to the American Missionary Society and the Colonization Society yielded almost nothing. His appeals for philanthropic support in New York also met with little success. But at least he got enough to set him off on his trip in May, 1859.59

It is ironic, however, that despite his denial of complicity in Brown's movement, and his subsequent emigrationist scheme, Delany, like
many other blacks, could not help but capitalize on the chain of events resulting from Brown's movement. As the nation drifted into a Civil War, black leaders suddenly realized how justified Brown had been. Delany suspended his emigrationist scheme.

2. W.E.B. DuBois, ibid. Brown led four of his sons and two followers in a night attack on a pro-slavery settlement at Pottawatomie Creek. Five men lost their lives.

3. As DuBois rightly observed, leading blacks of the time believed in Brown, but not in his plan. They knew he was right, but they also knew that if he failed, they would probably pay the cost. Ibid., pp. 109-110. Stephen Oates also claimed that "the Negroes who signed Brown's Constitution wholeheartedly approved of the ideals in its preamble, and they shared the old man's extreme hatred of slavery. Yet many of them were not so sure about joining his force. The thought of going back South must have terrified them. The scheme of invasion itself sounded fantastic...they had risked their lives and suffered much hardship to get to Canada and freedom." See his To Purge This Land..., op. cit., p. 247. The Weekly Anglo-African also observed that few blacks were bold enough to espouse Brown's cause, and fewer still were willing to be co-laborers and identify with him. November 5, 1859.

4. Frank A. Rollin, Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany (Boston, 1868), p. 91. During Reconstruction in South Carolina, Delany once referred to himself as a "John Brown Abolitionist!"

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., p. 87.

7. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 90.

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., p. 193.
15. Albert Fried, op. cit., p. 53. Oswald G. Villard, op. cit., Chapter IX.
17. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 86.
18. Under the auspices of the Elgin Movement these early fugitives found peace and relative comfort in Canada. Many already owned the land on which they lived. Such refugee settlements sprang up in Buxton, Chatham, Windsor and in Essex County. When Brown came to Canada, therefore, he met an economically viable and thriving black community whose revolutionary ardor had considerably weakened as their economic status improved.
20. Ibid., p. 86. "If I am to do nothing here" Brown told Delany, "I want to know at once."
21. Ibid.
22. The Provincial Freeman was then Chatham's leading anti-slavery newspaper. The proprietors, Mary Shadd Cary and her brothers, Israel, Isaac, Absalom, came originally from Wilmington, Delaware. They were among Chatham's leading abolitionists. Their home served as one of the places where preliminary meetings with Brown took place. Jim Bearden and Linda Jean Butler, The Life and Times of Mary Shadd Cary (Toronto, 1977), Chapter 33.
23. An untitled and incomplete pamphlet in The Stanley J. Smith papers, Regional Room, The University of Western Ontario Library (hereafter referred to as The Smith Papers).
25. Ibid.
26. Members of John Brown's constitutional convention at Chatham, May 8-10, 1859, as transcribed by Virginia authorities from the signatures appended to the Constitution. Calendar of Virginia State
Papers, Vol. II, pp. 341-342. A copy in The Smith Papers. The original letter summoning the convention, dated April 29, 1858 was discovered somewhere in 1859, and it had the signatures of Delany and one J.M. Bell. Boyd B. Statler to Stanley Smith, Jan. 21, 1960, ibid.


29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Journal of the Provisional Constitutional Convention..., op. cit. Also Richard Realf's Testimony, ibid., p. 17.


34. Ibid.

35. Ibid. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 92. Rollin described Realf's charges as "without foundation."


37. Ibid.

38. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 93.

39. Ibid.


43. Ibid.
44. Osborn P. Anderson, op. cit.


46. Ibid.


48. Ibid.


56. Brown spent several days in Douglass's home discussing his scheme and trying to win Douglass over. "Our talk was long and earnest" Douglass reported. "We spent the most of Saturday and a part of Sunday in this debate—Brown for Harper's Ferry and I against it." Life and Times, op. cit., pp. 319-320. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 86.


CHAPTER SIX
THE AGE OF "BETTER METAL": 1860-1868

By the time Delany returned from Africa late in December 1860, Abraham Lincoln had been elected. South Carolina had seceded and the entire nation was drifting toward a civil war. His mind set on emigrating, he ignored the gathering storm. His African trip had been a success. He presented lectures in Liberia, Nigeria and on the way back in England. During one lecture in Liberia, he informed his audience that the entire black movement had been a gradual and peaceful evolution toward an African nationality.\(^1\) In Abeokuta, Nigeria, he successfully negotiated a treaty with the local chiefs which granted him a piece of land with the provision that "no heterogeneous nor promiscuous masses or companies but select and intelligent people of high moral as well as religious character were to be induced to settle there."\(^2\)

In England, he appealed for financial support for his African project from the big commercial houses.\(^3\) His appearance at the International Statistical Congress in England almost resulted in a diplomatic confrontation between Britain and the United States.\(^4\)

Back in America he published his findings, entitled *Official Report of the Niger Valley Exploring Party* (1861). He provided detailed and impressive evidence of the economic and natural potentialities of the African continent. These were undoubtedly meant to strengthen the emigrationist cause.\(^5\) The next two years were busy ones as he shuttled from
one part of the country to another spreading his emigrationist gospel and selling his book. His lectures attracted quite an audience. He would soon depart permanently for Africa, he claimed. Even Frederick Douglass attended a few of Delany's lectures in New York and commented favorably in his paper.

His lectures blended in with the growing momentum generated by the colonization movement early in the war. As "liberal" opinion in the North suggested the inevitability of emancipation, colonization schemes of different sorts emerged. Few whites wanted a multi-racial society. Lincoln initially coupled his emancipation with some project for colonizing blacks in Central America. In fact, Delany's Political Destiny was among the documents presented by apologists of colonization in the thirty-seventh Congress. The Haitian emigration scheme also generated some interest. The American Colonization Society, after years of unpopularity among blacks, sponsored a sister movement called the African Civilization Society, which professed to be anti-slavery. Delany condemned the Haitian movement, while at the same time emphasizing the rather dubious distinction between his emigrationist scheme and the colonization movement.

He seemed further strengthened in his conviction that America was not the right place for blacks. The natural policy of the ruling powers of Europe, he maintained, favored perpetual black political dependency. This would occur unless blacks returned to Africa. He advocated a council of leading blacks "composed of the highest intelligence" to deliberate on an appropriate course of action. The political movements
among the world powers, he insisted, aimed at nothing but the reduction of blacks to conditions best suited to the promotion of "their luxury, wealth and aggrandizement." "Is subordination our normal condition?" he asked. "I cannot hope to be long on this continent," he emphasized.\textsuperscript{15}

In spite of this grim picture, Delany's solution would not have significantly altered the fate of blacks. In one lecture, he claimed it was not his intention to get all blacks to emigrate to Africa but simply to impart information. All people, he said, were not adapted for Africa. Only those "enterprising and beneficial to society" were fit for Africa. Those he called men of "sterling worth" with capacity for developing the intelligence and resources of the continent.\textsuperscript{16}

However, colonization or emigration, whether for a few or for the masses failed miserably. The Haitian scheme ended disastrously as many migrants died of starvation and the survivors trooped back to the U.S. President Lincoln also abandoned his scheme.\textsuperscript{17} Delany's own emigration bubble burst when the African chiefs reneged on their treaty obligation, and the British occupied Lagos in 1861.\textsuperscript{18} The entire nation, it seemed, must contend with the reality of black presence.

Delany's abandonment of emigration was not solely the result of external developments. The Civil War itself was most crucial. However much he might close his eyes to the crisis, it dawned on him from the start that he had to reassess his strategy. Historians have yet to appreciate the significance of the Civil War in changing Delany's perception of black reality. In the previous decade he had perceived consensus as the fundamental feature of national policy on slavery. He ruled out
conflict. He predicted the nationalization of slavery as it spreads its tentacles northward. The North would do almost anything to placate the South in the name of Unionism.

He was right in many respects. Even with the outbreak of war, it was obvious that the North was not fighting to liberate blacks. This notwithstanding, the fact remained that war had broken out between both sections of the nation. Delany had never foreseen this. His entire philosophy in the 1850s had prepared him for a time when "a solemn convention" would nationalize slavery. The outbreak of the war, therefore, came as a surprise and a shock. It suddenly destroyed a fundamental basis of his emigrationism. Late in life, he admitted that even though his mind was set on returning and settling in Africa, the Civil War changed everything.19

With the outbreak of war, therefore, the "African" in Delany gave way to the "American." Like other leading blacks, he perceived the war as suddenly providing that opening to freedom and acceptance into the main-stream of American society. During the war, he scored one personal success after another. Finally, he got that acceptance and recognition that had long eluded him. Consequently, he grew more hopeful and optimistic. Increasingly, his attitudes toward white liberals, not to mention conservatives, changed. Where other black leaders saw danger, he saw hope. When they advocated radical and resolute responses, he counselled caution, moderation and compromise.

Further developments central to Delany's changing perception were his commissioning as the first black combat officer in the Union army, and his subsequent achievements as a Freedmen's Bureau agent in Hilton Head, South Carolina. This period, 1861 to 1868 could rightly be called
the golden age of his career. His fame spread like a wildfire in the South Carolina Sea Islands. His achievements attracted praise from blacks and whites. Enhancing his personal experience, Delany saw [or at least he thought he saw] the dawn of the age of what his authorized biographer called "better metal" for black Americans. The millenium had finally arrived.20

THE BLACK MAJOR

Delany wanted an active role in suppressing the rebellion. However, because "northern ingenuity" was yet to discover the latent power of blacks, he, like most blacks, remained anxiously on the sidelines.21 Consequently, he devoted his time to lecturing on Africa. Occasionally, he called for the arming of blacks.

Lincoln's inaugural address had not given blacks cause for optimism. Because he promised to sustain slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law, leading blacks grew skeptical of the government.22 Delany, however, viewed Lincoln's policy more positively. In October 1861, he confided in President Mahan of Michigan College that the war had become part of his daily existence and that nothing short of black participation would satisfy him.23 Mahan promised to approach Lincoln on behalf of blacks.

Delany realized that opportunities existed in war situations for personal and group aggrandizement. But blacks remained on the sidelines until the danger of imminent Confederate victory forced the federal government into recruiting them.24 Delany's first opportunity came when he was assigned to assist in recruiting the 54th Massachusetts regiment.
He was also appointed acting surgeon for Chicago. 25 Toussaint, then eighteen and schooling in Canada, sought his father's approval and quickly enlisted in the regiment. The response of blacks was quick and in no time the regiment was filled. 26

Delany then applied to be made surgeon of the blacks in the Unit. This post, however, went to someone else. 27 No sooner had the 54th regiment been completed than he was appointed agent to help recruit the heavy artillery in Rhode Island and Connecticut. 28 His successes here earned him services elsewhere. Through the recommendation of a Rhode Island artillery officer, Delany got the greatest contract of all: state contractor for the West, South-West states and territories. 29 From his headquarters in Chicago, Delany launched a massive recruitment campaign. His recruitment posters called on "Black National Defenders" to enlist in the Connecticut Volunteers with promise of $200 cash on being sworn in. 30 As a state controller, Delany would not only recruit black soldiers, but also sub-agents to serve in other areas within his jurisdiction. These sub-agents were offered the "most liberal compensation in cash." 31 There is no record of what actually accrued to Delany. However, since his sub-agents were liberally compensated, it is reasonable to suggest that he was equally well paid.

In December, 1863, on the strength of his successes, Delany wrote to the Secretary of War requesting authorization to recruit blacks in the Southern states. The issue of recruitment was, in his estimation, "one of the measures in which the claims of the black man may be effectively recognized without seemingly infringing upon those of others." 32
It is not certain that he got this agency.

Meanwhile, as an indication of his renewed hope and faith in America, in 1866 Delany moved his family back to the United States. He settled Catherine and the children in Wilberforce, Ohio. Since a thriving black community had developed around the university, Wilberforce provided an ideal atmosphere for the children's education. He purchased a piece of land close to the university from the A.M.E. Bishop Daniel A. Payne.

Turning his attention to the war, Delany addressed certain critical issues. First, the rampant discrimination against, and ill treatment of, blacks in the Union army disturbed him. Secondly, the emancipation proclamation notwithstanding, the government still wavered on the issue of black participation. Thirdly, news from Richmond, Virginia revealed that Confederates had no qualm with enlisting their slaves. Finally, there hovered the likelihood of a foreign intervention in the event of protracted conflict. To bring this war to a speedy conclusion therefore, Delany felt, the government must adopt "black freedom" as a strategy. Someone, however, must convince the government of this necessity, and the right person to do this, he felt, was himself.

Other blacks (Douglass included) had tried without success to get something concrete from Lincoln. Therefore, when Delany set out on February 6, 1865 for an interview with Lincoln, it seemed to many that he was on a fool's errand. Garnet, his host in Washington, tried to dissuade him, arguing that Lincoln would not respond favorably to any black demands. But Garnet was mistaken. Delany had not come to "demand" something from Lincoln, but to "offer" him something. To
everyone's surprise, Lincoln granted Delany an interview. The result of this interview remains a living testimony to the magnitude of Delany's power and success.

When Lincoln asked, 'What can I do for you, sir?' "Nothing, Mr. President," Delany replied, 'but I've come to propose something to you, which I think will be beneficial to the nation in this critical hour of her peril." The expression of interest on Lincoln's face was unimaginable. "Go on, sir" he said. Delany then proceeded to draw his attention to the abuses of black volunteers in the Union army, and recommended their promotion and commissioning according to merit, and also better treatment to prevent their desertion to the rebels. He also informed Lincoln that the rebels were already recruiting slaves, but that this could be subverted through the Underground Railroad. "How would you handle white prejudice?" Lincoln inquired. Delany then proceeded to propose

an army of blacks, commanded entirely by black officers, except such whites as may volunteer to serve, the army to penetrate through the heart of the South and make conquests with the banner of emancipation unfurled, proclaiming freedom as they go."

In addition, he also recommended the establishment of instruction camps in the South to train and cater to the needs of this black regiment. This approach, he emphasized, will win the slaves for the Union, stop foreign intervention and defeat the Confederates.

Lincoln was elated. "This is the very thing I have been looking and hoping for, but nobody offered it," he said. "I have thought it over and over again. I have talked about it, I hoped and prayed for it,
but till now it never has been proposed," he further emphasized.\textsuperscript{43} In the end, he offered Delany the command of the proposed regiment, and accompanied it with a letter of recommendation to E.M. Stanton, Secretary of War, urging him not to fail to have an interview "with this most extraordinary and intelligent blackman."\textsuperscript{44}

After a series of interviews with Stanton, Delany was finally commissioned a Major of infantry; and with another letter of introduction, was ordered to proceed to Charleston, South Carolina and raise his black regiment (Corps D'Afrique) under General Rufus Saxton. To be the first black field officer in the Union army seemed indeed like "a light illuminating, with a strange wild splendor, the hitherto dark pages of his people's history, heralding the glory of the future."\textsuperscript{45}

Accepting the honor, Delany thanked the government, and assured it that the trust reposed in him would never be betrayed or dishonored. In a letter of introduction to General Saxton, the War Department emphasized that Delany had its entire confidence.\textsuperscript{46}

While waiting for his army uniform, Delany held a series of meetings in Cleveland with black representatives. He enlisted some to accompany him South and serve as officers of his new regiment. Among them was Harriet B. Tubman.\textsuperscript{47} In New York, he appointed his one-time co-emigrationist, William H. Day, in charge of the military policy of the Underground Railroad. An added dimension to the operations of the "railroads" at this time was the subversion of Confederate recruitment of slaves. Returning to Wilberforce, he spent about five days with his family "arranging their finances." Finally, he departed for the South.\textsuperscript{48}
His arrival in Charleston was greeted with jubilation. Blacks trooped in to see and pay homage to the black Major. They overwhelmingly welcomed his proposal to raise the regiment. Two black regiments had already been completed before his arrival; the 102nd and 103rd United States colored troops.

He launched the 104th with a call to Charlestonians to rally round the flag. "It is the duty of every colored man to vindicate his manhood by becoming a soldier, and with his own stout arm to battle for the emancipation of his race," he urged blacks.\textsuperscript{49} Black freedom, in his estimation, was at stake. He offered pay, rations, clothing and other material inducements to prospective recruits. The response was overwhelming. In no time the 104th was filled and the 105th started.\textsuperscript{50} Before any of these regiments could be militarily tested, Lee surrendered.

Had the war continued, according to Rollin, both father and son (Delany and Toussaint) would have made considerable impact. The end of war, however, did not bring to an end Delany's services to the government. His successes during the war secured a place for him in the aftermath. While other blacks were mustered out of their regiments, he was retained and reassigned as an agent of the newly established Freedmen's Bureau.\textsuperscript{51}

\textbf{FREEDMEN'S BUREAU AGENCY, 1865-1868}

The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlawed slavery and the abandonment of colonization by Lincoln meant a de facto if not a de jure recognition by the government that it had to devise means of settling the largely unsettled freedmen. The institution assigned this task was the Freedmen's Bureau, established by an act of Congress on
March 3, 1865. Among its duties were the supervision and management of all abandoned lands, and also the dispensation of all issues relating to freedmen and refugees. 52

Those abandoned lands in the Confederate states that had come under Union control would be assigned to each freedman/refugee at not more than forty acres, and they would be protected in the use of such land for up to three years at an annual rent not exceeding six percent of its value. 53 The task before the Bureau was formidable. It had to create a modus vivendi where none hitherto existed. Blacks naturally sought a strong foundation upon which to consolidate themselves. They overwhelmingly wanted land. "Forty acres and a mule" perfectly summarizes the essence of their freedom. They favored a subdivision of the larger plantation into smaller units among themselves. 54 But this conflicted with the unrepentant chivalry of the average Southern planter/Confederate who was prepared "to fight over politically the ground [he] had lost in battle." 55 What he demanded, according to an authority, was a black agricultural proletariat, not an independent black yeomanry. 56

During the war, some degree of expropriation of lands took place through confiscatory taxation. Such lands were sold to freedmen at $1.25 per acre. Few freedmen benefited from this, as the bulk of the land went to Northern speculators and investors, who usually offered higher prices to the detriment of the poor freedmen. Such lands were re-leased to blacks at exorbitant rates. 57 Large scale expropriation took place in the Sea Islands of South Carolina as a result of Sherman's field order 15. During General William Sherman's triumphant march
through the Carolinas, large numbers of slaves, seeking liberty, swarmed to his column. It was the need to settle the fate of these slaves that made him issue his famous field order. It set aside all of the Sea Islands from Charleston South, not already disposed of, and all of the abandoned rice fields along the rivers for a distance of thirty miles inland. Blacks settled here and each family secured "possessory titles" to not more than forty acres, until Congress should provide a final solution. About 40,000 freedmen settled here under its proviso. By the end of the first summer of operation, the Bureau had about 800,000 acres of land and 5000 pieces of town property under its control. These were leased to freedmen for small rental fees or sold to them at any time within three years for a nominal price. All these further heightened black expectations for large-scale land redistribution.58

However, before blacks could effectively consolidate their new economic status, President Johnson (who succeeded Lincoln after his assassination) issued his amnesty proclamation granting pardon to ex-Confederates "with restoration of all rights of property, except as to slaves and except in cases where legal proceedings have been instituted."59 Many planters reclaimed their lands.

Initially, Oliver O. Howard, the Bureau Commissioner, and Rufus Saxton, his assistant Commissioner for South Carolina, ignored Johnson's order and proceeded with land allocation to blacks, but in the end both had to give in to combined pressure from planters and the government.60 Dispossessed freedmen were offered the option of contracting to work for the planters. Overwhelmed with sorrow, many threatened to leave the Sea
Islands rather than contract to work. Others vowed to resist restoration with violence. Backed by a government order, however, the Bureau proceeded with restoration.

Ex-planter, however, needed more than just their lands. They wanted in conjunction a reliable labor force. The task of the Bureau therefore, became one of devising a workable scheme that would bring these hitherto hostile forces together in a working relationship. Thus emerged the contract system. But this could not completely heal the wounds created first by emancipation, and then restoration.

In the eyes of many Southerners, the Bureau was an instrument of Republican despotism. Its agents were attacked and villified. In many localities freedmen viewed Bureau supervised contracts as tailored to suit the interests of planters. In sum, the Bureau acquired the reputation of a negative social institution. In Hilton Head, South Carolina, however, the picture was different. Where others failed to devise an adequate contract system between planters and freedmen, Delany succeeded.

His arrival in Hilton Head initially caused a stir among the planters, and even among some unsympathetic white officers. James Fullerton, adjutant-General in Washington, reported during an inspection trip to Hilton Head that,

Whenever an order has been issued by military authorities that he [i.e. Delany] does not like, he calls a meeting of colored citizens to consider it and, he told the negroes in public speeches that the land that they have been working upon belongs to them, and they should have it.
On July 23, 1865, addressing a gathering of about 500 to 600 blacks and some whites on St. Helena Island, Delany told blacks that slavery was over and he encouraged them to resist any attempts at re-enslavement. Freedom had not come through the grace of the government, but through black initiatives and efforts, he emphasized. Land, he informed them, was the basis of their existence, therefore, they should struggle individually or communally to acquire it.65

Furthermore, blacks were industrially superior to whites, and he therefore urged them to exploit this superiority to its maximum. He warned them to watch out for dubious cotton agents and government supervisors.66

Reporting on this address to his superiors, First Lt. Edward Stoeber observed that the whole tenor of Delany's speech was meant to instigate anti-white violence. "My opinion of the whole affair is" he concluded "that Major Delany is a thorough hater of the white race."67 As it turned out, Stoeber's apprehensions were groundless, for Delany's scheme in Hilton Head established peaceful racial relations.

As a sub-assistant Commissioner for the Bureau, Delany took charge of the twenty-one government owned plantations in Hilton Head. These were acquired back in 1863 when they were auctioned for non-payment of U.S. direct tax.68

An act of Congress, February 6, 1863, specified that such abandoned and forfeited lands considered necessary for war, military, charitable or educational purposes should be sold to the government and not to
private individuals. Because Hilton Head was considered of military import­ance, the government purchased most of the plantations. Some of these were surveyed and sold to freedmen. But Johnson's restoration created bitterness and disillusionment among freedmen long before Delany's arrival.

Delany saw his duty as the enabling of freedmen to achieve salutary results from their freedom. Aware of the presence of Northern investors and speculators, and concerned about their rapacious machinations, and those of the planters, he sought to devise an adequate means of protecting freedmen. He started out uncompromisingly advocating black rights to land. He strongly believed that blacks had earned their freedom in the war, and consequently, deserved adequate compensation in land grants. He started a series in the Hilton Head New South titled: "Prospects of the Freedmen of Hilton Head," in which he advocated land redistribution. Central to his idea was the concept of "political economy" which he considered to be the proper foundation for black self-reliance and elevation. Blacks must acquire land. His ideal was the independent yeoman farmer. He also dwelt on a now familiar theme in his philosophy: the contributions of blacks to the economic development of the New World. "Political economy must stand most prominent as the leading feature of the issue of negro elevation" he maintained.

There was nothing "political" however, in Delany's concept of "political economy." The key word is "economy." Earlier he had defined "political economy" as "knowledge of a nation's wealth or how to make money." Not to be mistaken for advocating political rights, he quickly
pointed out that "equality of political rights was the genius of the American government, and therefore, like all great principles, will take care of themselves, and, must eventually prevail." Consequently, he would not spend his time agitating for political rights. The central problem, he insisted, was "economic": "Will the negroes be able to obtain land by which to earn a livelihood?" He advocated a breakdown of the plantation and subdivision into smaller units among freedmen. It is a great fact of political economy, he maintained, that a given amount of means divided among a greater number of persons, makes a wealthier community, than the same amount held by a few.

In this, he was closer to the aspirations of the freedmen than other leading blacks who demanded political rights. But he was also aware of the tremendous obstacles on the path of black landownership. First, the federal government pursued a questionable policy with respect to meaningful economic freedom for blacks. Secondly, although this is still very much a controversy among historians, the degree of restoration and consolidation of the old plantation economy constituted a serious hindrance to black land acquisition.

Blacks, therefore, had perforce to rent/lease lands from rich planters, or even contract to labor for them. Delany perceived his duty as primarily one of devising an adequate and equitable basis for such an economic relationship. Consequently, he put forward his "Triple Alliance" system, based on the assumption that the new economic order in the South could only thrive on the basis of a domestic triple alliance involving Northern capital, Southern land and black labor. Each
party must receive one-third of the profit. This was the only just and equitable basis for the economic regeneration of the South, and he proceeded to apply it to the relationship between landowners and laborers in his jurisdiction. 79

Not all the plantations under his jurisdiction were cultivated. About half the acres in most of the plantations were designated as residential. 80 There were also other plantations outside of his jurisdiction, but because the Bureau agency was assigned to them, both planters and laborers there constantly sought his advice and judgement. 51

His first concern was with the prevalent practice of granting lands to speculators who in turn sublet them to freedmen at exorbitant rates. This resulted from instructions from Washington requiring lands to be sold to the highest cash bidder. 82 Consequently, freedmen, refugees and poor whites found themselves landless, as Northern investors and speculators usually bid the highest. 83 Blacks, therefore, found themselves dependent on these speculators, and in perpetual poverty.

Delany felt something urgently must be done to alleviate this problem. He suggested the establishment of a cotton agency which would enable blacks to save a portion of their scanty earnings. 34 He also wanted land leased to them at prices commensurate with their means in preference to Northern speculators and capitalists. 85 The agency would also eliminate the speculators in the distributive process. Freedmen could deposit their cotton on consignment, cutted (assorted), ginned, processed and sold to the highest cash value in Charleston, with the net profit accruing to them. The cost would be considerably less to the
individual since it was a corporate venture. 86

One of his spectacular successes was in convincing the government to approve a $1 per acre price for freedmen. In no time about $3,000 in cash and cotton vouchers was deposited with the Bureau to secure land leases at the low price. 87 In his report to headquarters, Delany observed a general improvement in the life and social relations of the freedmen. 88 The problem of the speculators had been greatly reduced. The Bureau had been a positive element in the community, he observed to his superiors. 89

Planters eagerly sought his advice on the means of procuring labor. To further consolidate the economic position of the freedmen, he recommended to the government that no less than twenty acres be allowed per family. Anything less, he argued, will place freedmen in a position of "hazardous uncertainty and anxiety." 90

Johnson's restoration, however, continued to undermine black economic freedom. Soon the number of plantations in Delany's control declined to fifteen. There also occurred a marked reduction in the quantity of land held by each family, and in the amount of acres cultivated. 91 By the last year of his agency, the number of acres leased to each family had been reduced to ten. 92

Notwithstanding this, Delany was satisfied with the yield. He observed that freedmen were hardworking. Their social relations had improved tremendously. 93 His Triple Alliance system wrought magic in Hilton Head and neighborhood areas. Almost overnight, the mutual distrust
and suspicion between freedmen and planters disappeared as both trooped to his office for contracts.\footnote{94}

News of his success soon reached official circles. This was inevitable, especially since similar experiments failed in almost every other place. His superiors soon exploited his success. General Sickle, then Assistant Commissioner for South Carolina, disturbed over the general unpopularity of the Bureau and the strained relationship between planters and freedmen, summoned Delany to headquarters and assigned him to undertake a tour of the entire district on his behalf. He placed some troops at his disposal and gave him all the powers of a Commander.\footnote{95}

Delany toured Edisto Island, Port Royal and the Sea Islands. He visited plantations there and held meetings with representatives of planters and freedmen. In most places, he discovered that the major cause of friction was the refusal by freedmen to sign contracts. In such places, he simply offered his Triple Alliance system, which was readily accepted by all and tranquility was restored.\footnote{96}

Why did Delany's Alliance system work? As modern scholarship suggests, Southerners approached reconstruction with exactly the same racist values with which they had exploited and degraded blacks in the ante-bellum period. Consequently, it was not unusual to find contracts drawn up that assumed the superiority of the planters. Most contracts instead of spelling out mutual obligations and protection, simply imposed "discipline" and restrictions reminiscent of slavery on blacks.\footnote{97} Delany's system worked principally because it defined duties, responsibilities and rights that applied equally to both parties. Planters
accepted it because its provisions guaranteed them a dependable labor force. Freedmen complied with it because it guaranteed them a "just" return for their labor and safeguarded them from the hitherto unrestrained exploitation of the planters. (See Appendix 3.)

Anywhere there was news of insurrection or likely insurrection involving freedmen, it became a practice of the government to send Delany with a detachment of the troops to pacify the situation. His "system" soon restored peace to the Sea Islands. An editorial of the New South observed "a continued improvement in the labor question in Hilton Head and neighborhood." Freedmen were willing to work, and hundreds of them with planters usually congregated at Delany's office to adjust their differences. The New South praised Delany's impartiality in the conduct of his office. "Our whole community is taking heart. One obstacle after another to thorough regeneration is being removed," it observed.

Nor were Delany's successes limited to economic and social relations alone. Education and temperance had always been part of his program, and he did not forget these in Hilton Head. He worked closely with the American Missionary Society teachers on the plantation schools, catering to their needs and immediate problems. He knew the supreme importance of education. He also realized that freedmen desperately needed it in order to consolidate their freedom. In his report to headquarters, September 27, 1867, he observed that school attendance in his district averaged one thousand children daily. But the American Missionary Association (A.M.A.) alone, in his estimation, could not cope with the
magnitude of problems involved in educating freedmen. He strongly urged the Bureau to get involved and make appropriations for his district, which had hitherto been neglected. Every plantation in his district should have a school. The children here, he emphasized, were as eager and intelligent as those of other districts and therefore would benefit from education. 103

His regular visits to the plantation schools acquainted him with some of the problems involved. In his reports he deplored the poor facilities. The classrooms were not adequately equipped and the teachers poorly housed. He wanted the Bureau to get actively involved and aid the A.M.A. in solving these problems. 104 A school, he observed, should be a desirable place of resort to the people "and could only be made so by associations of pleasurable remembrances. Besides good and agreeable teachers, there must be pleasant rooms, comfortable seats and desks with equal playground and scenery." 105 He also condemned the constant resort to whipping as a mode of discipline. He described it as a relic of ignorance and advocated its abolition. "A teacher" he maintained, is, or is not adapted to teaching. If properly adapted, they could and should teach without whipping. If they cannot control and correct their pupil without whipping, then it only proves that they are not adapted to teaching and all such should seek some other employment. 106

A school, he reiterated, "should be a place of the most pleasurable resort and agreeable association of children." Whipping reminded children of the plantation overseer waiting for his victims. Such domineering and intimidating posture would adversely affect the education of the children. 107
He encouraged freedmen in his district to hold regular temperance meetings. He observed with satisfaction that the meetings were well attended. Freedmen exhibited tremendous enthusiasm for temperance activities. 108

Field agents of the A.M.A. entrusted with the day-to-day task of educating the freedmen, were very appreciative of Delany's efforts. In a report to his superiors, E. Wright, an agent stationed in Hilton Head, wrote "We succeeded in setting up a day and night school for adults. Major Delany of the Bureau is going to make an effort to arouse the adults and induce them to attend school. I have much faith in his success." 109 Another agent, T. Wilkins, wrote "Major Delany who is under the Bureau sent me word a few days ago that he would give rations to these people, which has relieved me of a great deal of anxiety." 110 Yet another agent, D.M. Walcott, in a letter requesting eight hundred dollars for educational purposes on "Drayton" plantation, also noted that "Major Delany has also forwarded a proposal on this to his headquarters at Charleston." 111 Elizabeth Summers, a school teacher commissioned to the "Lawton" plantation, noted in one of her letters, a visit to her plantation school by Delany. He inspected the school houses and teachers' residences to see what repairs were needed. "He is going to fix our school." She reported. 112

These achievements, however, occurred at a time when the Bureau was declining. By the end of 1867, structurally and functionally the Bureau had become a shadow of its former self. As more states complied with the new guidelines for readmission into the Union, the Bureau's staff
and responsibilities were drastically reduced. When South Carolina secured readmission under the new Constitution in 1868, many of the field officers of the Bureau were relieved of their duties. What was left of the Bureau was functionally restricted to purely educational duties and the payment of bounties to blacks. According to an authority, this development constituted one of the inexplicable paradoxes of radical reconstruction. It seemed that the opposition of the planters finally succeeded in undermining an institution they perceived posed a threat to their economic status.

On July 22nd, 1868, Robert K. Scott, assistant Bureau Commissioner for South Carolina, wrote to his superior in Washington, Major General O.O. Howard, recommending the termination of Delany's duties. "I make this recommendation not because of any fault to be found with Maj. Delany whose services have always been characterized by zeal, and efficiency, and have resulted in great good to the people on the Islands, but after the 1st prox. I do not think that occasion for his presence there will longer exist."

With the Bureau's effective demise in 1868, Delany's agency ended. He had succeeded in creating an "equitable" system of labor where none hitherto existed. Out of chaos, he created harmony. His achievements became almost legendary in official circles. His successes and achievements during the war, and as a Bureau agent in its aftermath, almost completely divested him of his susceptibility to racism. His perceptions of whites and of America changed dramatically. Whites were no longer incurable racists. America had become a land of opportunity for blacks. Blacks could hope to function within the system, and ultimately
win recognition and acceptance, such as he had. All that was needed was moderation and patience rather than emotionalism, impatience and radicalism.

The same Delany who, a few years back had advocated an "all-or-nothing" approach in relation to black demands, suddenly counselled moderation and accommodation. His personal successes convinced him, it seemed, that Americans, especially Southern whites, were now prepared to accept blacks as a constituent part of the body polity. But this now required time and patience. Consequently, he conceived his responsibility, quite consistent with what he had always believed, as one of guiding freedmen away from the path of violence and radicalism.

Viewed within this context, his alliance system only succeeded in undermining the revolutionary movement that Johnson's restoration policy would have triggered in the Sea Islands. Freedmen loathed contracts. They desired their own piece of land. Many of them vowed to resist restoration. Many would have emigrated rather than work for any planter. The prospects of an acute labor shortage and widespread insurrections disturbed planters. The government was equally concerned. Delany's "system" established a modus operandi, albeit fragile, that guaranteed the operations of the plantations. His achievements were in fact part of the larger "successes" of the Bureau in enforcing and supporting the labor-contract system which laid the foundation for the establishment of black peonage. 116

As he launched into active politics, however, his newfound hope and optimism, and his crusade for moderation involved him in trouble. Other
leading blacks were not so sure that sufficient justification existed for such optimism.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER SIX

1. The Weekly Anglo-African, Oct. 1, 1859, p. 1. Delany divided black historical development into four phases: the period of letter-writing, when certain literate blacks petitioned key American statesmen for redress; the period of newspaper-publishing when blacks began to use the press to advocate reforms; the period of lecturing, when blacks sponsored lecturers to inform and agitate on black problems and finally, the period of conventions. This last phase, according to him, aimed at achieving African nationality. The entire chronology is false and dubious. First, the convention movement aimed more at integration in America than at an African nationality. Secondly, Delany creates the impression of a very peaceful evolution. Conspicuously missing is the tradition of Nat Turner, Denmark Vesey and Gabriel Posser. The reason for this is clear. To admit that blacks had a revolutionary tradition would have seriously damaged the image of a peaceful evolution toward emigration that he was building.


4. During his stopover in England on his way back from Africa, Delany was invited to address the opening session of the International Statistical Congress on the health situation in Africa. In attendance were social scientists, physicians and statisticians from all over the world, including Florence Nightingale and His Royal Highness Prince Albert and members of the British Cabinet. The United States was represented by Secretary of State George Dallas. In his opening address, the President of the Congress, Lord Brougham of England, drew the attention of the American delegates to the presence of a negro, "hoping that this will not offend them." All eyes focused on Delany, who rose up and thanked both his Royal Highness and Lordship for the observation and emphasized "I AM A MAN." This was a short but very effective statement. It drew cheers and applause from the Congress. That a representative of a race treated as subhuman in the U.S. should share the same platform with some of the highest dignitaries of the world, was a humiliating experience to the American delegates. In protest they walked out. Back in the States, President Buchanan and his Cabinet met to determine what steps to take. Some demanded an apology from the British government. However, the Cabinet did not make any formal request. F. Rollin, Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany (Boston, 1868), pp. 99-133.
5. "Official Report....", op. cit., especially Sections VIII, XII and XIII.


7. "My destiny is fixed in Africa, where my family and myself, by God's providence, will soon be happily situated" he once wrote. Ibid., Oct. 5, 1861. Also reacting to reports that he had given up on emigration, he insisted that he was making vigorous preparations for the consummation of his designs. Ibid., Jan. 22, 1862.

8. Douglass's Monthly, Aug. 1862, p. 695. The paper described Delany as "the intesest embodiment of black nationality to be met with outside of the Valley of the Niger." Through these lectures, according to the paper, Delany "gave whites opportunity of seeing a brave and self-conscious black man, one who does not cringe and cower at the thought of his hated color....", ibid.

9. The desire for homogenization through the removal or elimination of the negro was a significant component of Civil War nationalism. See George M. Frederickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), Chapters V and VI.


12. He opposed the Haitian movement first because a white man, James Redpath ran it. Douglass's Monthly, Sept. 1862, p. 719; The
Weekly Anglo-African, Feb. 1, 1862. Secondly, Haiti lacked two of the essential elements of a great nationality — territorial domain and population. Haiti is a small island with no prospects or probability of additional territory and consequently must always have a limited population. Thirdly, geographically, according to Delany Haiti is an easy prey to European imperialistic designs. Fourthly, the great preponderance of the white race in this hemisphere, "must eventually extinguish the blacks and thus by natural causes exterminate her, except a segregation of the entire black population on some part of the continent." Africa can never be subjected to these unfavorable circumstances, he emphasized. Ibid (this was in a letter to Prof. M.H. Freeman of Avery College).

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., Jan. 4, 1862. Delany objected to a general council because it would result in negative efforts, he claimed.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., Nov. 2, 1861.


18. Dorothy Sterling, The Making of An Afro-American: Martin R. Delany, 1812-1885 (New York: Doubleday, 1971), pp. 222-223. There were two reasons for this; first, according to Sterling, the African chiefs were afraid that black Americans would gradually take over their lands. The second reason is speculative. It is plausible to suggest that the chiefs got hints of an alleged declaration of Delany's in London, Ontario that "the first thing he intended to do after going to Lagos was to 'take off the king's head!" The Weekly Anglo-African, Oct. 5, 1861. William Wells Brown, in a letter in the Pine and Palm of the 28th Sept., 1861, accused Delany of making that declaration during an address in London. Ibid. Delany denied this, claiming that "no rational person could be capable of such folly..." ibid.

19. Delany to Coppinger, Charleston, South Carolina, August 18, 1880, Delany File, London Cross Cultural Learner's Centre.


22. Ibid., p. 137. Also Douglass's Monthly, April 1861, p. 444.

23. Ibid., pp. 140-141.


26. F. Rollin, ibid.

27. Ibid., p. 146.

28. Ibid., pp. 141-142.


30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.


33. D. Sterling, op. cit., p. 239.


36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p. 162.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., p. 166.


42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., pp. 169-171.

45. Ibid., p. 181.


48. Ibid.

49. F. Rollin, ibid., pp. 211-212. Correspondence, recruiting posters, military records, in War Records Office, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

50. Ibid., pp. 212-213.


53. Ibid.


60. George R. Bentley, op. cit., p. 96. See also Milfred C. Fierce, op. cit., p. 15. For more on the pressures exerted by planters on Johnson to force Howard into quickening the pace of restoration, see Lawanda and John Cox (eds.), Reconstruction, The Negro and the New South (Document) (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), pp. 322-325.

61. Many blacks vowed to violently resist restoration. Few were willing to enter into contracts with planters. Walter Fleming, op. cit., pp. 356-358.


63. The contract system was a compromise measure that satisfied neither of the parties. Planters would have preferred an unhindered exploitation of black labor. The notion was widespread that blacks would not work without compulsion. Thus the labor contract emerged as the keystone to labor relations between planters and freedmen. It worked to the advantage of the planters. Such "compulsion," akin to what Edgar Thompson called "military agriculture," guaranteed a steady supply of labor to the planters. The system virtually left planters free to manipulate contracts to their personal advantage. This accounted for a lot of the resentment blacks had against signing contracts. See Glennon Graham, "From Slavery to Serfdom: Rural Black Agriculturalists in South Carolina, 1865-1900," op. cit.
cit., Chapter III. In a detailed study of Bureau administered contracts in Edgefield, Abbeville and Anderson Counties in South Carolina, Lewis C. Chartock concluded that "...southern planters were able to use the contract system to define a social role for freedmen which was not far removed from the status they had occupied when they were slaves." See his "A History and Analysis of Labor Contracts Administered by the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands in Edgefield, Abbeville and Anderson Counties in South Carolina, 1865-1868," Ph.D. Dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1974, p. 191. See also Edgar Thompson, "The Natural History of Agricultural Labor in the South," in Plantation Societies, Race Relations and the South: The Regimentation of Populations. Select Papers of Edgar Thompson. (Durham, N.C., 1975), p. 317.


66. Ibid.

67. Ibid., p. 308.

68. A congressional act of August 5, 1861 required an annual direct tax on all lands in every state (not recognizing any state to be out of the Union) to provide increased revenue for financing the war. A supplementary act of June 7, 1862 for "the collection of the direct taxes in insurrectionary districts" called for the forfeiture and selling of lands for non-payment. Josephine W. Martin (ed.), "Dear Sister": Letters Written on Hilton Head Island, 1867 (Beaufort, S.C.: Beaufort Book Co. Inc., 1977), pp. 43, 101. Summers, Elizabeth A. (1844-1900) 11 Mss. 24 April-15 June, 1867, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

69. Ibid.

70. Long before the end of the war, blacks had demonstrated their eagerness for land, and their determination to acquire this either individually or collectively in the Sea Islands. But the presence of Northern capitalist land speculators proved a stumbling block to black aspirations. These land speculators or "new masters" were more interested in exploiting black labor for quick profit, than in helping blacks consolidate their economic freedom. More often than not, their designs undermined black economic gains. See Willie Lee Rose, Rehearsal For Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment (New York: Vintage Books, 1967). Also Lawrence N. Powell, New Masters: Northern Planters During Civil War and Reconstruction (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1980). Delany constantly alerted freedmen to the presence of the land speculators. Laura M. Towne noted in her diary entry for Sunday, August 3,

71. Ibid., pp. 231-233.
72. Ibid., p. 238.
74. F. Rollin, op. cit., p. 238.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid.


83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
90. Ibid.
91. Ibid., Roll 33, pp. 410-411.
93. Ibid.
94. F. Rollin, op. cit., pp. 243-244.
95. Ibid., pp. 245-251.
96. Ibid.

97. As Glennon Graham noted Southern whites did not consider themselves in need of "Reconstruction." It was blacks that should be "Recon-
structed." This sort of attitude greatly in-formed white responses to blacks during Reconstruction and was responsible for the patern-
alistic and racist policies that emerged. From Slavery to Serfdom, op. cit. Also Lewis C. Chartock, op. cit. See also C.W. Tebeau, "Some Aspects of Planter-Freedman Relations, 1865-1880," Journal of Negro History, 21, 2, April 1936. James H. Croushore and David M. Potter (eds.), John William De Forest: A Union Officer in the Reconstruction (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1948). According to John De Forest "Many of the planters seemed to be unable to under-
stand that work could be other than a form of slavery, or that it could be accomplished without some prodigious binding and obligating of the hireling of the employer," ibid., p. 28.

98. F. Rollin, op. cit., pp. 260-262. There were planters who objected to Delany’s interference in their relationship with the freedmen. On one occasion, a freedman, named John Robinson, swore to an affidavit that Delany had not paid him for a bale of cotton weighing 330 lbs which he deposited with Delany’s cotton agency. Ullman described this as a planter-inspired conspiracy to prosecute Delany. However, it failed because Delany was cleared by a military tribunal. V. Ullman, op. cit., pp. 393-394.

100. Ibid., p. 256.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., p. 263.
105. Ibid.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.


110. Reports of R. Wilkins, April 22, May 17, 1867, ibid.

111. Reports of D.M. Walcott, October 21, November 11, December 2, 1867.


114. Ibid.


116. Daniel A. Novak argues persuasively that federal policy was ultimately responsible for the entrenchment of Jim Crow and black peonage in the South. Federal policy during and after the war prepared the ground for the "new system of forced labor" that later emerged. The Freedmen's Bureau enforced and supported the system of labor contracts which led to the establishment of black peonage. It was not the Southern Bourbons or the Ku Klux Klan which initiated the move toward black subordination. See his The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery (University of Kentucky Press, 1978). William McFeely strongly criticized the Bureau and describes it as an instrument of black deprivation. He characterized the contract system as a denial of individual land ownership. See his Yankee Stepfather, op. cit.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CONSERVATIVE REPUBLICAN, 1868-1874

The demise of the Freedmen's Bureau opened yet another crucial phase in Delany's public life. Failure to achieve land-ownership for freedmen convinced him that further struggles lay in the arena of politics. But he did not come into active politics a completely frustrated man, seeking immediate and urgent changes. Though land had not been significantly redistributed, he personally had much to be grateful for. He had been elevated and accorded recognition to a degree unknown to any other blacks. He had retained his post even when all other black regiments were mustered out. His scheme transformed the Sea Islands. Indeed, he was the-establishment-man par excellence. Unlike most other black leaders, therefore, he did not enter the political arena with a "conqueror's psychology" determined to extract immediate concessions from whites. Consequently, he adopted a fundamentally moderate and conciliatory attitude toward white Carolinians.

This conservatism rendered his relationship with the Republican party shaky and uneasy. The radicalism of his black colleagues disturbed him seriously. His countervailing voice of moderation evoked praise from the state conservatives. If South Carolina conservatives needed an agent provocateur to disrupt the Republican party, they got one in DeSany. His constant and vicious villification of the state radicals and carpetbaggers convinced many blacks that he would have been satisfied had their fate been left to the tender mercies of old Massa.
Delany's conception of politics is central to understanding his fragile relationship with the Republican party. Politics, in his estimation, must be utilitarian. That is, a party could only justify its demand for the loyalty of its members if it extended some benefits to them. But benefits alone would not guarantee unswerving loyalty, unless the party maintained a favorable image in the community. The correlation of forces in the society must be in its favor. If the odds were against it, however, "run fast out of it," he advised. Politics, therefore, in Delany's estimation, unlike religion, did not require unswerving allegiance. It was akin to John Ingall's "metaphysics of force" and required constant vigilance, awareness and flexibility. Between 1868 and 1874, the Republican party in South Carolina failed to meet Delany's criteria. Frustrated and bitter, in 1874 he took his first tentative step in the direction of the Democratic party.

The political drama in South Carolina from 1865 to 1868 unfolded significantly without Delany. As a Bureau agent, he was barred from active politics. Consequently, until 1869, his political role was marginal. Crisis and conflict, however, greeted his advent into active politics, and these did not subside until the redemption of the state in 1876. These problems were significantly part of the larger conflict between radical Republicans and Democrats for political power. An adequate appraisal of Delany's political ideas and actions, therefore, requires an understanding of the intricate and complex politics of the state between 1865 and 1868 of which he played little or no part.
SOUTH CAROLINA POLITICS, 1865-1868

Wilbur J. Cash suggested that defeat in war and the coming of Reconstruction marked the opening of a second frontier in the South. In this frontier, new social directions and organizations had to be developed. But life was perilous on this "rocky and dangerous" frontier. Lacy K. Ford Jr., also described the latent conflict in Southern societies after the war as a struggle between modernization and traditional habits and values. What made the new frontier "rocky and dangerous" was the problem of how to deal with the newly enfranchised blacks.

Blacks had fought for the Union. During the war, the Thirteenth Amendment had outlawed slavery. They, therefore, emerged from the war determined to resist any attempt at re-enslavement. Defeat, however, had not changed white Carolinians significantly. They remained firmly rooted in their convictions about black inferiority, and consequently ill-prepared to recognize black leadership or equality.

Under President Johnson's amnesty, many ex-confederates had taken the oath of loyalty, and been restored to their former positions. The former confederate states, under provisional governors, were directed to summon constitutional conventions to draw new constitutions. Benjamin F. Perry, provisional governor of South Carolina, set the tone for the policy that ultimately emerged from the convention. He opposed the extension of suffrage to blacks on grounds of inferiority. Governments were intended for whites only, he maintained. Little wonder then that the Constitution that emerged from this convention, made up mostly of ex-Confederates, subordinated blacks to a quasi-form of slavery.
Blacks rejected this. Meeting on September 4, 1865 at St. Helena Island, they petitioned the state assembly for suffrage and equal rights. 6 Late in September, some one hundred blacks of Charleston petitioned the state legislature for constitutional changes to remove the disabilities created by the recent convention. They demanded absolute equality and a recognition and acceptance of their rights. 7 Meeting again in November, Charleston blacks offered friendship and peace to white Carolinians. "Our past career as law-abiding SUBJECTS, shall be strictly adhered to as law-abiding CITIZENS," they assured. They sent similar appeals to the national legislature and Congress in Washington, D.C. 8 As an honorary member of this meeting, Delany addressed the delegates on the subject of discipline and obedience to the law. 9

But white Carolinians would not listen. Their world view had no place for black equality. As a South Carolinian admitted, "Everyone thinks, and every child is trained up in the belief, that the negro is meant for the use of white people, and was brought here and should stay here for no other purpose." 10

Early in 1866, a national representation of blacks approached President Johnson on the issues of suffrage and the effective enforcement of the Thirteenth Amendment. 11 Johnson's response inspired no confidence at all. He informed the delegates that, as their "Moses", he would gladly lead them out of the United States to a better haven elsewhere. 12 It was obvious therefore, that presidential reconstruction meant quasi-bondage for blacks. The delegates outrightly rejected Johnson's offer. 13
Delany, then a Bureau agent, wrote the delegates urging caution, moderation and respect. In essence, he advised blacks not to push things too hard. Johnson perforce had to give first consideration to white interests. "Do not forget that you are black and he is white. Make large allowances for this, and take this as the standpoint," he suggested. They should, therefore, expect very little from Johnson. He cautioned against radicalism for "the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, but he that endureth to the end." He urged them not to grow discouraged or disheartened, but to place their faith in God and "stand still and see his salvation." He closed his letter with a short poem:

Be patient in your misery
Be meek in your despair
Be patient, o be patient
Suffer on, suffer on.

This plea for passivism and indifference did not mean that Delany had completely given up the struggle for black political rights. Five months after his plea to the black delegates, he wrote "His Excellency President Johnson" on the issue of "ENFRANCHISEMENT and the EXERCISE of suffrage." He reminded Johnson of the contributions of blacks to the defeat of the Confederacy. "What becomes necessary, then," he told Johnson,

to secure and perpetuate the integrity of the Union, is simply the ENFRANCHISEMENT and recognition of the POLITICAL EQUALITY of the power that saved the Union from destruction in time of imminent peril -- a recognition of the POLITICAL EQUALITY of the blacks with the whites in all of their relations as American citizens.
His pleas to the black delegates and Johnson had little impact on
the course of events. Johnson remained adamant; and blacks grew in-
creasingly militant in their demands. The year 1866 also witnessed a
radical resurgence in Congress. Radical Republicans in Congress, con-
vinced that the South wanted to resurgent slavery, quickly assumed
control of the course of Reconstruction. They gained control of every
Northern state legislature, every state house in which there was a con-
test, and the U.S. Senate and House. Radicals interpreted this wide-
spread victory as a mandate to throw out presidential policies, thus
inaugurating a conflict between Congress and Johnson.

Congress declared South Carolina's constitution null and void, and
refused admission to delegates from the state. It extended the Freed-
men's Bureau bill over Johnson's veto. It also passed the Civil Rights
bill and the Fourteenth Amendment in spite of Johnson's opposition.
While disfranchising many whites for participation in the rebellion, the
bill extended universal suffrage and citizenship to blacks.

In March 1867, Congress divided the Southern states into five
military districts each under a General assigned to supervise new guide-
lines for reconstruction. North and South Carolina came under the
second military district. Congress also authorized a constitutional
convention consisting of delegates elected by all male citizens of what
ever race, color or previous condition, "exclusive of those disfran-
chised by the proposed Fourteenth Amendment." This convention would
draw a new constitution granting suffrage to all male citizens. Such
a constitution must then be ratified by the electorate and approved by
Congress. The new legislature must then ratify the Fourteenth Amendment.
Only after meeting all these requirements was the state considered reconstructed and her delegates admitted to the national House and Congress. 24

Black Carolinians responded enthusiastically. They voted overwhelmingly for the convention and the new Constitution. Because of the disfranchisement of whites, the convention had a black majority. The new Constitution granted universal suffrage and equal rights. It abolished racial discrimination and ratified the Fourteenth Amendment. 25

White Carolinians were less enthusiastic. They insisted that the Constitution invaded their ancient rights and glories. 26 It had inverted the natural order of things, putting an inferior race above a superior one, they claimed. Consequently, they declared it illegal and ultra vires. 27 In a determined effort to subvert the ratification and acceptance, they appealed to blacks and to the Senate. Their spokesmen insisted that slavery had salutary effects on blacks. That being innately inferior, blacks needed white guidance and lordship to prevent a reversion to primitivism. 28 Therefore, they advised blacks to eschew radicalism and seek immediate and unconditional reconciliation with their former masters.

Black political power, they maintained, was at best ephemeral. 29 They vowed never willingly to make any political concessions to blacks. "The discussion of political subject with the colored is now forced on us," lamented a leading Democrat, "we have no choice. But we will not extend it beyond the limit of actual necessity. We will make no promise or compromise." 30 What was this "limit of actual necessity?" They
would concede civil and political rights to blacks. Not suffrage. Suffrage, they argued, was not a right, but a trust. It is conferred according to expediency, and in consonance with the political doctrine of the greatest good to the greatest number. Since blacks were considered inferior, they could not be entrusted with suffrage. In fact, black needs were material not political, insisted a Democrat. Since Radical Reconstruction, however, had forced itself upon the South, Democrats were prepared to concede some form of qualified suffrage to blacks. This was the "limit of actual necessity."

There was no sincerity to this concession. Qualified suffrage was simply a device to wrench power from blacks. A leading Democrat admitted that qualified suffrage would only be granted to the few educated and property-owning blacks. So few, in fact, that not even a shadow of power would accrue to blacks as a result of it. In essence, Democrats were making just one statement: this is a white man's country, and must remain so.

Democrats were further encouraged in their intransigence by the early demise of radical power in Connecticut, and the rising anti-radical momentum in Alabama and Mississippi. Reacting to these favorable signs, conservative spokesmen and press in South Carolina urged whites to unite against blacks. Furthermore, conservatives had strong faith in the aphorism, "blood is thicker than water." As one of their spokesmen told blacks: "This is a white man's country. You are deluded if you think those 'friends' (i.e. white radical Republicans and carpetbaggers) will stand by you. Blood is thicker than water."
They will stand by us." Consequently, the conservatives were always quick to remind blacks of their absolute numerical inferiority in the entire nation. The conflict, one of their spokesmen intimated, was not isolated to South Carolina. What was happening in the state was part of a larger conflict, North and South, involving blacks on the one side and whites on the other.  

South Carolina conservatives, therefore, were determined that the radical government and its Constitution should not outlaw 1870. But as 1870 approached, realizing that few blacks had been intimidated by their rhetoric, Democrats decided to change their tactics. The only effective way to woo blacks away from radical influences, Democrats realized, was for them to assume radical postures too. An ex-slaveowner advised his fellow Democrats to insist "inflexibly upon full rights for blacks, proper remuneration for their labor and ample legal protection." Consequently, at a convention, the Democrats, now organized as a Union Reform Party, voted to accept the 1868 Constitution. They also advocated universal amnesty, and an end to the political disabilities imposed upon whites.  

The tactics of the Democrats, however, clearly demonstrate how really difficult it is for a leopard to change its spots. However much they feigned radicalism, they could not completely discard their opposition to black elevation: They called for the abolition of the Freedmen's Bureau, and all political instrumentalities of black power. While campaigning to "breathe the air of conservatism into blacks" they also used violence or the threat of it. One Democrat urged blacks to
heed quickly the conservative warning or risk being "ground to powder between the upper mill-stone of Northern prejudice and the lower mill-stone of Southern repudiation." Black numerical superiority in South Carolina was transient, they claimed. They held strongly to the rather absurd conviction that the black population would remain constant. This would enable whites to become preponderant through immigration and natural increases.

It was obvious, therefore, as even the conservative press admitted, that the "radical" concessions of the conservatives were smokescreens. Their ultimate objective was to prevent "Africanizing" the state, and to restore white supremacy. This can't and stick policy fooled no one. Perceptive blacks knew that the conservatives presented them with clearcut choices—either surrender and reversion to some quasi-slavery, or continued struggle and advocacy for equal rights and opportunities.

At a radical Republican convention in 1869, therefore, blacks re-dedicated themselves to the Republican party. They urged the Democratic party to accept and recognize their rights as freemen and political equals. They emphasized that they would not mortgage these for whatever reasons. It is against this background that Delany's conflict with the radical Republicans becomes intelligible.

**DELANY AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY: EMERGENCE OF CONFLICT**

The Civil War and Freedmen's Bureau agency completely changed Delany's perception of the black reality. At a time when other black leaders developed deep suspicion for Democratic party policies, Delany's
confidence in the party soared tremendously. He did not share the deep-seated frustration and suspiciously-guarded outlook of the black leadership. His renewed sense of acceptance and satisfaction completely transformed him. The reality of the war itself was central to his changing perception. That one section of the nation could go to war against the other, he had never anticipated. Not only did this reality temporarily undermine his emigrationist ethic, but it also substantially altered his response to American reality. Everything around him seemed to point to the emergence of a new positive and responsive establishment. This establishment, in his estimation, held great prospects for blacks, if undisturbed by radical and "irresponsible" demands. He envisaged a world where peace would guarantee lasting economic prosperity.

The Civil War, in his estimation, had significantly altered race relations in the United States. It had transformed blacks from passive objects, merely existing at the periphery of society to "an integral part and essential element in the body politic of the nation." This transformation therefore had obliterated the basis for race conflicts. America was no longer a hopeless land. The new Delany advocated evolutionary and gradualist changes.

A strong paternalism also underpinned his conception of black reality. Largely a product of his aristocratic consciousness, this paternalism had been an old theme in his philosophy. Reviving one of his fixed laws of nature, he reminded blacks that demands for equality must be consistent with material and intellectual attainments. Since blacks,
in his estimation, were generally inferior to whites in these regards, they should contend for lower-level positions, hoping gradually to rise as they developed materially and intellectually. But he did not consider himself bound by this law, since he viewed himself superior, at least intellectually, if not materially, to the black leadership. For a person of such convictions, therefore, failure to succeed politically in a contest against those he condescendingly regarded as inferiors could easily breed extreme frustrations and alienation. Precisely that happened. 47

No longer concerned for black problems per se, Delany developed a strong sensitivity for the national mood. His major concern was for black radical demands and how these infringed upon and influenced the national mood. He perceived his role as that of an elder, whose responsibility it was to monitor and guide the actions of the youthful black leadership. In his mid-fifties, he undoubtedly saw black leaders, mostly in their mid-twenties and early-thirties, as opportunists capitalizing on the past sacrifices and efforts of the older generation.

His ideas, therefore, were tailor-made for crisis. He overlooked and underestimated the degree of the Democratic/conservative threat to black freedom. Evidence abounded which demonstrated that white Carolinians had not reconciled themselves to the changes that occasioned the War and Reconstruction. They in fact favored precisely the sort of compromises that Delany advocated because they considered them adequate means of subverting black freedom. From the beginning therefore, Delany's ideas evoked a hostile reception from the radical Republicans and the black
leadership.

To consolidate their hard-won freedom and political rights, black Carolinians demanded more representation at the federal level. During the session of the constitutional convention in Columbia, 1867, Wendel Philips advocated the election of a black vice-president for the country. All the delegates unanimously endorsed this. Few expected opposition from Delany, especially considering his strong advocacy for black representation in the 1850s. But Delany had changed.

In a letter to Henry H. Garnet, he wrote,

In such times as these it requires men of the greatest practical experience, acquired ability, mature intelligence and discretionary wisdom, to speak and act for the race now an integral part and essential element in the body politic of the nation.

Although blacks had always advocated "all the rights and privileges belonging to an American citizen of the most favored race," the demand for a black vice-president, he maintained, was premature, nonsense and a product of youthful exuberance. Blacks, he emphasized, should only contemplate occupying official responsibilities in society when they were "READY and QUALIFIED." As he advised, "Let colored men be satisfied to take things like other men in their natural course and time, preparing themselves in every particular for local municipal positions, and they may expect to attain to some other in time."

The conservative press praised Delany's "sensibility and patriotism" and argued further that suffrage did not automatically confer the right
of office-holding on blacks. Office-holding required intelligence; something, it claimed, blacks miserably lacked. Should blacks, however, insist on seeking offices, they should concentrate on local ones which required little or no intelligence. Ideally, however, the conservatives would want blacks completely out of politics. "The negro is far better and happier out of politics," maintained The New York Times. It further advised them to acknowledge their social inferiority and surrender leadership roles to whites.

A caucus of the black members of the state nominating convention met in Charleston, 1868, and decided to nominate a black for Congress. One of the names suggested was Delany. Mr. L.S. Langley, a member of the convention then wrote Delany requesting permission to nominate him as a candidate for Congress from the Second Congressional District (Charleston, Beaufort, Colleton and Barnwell). From his Bureau headquarters in Hilton Head, Delany wrote to Langley objecting to the offer on three grounds. Firstly, Reconstruction was just underway and the status of blacks "was undetermined." Secondly, the mood of the entire nation, "still wrangling with emotions of the war," would not tolerate "any such ADVANCE move as this." Thirdly,

it is scarcely necessary for me to repeat what you have frequently known me to express, the greatest possible discretion and prudence in these first steps in the indigency of the disfranchisement of our race in this country. Every step taken should be fraught with prudence and caution...

Delany described the bid for Congressional representation as irrelevant and unnecessary to black claims as American citizens, and also unimportant "to the accomplishment of that end." Blacks did not need a
representative in Congress in order to assert their citizenship claims. The entire nation was not yet ready for black political officers, he maintained.\textsuperscript{60}

He proceeded to caution blacks against pressuring whites into conceding political roles. Whites were benevolent enough to know the propitious time for such concessions. He advised blacks never to complain or feel bitter, because whites would always feel obliged to reciprocate for black fidelity and patriotism during the war. And if they never did? "Then that will be the end of the whole matter," he concluded.\textsuperscript{61}

Laudable as Delany's concern for the national mood may seem, it should be remembered that, as a Bureau agent, he was still barred from active politics. Consequently, even if he had wanted the Congressional nomination, he would have been unavailable for the seat. Unless, of course, he resigned his Bureau position, which would have been unwise since there was no guarantee that he would be elected.

To back up his plea for white officials, he urged blacks to vote Mr. Lesesne, an ex-Confederate, for Mayor of Charleston in 1868. Infuriated, black Charlestonians burnt an effigy of Delany.\textsuperscript{62}

At a great ratification meeting at Epping Hall, Delany observed much "ill-timed and extravagant advise" emanating from blacks.\textsuperscript{63} Responding, he advocated moderation in action and sentiment. Echoing what had now become a conservative cliché, he reminded blacks of their numerical inferiority in the nation. "We are only one-sixth of the entire population of the country, the white people were the ruling element of the nation, and must take the first rank, and would have the
first and choice places." he asserted. "In finding standing room for yourself" he finally advised blacks, "undertake not to elbow the whites out of their place." Blacks reacted with a "buzz and murmurs of disapproval." One delegate angrily called for the political ostracization of Delany. Some referred to him as the Planters' Agent. He attributed these criticisms to radical influences.

Under no circumstances would Delany encourage blacks to stand vehemently for their rights. He had strong faith in the magic of white paternalism and benevolence. He would rather that developments took their "natural courses" than have blacks influence them, especially through radical demands. Such demands could potentially endanger the peaceful atmosphere necessary for economic cooperation and regeneration. Since he firmly believed in a gradualist approach, he developed negative attitudes toward black demands he considered radical. His speeches provided added fuel to the conservative machine. Their press frequently quoted him to corroborate its claims that blacks were inferior and therefore unfit for official responsibilities. As the conservative Daily Phoenix (Columbia) told blacks, "Your own Delany has warned you!"

It is difficult not to read selfish motivations into Delany's opposition to black political aspirations at this time. After all, as a Bureau agent, he could not be a candidate for any political offices. Satisfied therefore with his agency, he sought to dissuade other blacks from assuming positions of importance in national politics.
As soon as he lost the Bureau job, his opposition to black political power dramatically ceased. The nation now seemed ready for black officials. Service in the army, and the Bureau agency had got Delany used to the limelight. The sudden turn of the tide occasioned by the demise of the Bureau left him uncomfortable. This threatened the economic and physical sustenance of Catherine and the children. He desperately searched for a political position that would launch him back to influence and authority. First, he approached Governor Robert Scott for a position, but failed. Early in February 1869, he left South Carolina for Washington, D.C. to solicit for the post of the first black minister to the Republic of Liberia.  

While waiting for the President's decision, he wrote and published a series of four tracts on national polity—Citizenship, Civil Rights, the Constitution and Secession. He meant these tracts as means of enlightenment and political education for, in his estimation, the largely ignorant and politically youthful black leadership.

He also advocated more political representation for blacks. He argued that blacks only had the vote, but could not be voted for. This was injustice and violated the Constitution. He urged blacks to demand more representation. By the very act of secession, he asserted, the South had taken itself out of the Union and consequently, the North could justifiably dictate terms of re-admission. Here he de facto endorses radical reconstruction!

His arrival in Washington coincided with a momentous event. As part of the movement to consolidate black economic power, a Colored
National Convention assembled in Washington in 1869. It was summoned by Isaac Myers, a leading labor activist from Baltimore. In attendance were prominent black editors, businessmen and clerics. As in past conventions, the delegates stressed the value of education and political rights. But the focus here was more on economic problems—the right to organize as unions, the encouragement of trade and industry among blacks and the problems of Southern tenant farmers. The result was the establishment of a Colored National Labor Union. Delany delivered one of the most inspiring speeches. He dwelt on the contributions of blacks to the economic development of the new world. Black labor, he argued, sustained the economies of the rich industrial nations. This, he emphasized, constituted a strong case for more political representations for blacks.  

Delany's desperate "search" for a place accounted for this dramatic change. In his estimation the tract would also serve to establish, beyond any doubt, his knowledge of constitutional law and political theory—thus enhancing his candidacy for the Liberian mission. His sudden support for the Republicans and radical reconstruction, and repeated emphasis on the need for more black officials, were meant to enhance further his chances of securing a position. Unfortunately, the Liberian mission fell through.

Disappointments at both the state and federal levels significantly damaged Delany's self-perception and ego. He attributed these to "the chicanery of wily politicians." He returned to South Carolina determined to intensify agitation for more black representation.
Politically little had changed. The conflict between radical Republicans and the state conservatives lingered on. While leading blacks advocated an "uncompromisingly radical course" and opposed any movement toward conservatism, the state conservatives continued the old carrot-and-stick policy. 75

Determined to make 1870 "the year of the happy deliverance", they intensified criticisms of the radical administration. To attract blacks, the platform of their "reform" movement accepted the Fifteenth Amendment and universal suffrage. This policy could be termed "conservative Republicanism." 76 The real motive of this however was the achievement of enfranchisement for ex-Confederates. They nominated an ex-Republican Judge for governor and an ex-Confederate General for Lt. governor. This was a compromise ticket that sought to attract supporters from both ends of the political spectrum. Despite this pretense of being liberal and reformist, there was a strong opposition to "negro equality" at the party's convention. Some delegates were not prepared to compromise on the issue of white supremacy. 77

Within the Republican party itself, an internal reform movement developed. Acknowledging the existence of corruption and other problems within the administration, many Republicans advocated reform and the election of honest men. Few however desired a split in the party in this process. 78 Francis L. Cardozo, the black Secretary of State, described the conservative "reform" movement as fraudulent. White Carolinians had not changed fundamentally, and there were no grounds for blacks to take their "liberal" and "reformist" pretensions seriously. 79
Most leading blacks, therefore, supported strengthening the Republican party.

Delany's contribution to this reform movement created a storm. He advocated more black representation within the Republican administration. He was not alone in this. Other prominent blacks voiced similar sentiments. He, however, seemed to have been more articulate and forceful. "No people have become great without their own leaders" he argued. "Blacks must have black leaders. We must lead our own people." He called for a fair share of offices for blacks. He wanted a black Lt. governor, two blacks in the House of Representatives, one in the Senate and "our quota of state and county offices." He also advocated universal amnesty for all ex-Confederates.

Although Delany condemned the "palpitrators" at a grand rally in Edgefield, his strong advocacy of black representation elicited equally strong condemnation from the regular Republicans. When he called for more black representation, it was obvious he meant "pure black," not mulattoes. He was speaking more to enhance his own position and this did not escape the notice of others. One critic described Delany's speech as a selfish move to enhance his contest for the U.S. Senate. Rumours even had it that he was contemplating establishing a third party. The Republican party criticized an earlier assertion of Delany's that "we [i.e. blacks] propose to elect no candidate whom the colored man does not approve of." This was unnecessary, claimed the party, since by virtue of their population majority, blacks had always been decisive in electing state officials. His speeches were seen as selfish,
irrelevant and further evidence of his obsessive devotion to his own narrow interests. Although, in the wake of widespread criticisms, Delany denied all charges, he could not completely exonerate himself. He paid dearly.

His obsession with peaceful reconciliation with white Carolinians seriously hurt his chances of effective acceptance by, and assimilation into the Republican party. But perhaps more importantly, his advocacy of universal and unconditional amnesty for ex-Confederates even in the face of their continued intransigence and threat to black freedom, left a bad taste in the mouths of many Republicans. Also, his acceptance and propagation of the fundamentally racist ideas of the conservatives further hurt his cause. "Remember the disparity in the number of the two races. The white man gave us all we have," he once told blacks. At another rally he declared "We are not equal to our white friend in many ways. Not equal in general intelligence." He obviously meant such negative utterances as a means of impressing on blacks the need for moderation and gradualism. To the black leadership, however, and to the Republican party in general, such speeches only served to undermine the government.

For the 1870 election, the Republican party renominated incumbent governor Robert Scott for a second term and Alonzo Ransier, a mulatto member of the state house, as his running mate. When Charleston Republicans assembled in late July, 1870, to elect delegates to the state nominating convention, Delany was conspicuously absent. Finally, in December, he lost his bid for the Senate when almost every leading
Republican (including blacks) opposed his nomination. 90

Despite internal problems, and the intimidation of black voters by
the Ku Klux Klan, the Republican party won the election by a vote of
85,071 to 51,573 for the Conservatives. The newly elected House of
Representatives had 22 Conservatives and 101 Republicans, 75 of whom
were blacks. 91

The election brought no meaningful change in Delany's life. In
desperation he approached Governor Scott for an extremely low paying
post of a jury commissioner for Charleston County.

"I am in hope that your excellency will give me this
little appointment, as I have never received any
remunerative position at the hands of your excellency
...and this will pay something and thus help to bear
expenses" he pleaded. 92

Scott gave the job to someone else.

Disappointed in politics, Delany sought refuge in business. In
1871 he began a land agency and note brokerage business. He had always
believed that in the rich and unexploited lands of the South lay the
key to economic prosperity. Part of his reason for appeals to blacks
and radical Republicans for moderation and compromise had been to attract
Northern capital to the state. All sorts of other Southerners, white
and black, were making similar appeals at this time.

In a series of letters titled "Homes For the Freedmen" he appealed
to Northern capitalists to come South and help finance the purchase of
lands for freedmen. 93 Rich and surplus lands existed in South Carolina,
he insisted, and freedmen would willingly buy these if assisted by rich capitalists. "The thing now most required for the freedman is a home — one that he can call his own, to secure the subsistence of himself and family" he argued.94 He recommended for the freedmen of South Carolina, at least, ten acres of land per family. The burdensome taxation in the state and the slow pace of development, he intimated, were the result of the unequal distribution of the available lands. There were large landowners with little capital to develop their lands, and therefore eager to sell them. On the other hand, there were landless poor blacks anxious to acquire lands but without the necessary capital. The philanthropic capitalists of the North must therefore come to the rescue by providing the necessary capital. Such a move, he argued, would significantly redistribute property, thus increasing the wealth of the state through increased property tax.95

Behind this ostensibly humanitarian appeal lay Delany's personal business considerations. He knew his chances of success as a real estate agent and note-broker depended on the availability of Northern capital and finance. Such capital, he strongly emphasized, must be dispensed "through (special) agencies for this object...."96 He did no better here either. No capitalists came.97 Once again, Delany attributed his failure to the conspiracy of those same "wily politicians."98

Repeated failures in his political and business aspirations drove Delany almost crazy. By August 1871, he was a frustrated and very bitter man. In a letter to Frederick Douglass, he wrote a scathing review of the political situation in South Carolina. Despite ideological
differences, both still held each other in high esteem. Douglass had recently been appointed Marshall of the District of Columbia. Because of Douglass's position, Delany considered him the appropriate person to report to on the situation in South Carolina.

Though based on South Carolina, Delany's review supposedly applied to all the reconstructed states. He pledged to "speak plainly, call things by their right name, and look those of whom I speak directly in the face." He blamed the situation in South Carolina on Northern radicals, whom he claimed had misdirected blacks for their own personal gains. He also accused them of neglecting intelligent blacks in their appointment to official positions. These radicals had also dangerously pushed blacks into the realm of violent politics. He accused both state and federal governments of discrimination against "pure blacks." They appointed only mulattoes (like Douglass?) to offices, thus driving a wedge between them and the pure blacks. He also described blacks as socially, morally and politically decadent.

This very negative perception of black reality undoubtedly resulted from Delany's personal failures and frustrations. Intelligence and unadulterated blackness seemed to constitute his major criteria for office-holding. Even in these, he was wrong. Black officials under radical Republican administration in South Carolina were not nonentities. They were intelligent and educated. Many of them hailed from the rich and prestigious ante-bellum mulatto class. Many also were of the "pure black" type.

Conspicuously missing in Delany's review was the conservative-
inspired anti-black pogroms. He did not even mention Klan violence and intimidation that had terrorized blacks since the inception of radical reconstruction. His analysis was akin to that of the conservatives in that he blamed every ill and violence in South Carolina on radicals and carpetbaggers.

Douglass objected to Delany's analysis. Violence was not the result of radical influence. White Carolinians themselves inspired it. "I shall never ask the colored men to be lambs when the whites insist upon being wolves," he added. He then revealed that the federal government had "pure black" employees. "Were you not M.R. Delany," Douglass wrote, "I shall have said that the man who wrote this of the colored people of South Carolina had taken his side with the old planters." Another critic described Delany's review as a selfish move to reach the administration in Washington, through Douglass, and secure appointment as representative of the "pure blacks."

It is not entirely certain if, as Douglass wondered, Delany had "taken his side with the old planters." One thing was certain, however. The old planters had taken their side with Delany. The conservative Charleston Courier described Delany's letter as a "remarkable document" that espoused ideas of great importance. It welcomed his indictment of the radicals and demanded that his evidence be accepted and believed since "our own [evidences] to the same tenor have been systematically ignored." Praising Delany, the conservative press urged him to join it in the "clearance of this worse than 'Augean stable' he so graphically described."
As the 1872 election approached, the radical-conservative conflict intensified. While the conservative press attacked government corruption and high expenditure, the conservative Taxpayers Convention also denounced the policies of the government and called for major reforms. Their 1870 defeat still fresh in their memory, the state conservatives decided not to contest the state ticket, but only local elections. 110

Leading blacks within the Republican party also wanted reforms. None, however, favored any split in the party, as this would have benefited the conservatives. This was precisely what happened in Missouri, where a split in the Republican party resulted in the election of more Democrats. 111

Delany soon became the center of another controversy. The "Willard Movement" in Charleston seriously threatened the unity of the Republican party. Organized by young men dedicated to reform, it published a pamphlet titled: Political Battle Axe for the Use of the Colored Men of the State of South Carolina in the Year 1872 (signed, KUSH). 112 According to Delany "this seemed really to have been the first effective entering wedge into the ranks of reckless radical Republicanism." Who these young men were, and who KUSH was, may never be known. However, since this was a conservative movement, accusing fingers pointed to Delany. Although he denied any association with the movement, "the disturbed radicals swore vengeance against me," he claimed. 113

This threat of vengeance notwithstanding, he remained a Republican. He was hopeful that prospects existed within the Republican party. In
October 1871, at the Southern State Convention of Colored People in Columbia, he joined other blacks in calling for unity and strength in the fight against what they called "remnants of modified servitude."  

The Republican party, however, could not completely avoid a split. Although the Democrats withdrew from the state ticket, Republicans contested the election against one another. When the State Republican Convention nominated Franklin J. Moses, a former speaker of the state House for governor, and Richard H. Gleaves, a wealthy mulatto for Lt. governor, a faction bolted, and at a separate convention nominated Reuben Tomlinson, a native white.  

Delany campaigned vigorously for Moses and the regular Republicans. Moses promised reform, honest government and retrenchment. He also promised to meet all the financial obligations of the state. Delany travelled to New York, the nerve-center of South Carolina's finances. He published two letters in the New York Times, promising South Carolina bondholders and potential bondholders that Moses would not repudiate any of the state debts, and that his election would enhance the credit of the state.  

Moses defeated Tomlinson by a vote of 69,838 to 36,533. Frauds, however, figured prominently in the election. The cause célèbre was the election of one John J. Patterson ("honest John") to the U.S. Senate. "Honest John" bribed potential opponents and his "agents" canvassed the state purchasing votes. Delany later testified before a Senate investigation committee that he remembered an agent of "honest John" offer a cash reward to Robert B. Elliott, the black Congressman, if he withdrew...
from the contest. 117

Election frauds, however, were child's play compared to the corruption of the entire Moses administration. The diary of Josephus Woodruff, Clerk of the Republican Printing Company, is replete with accounts of how key black Republicans abused their official positions and plundered the treasury. 118

Though Moses had won, nothing tangible or material accrued to Delany for his troubles and efforts. 1873 was a particularly difficult year for him. Making a living became increasingly problematic. In desperation, he approached General H.G. Worthington, the Collector of Customs in Charleston for help. Worthington was "a personal friend" and he offered Delany the job of "Duty Inspector" under federal, not state patronage on a pay of $1,400 per annum. 119

The offer of this job, however, could not pacify Delany. Moses had indeed broken faith with him. He had supported and campaigned for Moses on the promise of reward. 120 The Reverend Mr. Cain, a highly respected black leader, in a letter appealed to Moses to come to Delany's aid:

"I have felt much concern about my friend Delany and my pledges to him made before he consented to abandon his opposition to your nomination," Cain wrote "... Delany's condition is a needy one. He has staked all on your word, for heaven's sake do not cast him away." 121

He further pleaded that Delany be placed in a position "where he may render the state some service while he makes a living for his wife and children. You know doubtless what it is to be without money, without friends, without a position, with pressing necessities." 122
Moses did not listen, and thus again Delany had his hopes dashed. Moses in fact lived up to his reputation. According to an authority, he bore, externally at least, many of the earmarks of the ideal Southern gentleman—a shrewd, unscrupulous scoundrel, untrue to his friends and unfaithful in his public trust and devoid of fine moral instincts. 123

Isolated from friends, without money, without a position and with pressing family responsibilities, Delany must have felt at the end of his wits. Aggravating this consciousness was the realization that these financial difficulties did not afflict other black leaders. Modern scholarship demonstrates that a greater percentage of the black leadership in South Carolina at this time was relatively wealthy. But more significantly, their positions in the Republican state machine and administration brought added income. 124

Delany's major preoccupation since 1869 had been the struggle for effective acceptance and integration into the state Republican party. His experience had been one of repeated failures. But for the job of "Duty Inspector," he would have been in greater trouble. Even then, it did not escape his notice that state politicians had unsuccessfully attempted to deprive him of his position. These "wily politicians" it seemed would never be satisfied until they had completely destroyed him. 125 In desperation, he turned toward the state conservatives for a joint onslaught on the radical Republicans.

1874: THE INDEPENDENT REPUBLICAN

By 1874 Delany had come to the conclusion that black political
power in South Carolina was not worth preserving. He was prepared to
go to any length to bring about its downfall. Black corruption and
political inefficiency, he emphasized, had not only damaged the state
internally, but had also scared away Northern capital. Radicalism had
made the state unsafe for Northern investments. If the state was to
resume peaceful economic regeneration, power must revert back to white
Carolinians. The black-radical Republican coalition, in his estimation,
had failed dismally. A new coalition involving him, on the one hand,
and the rulers of the state's ancien regime on the other was what was
desperately needed. Consequently, he allied himself with the conserva-
tives (ex-Confederates and Democrats).

The corruption of Moses's administration had given the conserva-
tives the much needed Casus Belli. Though vehement in their condemna-
tion of the government, the conservatives were still not strong enough
to unseat it. The gains they made in local elections in 1872 were too
meager to turn the tide decisively in 1874. Therefore, they sought
every available opportunity to destroy radical power. The capitulation
of Delany presented precisely such a chance.

In February of 1874, Delany wrote a crucial letter to Jonathan T.
Wright, the black associate justice of the state Supreme Court. He
recalled how his plea for moderation, universal amnesty and reconcilia-
tion with ex-planters had been "pooh-poohed." 126 Black political power
was at best ephemeral. Whites, he predicted, would soon take over
political power and the consequences would be grave unless blacks changed
their political orientation. He advised blacks to adopt a principle
that would guarantee minority representation for local whites so that they would reciprocate when eventually they assumed power.

South Carolina conservatives and ex-Confederates had persistently advocated minority representation since the Civil Rights Act and the Fourteenth Amendment of 1866 gave blacks citizenship and the franchise. This sudden strengthening of the majority status of blacks seriously threatened the political fortune of the state conservatives. At the conservative Taxpayers Convention in Columbia, 1871, delegates unanimously called for more minority representation. Among those who supported this was Daniel Chamberlain, who later became Republican governor 1875-1876. The conservatives, however, wanted more representation in order to counter what they perceived as "radical excesses." Whatever the motivation, calls for more minority representation bore grievous implications for the continued consolidation of black freedom. The more political power conservatives attained, the greater the chances of their subverting the cause of radical reconstruction and black freedom. This was precisely what ultimately occurred.

Delany's advocacy for minority representation rested on his firm conviction that black political power in the state was ephemeral. He strongly believed in the now famous "population bogey" that the state conservatives had popularized since the inception of radical reconstruction. The population majority blacks enjoyed would soon end, they predicted. Black population would remain static while that of whites increased through immigration and natural processes. Such ridiculous arguments, they hoped, would strike fear into the hearts of blacks. To
strengthen the impact, they coupled this prediction with another which suggested that race war was imminent and that the outcome would be the total annihilation of blacks.\textsuperscript{129}

Delany believed this and it gave him cause for serious concern. He also recalled to Wright how since 1866 he had persistently warned blacks of the possible consequences of increased white immigration into the state. No one had then listened to him. Now the threat was real. There was increased white immigration into the state and the consequences would be the "neutralization of the black ruling element" he argued.\textsuperscript{130}

"It is a fixed fact" he continued, "that in five years, if not less time than this, the black population will be in the minority.\textsuperscript{131} He blamed this development on the radicals, whom he claimed had misdirected and miseducated blacks. "The white race is true to itself," he emphasized, "and it is useless and doing injustice to both races to conceal the fact that in giving liberty and equality of rights to blacks they had no desire to see them rule over their own race.\textsuperscript{132} Whites would do anything to overthrow black political power, he insisted. He described radicalism and its influence upon blacks as "dreadful, and a terrible political heresy" which deserved universal condemnation.\textsuperscript{133}

No one, not even radical Republicans, ever denied the prevalence of corruption in the administration. But the government itself had not been unmindful of these criticisms. Certain reforms in fact had been instituted. Delany's concern for corruption and the need for reform could therefore not be taken too seriously. There were other more important reasons for his desertion of the Republican party. First, he
had been through intermittent agonies and lost opportunities. These had significantly alienated him. Secondly, the implications of radical policies, as he perceived them, were potentially dreadful. Conservative press and spokesmen had consistently predicted race war in which blacks would be the ultimate losers. Such predictions, undoubtedly, disturbed Delany, who temperamentally abhorred violence. This hatred of violence plus his conviction that the black-radical Republican coalition was responsible for the unsettled atmosphere in the state rendered Delany receptive to much of the racist propaganda of the conservatives.

The *New York Times* praised Delany and hoped that other blacks would join him in the task he had undertaken. Unfortunately, other blacks saw the political situation differently. They blamed the political problems of the state on the continued intransigence of the conservatives. Cardozo outlined for the *Times* some of the concrete reforms already undertaken by the Republicans. He described the conservative profession of friendship toward blacks as dubious. Men who believed that slavery was a divine institution and inaugurated a bloody Civil War for it, he claimed, "could not in so short a time have entirely changed their opinion."

He was right, and he voiced the opinions of many blacks. But not of Delany and a few others who seemed to have had enough of Republican radicalism. Delany used every opportunity to impress upon blacks how much he now detested their exercise of political power. During the municipal election in Charleston (1874), a committee of blacks requested his views on the issue of a black mayor for the city. Objecting to
this, Delany argued that it was impolitic and damaging to the reputation, and commercial prosperity of the city. Charleston, he argued, should stick to her tradition of white mayors. The poor performances of black leaders at the state level glaringly indicted all aspiring black politicians. 136 "The credit of the city would be blasted by destroying confidence everywhere in our financial and commercial relations," he maintained. "The state having been ruined by rule under the suffrage of the colored race, the city of Charleston was the only part of it left, that gives us credit abroad." 137 Charleston under a white mayor, in Delany's analysis, stood like a city on a hill, untainted by black corruption and inefficiency. This pristine purity would be destroyed should a black become mayor. If Charleston under a white administration was the only hope left for the entire state and if black political power had significantly brought discredit to the state, it followed logically from Delany's analysis that the state must be salvaged from black politicians and radicals. Such negative definition of black political power was precisely what the state conservatives wanted. They found in Delany a willing and obliging comrade.

After failing to receive the Republican party's nomination for Lt. governor, Delany and a few others bolted and launched the Independent Republican Movement. They nominated Judge Green, a white Carolinian, for Governor and Delany for Lt. governor. They pledged reform and honest government. As in 1872, the state conservatives did not sponsor a state ticket, but contested only local seats. Also as in 1872, rival Republicans would contest the 1874 election. But unlike 1872, however, the state conservatives declared for the Green-Delany ticket. 138 They
had every reason to do so. Green was a native son. Delany articulated conservative sentiments. In fact, the acceptance of a ticket with a white Carolinian symbolized Delany's basic objective: rapprochement with ex-Confederates and Southern whites.

During the campaign, Delany literally turned the history of the black experience on its head. He used deception and deliberate misinformation in order to sell his conservative coalition to blacks, and at the same time sustain the confidence of the conservatives.

At a campaign rally, he told his listeners, "for a long time I have been alone in the party [i.e. Republican] and denounced for my views." The days were gone when Republicans were always right, he asserted. He called upon blacks and whites to unite in a common struggle to redeem the state from the radicals. Redemption was the key word white Carolinians wanted to hear, and they swarmed toward the Green-Delay ticket like bees. "I am no longer scared of being called a Democrat," he said, "after all, the Democrats gave blacks freedom!" Democrats, he claimed, made far more positive contributions to the Underground Railroad than Republicans.

One of the "mistaken ethics of politics" that radical Republicanism fed into blacks, he lamented, was the notion that Democrats were bad. Using this dubious notion, he claimed, Republicans deceived blacks and got away with many frauds. The entire Republican rule had failed dismally. It had conferred no benefits whatsoever on blacks, he maintained. The radical Republicans had not only misdirected blacks, but had also driven capital investments from the state. "The Republican party was
not worth preserving" he concluded.142

In his acceptance speech as Lt. governor, he pledged "all intelligence, all the powers of intellect that (he) possessed, all of the integrity of character, to bring about between the two people, black and white, those relations that shall tend to the promotion of each other's mutual welfare."143 He deplored the mounting racial tension in the state and attributed it to what he termed "Republican political miseducation." Blacks had more to lose in a racial conflict, he maintained. "I shall endeavor to correct this," he pledged.144 He advocated a "new departure" involving a "Union of some of the first white men of South Carolina who held high office of trust under the old state government (i.e. pre-Civil War), and me Martin R. Delany, a John Brown abolitionist."145 This call for a return of the old government revealed Delany's own sense of frustration and disappointment over his conflict with radical Republicanism. But the juxtaposition with John Brown was fraudulent. Were Brown alive he would have been the first to dissociate himself from the old order in South Carolina.

The conservatives almost unanimously endorsed Delany's candidacy. Even the diehard Bourbons abandoned their political apathy. The Independent Republican Movement suddenly provided them with the opportunity to "kill the snake of radicalism."146 What Delany and other blacks in the movement failed or refused to acknowledge was the insincerity of the white conservatives. They were not supporting the movement out of a conviction that blacks deserved equal rights. In fact, as the conservative press admitted, the move of the conservatives did not signal an
abandonment of principle. It was necessitated by expediency, and neither represented any want of Democratic principle nor disloyalty to the highest type of Democratic opinion. 147

The momentum generated by the Independent Republicans swept conservatives all over the state. They voted in record numbers. Unfortunately, blacks overwhelmingly voted for the radical Republicans, who won the overall contest. With Daniel H. Chamberlain as Governor and Richard Gleaves (colored) as Lt. governor, radical reconstruction assumed another stormy phase. The total votes cast in 1874 were 149,221, the largest since 1868, indicating increased white participation. 148

As it turned out, however, the conservatives were the real winners in 1874. Thanks largely to the Independent Republican Movement, in fourteen of the state's thirty-two counties, the conservatives swept the local offices. They elected about two-fifths of their members to the state legislature, which for the first time since 1867 now had a white majority of three. The movement itself fizzled out after the election. 149

The entire period 1868-1874 had been hard and bitter for Delany. The enthusiasm with which he began in 1868 turned sour as the years progressed. The Civil War and the Freedmen's Bureau afforded Delany his first significant taste of power and authority. The experience left indelible imprints on him. His personal successes seemed, in his estimation, to herald the dawn of the millennium for all blacks. This experience significantly shaped his response to the black struggle. Throughout 1861-1868 he urged blacks to compromise and seek unconditional
reconciliation with white Southerners. More importantly, he cautioned against, what he considered, irrelevant demands for political power. Only such a compromise approach, he believed, could guarantee the peaceful atmosphere for the economic regeneration of the South. He strongly believed that the key to black salvation lay in such economic development.

However, the termination of his Bureau agency left Delany unemployed. The search for a job therefore launched him into the political arena of the state. Problems, however, attended his advent into active politics. Other blacks noticed that his ideas were not only unrealistic, but dangerous to the cause of black freedom. His new crusade on behalf of the "intelligent" and "pure black" only further compounded his difficulties. Soon it was very difficult to disguise the selfish undertones of his speeches and letters. His fundamentally unprincipled approach seriously strained his relationship with the Republican party.

Equally crucial was his condescending perception of the black leadership. In his estimation, the black leadership was politically ignorant, immature, and therefore, unfit for the sort of responsibility that Republican rule conferred. It damaged his ego to watch those he considered ignorant managing the state affairs, while he, the all-knowing master of political science and ideas, the intelligent, and the purest of the pure blacks, remained without.

Failure to gain entry into the political centers of power only strengthened his determination. But the more he tried and failed, the greater his frustration. Finally, joining the conservatives, he lashed
out strongly not just against Republican power, but more specifically against black political power. Since, according to him, blacks were politically ignorant and immature, it followed that political responsibility and power properly belonged to whites. Like Machiavelli's Prince, for Delany the end justified the means. His end was political power and authority, and if that required a denigration and destruction of black political power, so be it. The failure of 1874, however, constituted a severe blow, and also a revelation to him. It now remained to be seen what dramatic steps he would take next.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER SEVEN

1. His entire argument for black representation from 1870 to 1874 was based on this utilitarian conception of politics. At a mass meeting in Edgefield, July 1870, he proclaimed "when I go hunting with a whiteman, I do not want the whiteman to say 'I take the turkey, you take the buzzard.' I want some of the turkey too." The Daily Republican, July 15, 1870. At another meeting he said, "No people have become great without their own leaders. Blacks must have black leaders. We must be led by our own people. Not whites." Ibid., June 24, 1870.


5. The new Constitution reasserted state rights and developed the infamous "black codes" as a mechanism of subordinating blacks to the new form of bondage. Simkins and Woody, ibid., pp. 38-40. A. Taylor, ibid., pp. 42-47. The underlying rationale for the new Constitution was that freedom was an unnatural state for blacks. Ibid., pp. 50-51. Herbert Aptheker, "South Carolina Negro Convention, 1865," Journal of Negro History, 31, Jan. 1946, pp. 91-92. See also New York Tribune, Nov. 29, 1866, pp. 1, 8.


7. Ibid., pp. 93-95. Proceedings of the Colored People's Convention of the State of South Carolina, held in Zion Church, Charleston, November 1865. Together with the Declaration of Rights and Wrongs, an Address to the People; a Petition to the Legislature and a Memorial to Congress. Charleston, 1865.

9. Ibid., p. 290.


12. Ibid.

13. Ibid.

14. Frank Rollin, Life and Public Services of Martin R. Delany (Boston, 1868).

15. Ibid., p. 282.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 283.

18. Ibid., pp. 278-280.

19. Ibid.


22. Simkins and Woody, op. cit., Chapt. III. This chapter deals with the congressional provisions/guidelines for reconstruction.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.


27. Ibid., p. 455.

28. A.A. Taylor, op. cit., p. 187. P. Lamson, op. cit., pp. 64-65. For the notion that blacks were naturally inferior and therefore deserved to be enslaved, see Charleston Mercury, Nov. 27, 1866.

29. Ibid. See also The Appeal of the South Carolina Democrats to Congress, in Cox and Cox (eds.), Reconstruction, The Negro, op. cit., pp. 228-236. They advocated a restoration of state power to enable them to execute, with the least outside interference, their plan of subordinating blacks.

30. See the letters of Jas. H. Campbell to the Aiken Democratic Club, in The Dawson Pamphlet Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Also in the South Carolina Historical Society Collection, Charleston, South Carolina. If the Democrats had their way, blacks would have no political roles at all.

31. The Daily Phoenix (Columbia), April 14, 1868.

32. The letters of Jas. H. Campbell, op. cit. Also letter of one Col. Thomas to the colored people informing them that suffrage was not a right that blacks should aspire to. As a leading member of the Newberry Democratic Club, Thomas shared the racist notions of party comrades that South Carolina was a white man's state and ought to remain so. The Daily Phoenix, ibid.

33. Ibid., April 26, 1868.

34. Letters of Jas. H. Campbell, op. cit.

35. Ibid. Also The Daily Phoenix, April 14, 1868.

36. The Charleston Mercury, April 4, 1866.


40. The Daily Phoenix, April 15, 1868. The state Democratic Convention recognized blacks as part of the body polity, entitled to full and equal protection. But it would only grant blacks qualified suffrage, based on intelligence and property. As the Anti-Slavery Reporter rightly observed, the platform of the Democrats remained
questionable. It demanded the restoration of state rights and the destruction of the very foundation for black elevation and power. In fact, if there was any doubt about the conservative nature of the platform, The Phoenix dispelled this when, responding to a charge by The Mercury that the Democratic party, by recognizing blacks as members of the body polity, significantly "repudiated the platform of a white man's government," it insisted that these concessions were necessary to stem the tide of Republican radicalism. "Our suffrage is based upon intelligence and property" it emphasized, and it was meant to keep this a white man's government. The Daily Phoenix, April 22, 1868. Platform of the Union Reform Party and the Address of the Executive Committee to the People of the State (pamphlet), (Columbia: Daily Southern Guardian, 1870) in The Dawson Pamphlets Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

41. Ibid., April 26, 1868. The minutes of the Democratic party of Charleston show a determined effort to win blacks away from the Republican connection, through an efficient organizational procedure. Democratic Party, Charleston, Minutes 1868; Manuscript, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. At the same time, the Democratic garrison at Abbeville "itched to get a shot at the negroes." Despite the presence of a company of troops, the garrison beat and stabbed several blacks. This information is in a letter of Edward Crossland to his mother in, The Crossland Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia. In the state legislature, Democratic sympathizers voted to abolish the political disabilities imposed by the Fourteenth Amendment. Ellison Summerfield Keiff (FL, 1876). MA, Vol. bd. 1867-76. MSS. South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

42. The Daily Phoenix, April 26, 1868, May 5, 1868.

43. Ibid., Feb. 26, 1868, April 10, 1868.

44. Ibid., April 22, 1868.

45. The Daily Republican, August 28, 1869. The consensus at a large Republican meeting was that the "radical" or "liberal" posturings of the Democratic party were fraudulent and should be condemned.

46. Martin R. Delany, Trial and Conviction (Charleston, 1876). A copy in the South Carolina Historical Society Collection, Charleston, South Carolina.

47. In his writings one detects a condescending and negative perception of the black leadership in particular and of blacks in general.


49. Trial and Conviction, ibid.
50. Ibid., p. 5.

51. Delany described Wendell Phillips as "a young man of some 27 to 28 years and consequently without any political experience, except such as acquired since the war commenced, and therefore may be excused for so palpable a political blunder," ibid. Jonathan Wright made a similar demand at a meeting of the officers of the Union League in October, 1867. The Charleston News and Courier, Oct. 18, 1867.

52. Trial and Conviction, op. cit.


54. New York Times, August 21, 1867. The paper described Phillips as "a great misleader", "arch-agitator", "a pitiless egotist", "Warwick of the blacks." It wondered "why a race that had just been raised to manhood...be stimulated to risk all manhood is worth in the scramble for the reward of party." It advised blacks to concentrate instead on developing habits of self-control and patient industry. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Trial and Conviction, op. cit., p. 5.

57. Ibid., p. 6.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. The only reference to this episode was in Delany's campaign speech for the Independent Republican Movement in 1874. To convince the state conservatives of his past fidelity to their cause, he informed them that he had supported Lesesné for Mayor in 1868 and had consequently been burnt in effigy by angry blacks. The News and Courier, Oct. 3, 1874.

63. Trial and Conviction, op. cit., p. 7.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Ibid.
67. Ibid. According to Delany, crowds of colored people spoke with expressions of disapprobation "of what I had said to them, because their radical leaders...made them believe that I was against their interests and rights.

68. The Daily Phoenix, April 12, 1868.

69. Victor Ullman, Martin R. Delany: The Beginnings of Black Nationalism (Boston, 1971), pp. 411-414. According to Ullman, Delany never intended returning to South Carolina: It was the failure to secure the Liberian job that brought him back. Ibid., p. 415. See also M.R. Delany to Coppinger, August 18, 1880. Delany File, London (Ontario), Cross Cultural Learner's Centre (CCLC).

70. Martin R. Delany, "A Series of Four Tracts on National Polity (1870)." The article on secession was published under the title "IN AND OUT" by the New National Era, Jan. 27, 1870. It also published the one on civil rights, Feb. 24, 1870. The entire series was later published in pamphlet form by the Republican Book and Job Office, Charleston. There is a copy in the Dawson Pamphlets Collection of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The object of the series, he proclaimed, was "to instruct a class of readers in the elementary principle of constitutional government and to do ample justice to a subject so important would require a series of articles on the history of Constitutions.", p. 12. Blacks, in his estimation, have assumed political responsibilities without adequate preparation and knowledge. His series was meant to fill this gap. "We must possess attainments equal to the requirements of the positions we expect to occupy. Otherwise, we have no right to expect anything," he told blacks. Ibid., p. 10.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. His entire address concentrated on his familiar "political economy" theme, emphasizing the industrious nature of black labor. Blacks produced most of the great staples of the world, he argued. Therefore, blacks deserved a place of importance in society. The New National Era, Jan. 13, 1870.

74. M.R. Delany to Coppinger, op. cit.

75. The Daily Republican, August 28, 1869.

76. "Conservative Republicanism" could be defined either as an attempt by conservatives to use radical/Republican means to attain conservative ends. An example was the attempt by the Democrats to coopt the platform of the radical Republicans in order to win over blacks and defeat radical reconstruction. It could also mean an attempt by a
Republican to use conservative means/or voice conservative sentiments to achieve a political goal. Delany used this technique. For the platform of the Union Reform Party, see The Daily Republican, July 6, 1870. Though this platform accepted the Fourteenth Amendment and universal suffrage, an article in the Democratic Carpetbagger Journal of Charleston revealed that the Democrats were just "playing radicals" for appearance sake. Their objective was to get rid of Blacks. Ibid., Feb. 5, 1876.


78. The platform of the Republican Party was as radical as ever—it accepted the Fifteenth Amendment, pledged a firm, fearless and unflagging support for the Civil Rights Bill and demanded a strict enforcement of its principle as part of the practical assertions of the civil equality of all Americans. It also advocated more land for freedmen. The Daily Republican, July 28, 1870; also Ibid., July 27.


80. Robert DeLarge demanded justice for blacks and the right to be voted for at a mass meeting of Republicans in Charleston. The Daily Republican, June 24, 1870. Rev. Cain also advocated equal representation of the races. Ibid., July 28, 1870.

81. Ibid., June 24, 1870, July 5, 1870.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid., June 24, 1870, July 7, 1870. June 27, 1870. Delany had already indicated his intention to contest for the U.S. Senate. One critic L.J. Taylor harshly condemned Delany. While a Bureau agent, Delany, Taylor claimed, crushed the aspirations of fellow blacks in nine out of ten places. "If you want colored men for office, get good ones, not these [i.e., Delany]," he emphasized. Ibid. Another critic, C.C. Bowen, called Delany an enemy of the Republican party. He also accused him of frustrating black aspirations in Beaufort. He strongly opposed Delany. Ibid.

84. The "Third Party" rumor disturbed the Republicans and they were determined to fight it, "with severity wherever and whenever we see this movement rear its head, we shall strike our hardest blows." Ibid., June 30, 1870.

85. Ibid., June 29, 1870. L. Taylor described the race issue as deceptive, Janus-faced, and he accused those who propagate it of personal ambition.
86. At a mass meeting, DeLARGE defended himself against the charge of trying to form a black party. He also promised never to mention the issue of color again. Ibid., July 7, 1870. At a mass meeting in Edgefield, Delany reiterated his commitment to supporting the Republican party. "I have a good church to take you to right in," he told the "palpitators" General M.C. Butler and other members of the Union Reform Party who solicited his support, "...a good church and a good pastor and does not intend to change for a long time yet" he emphasized. Ibid., July 5, 1870. At a celebration of the 4th of July in Charleston, he informed his listeners "although we may disagree, I am not at war with you." He denied attempting to split the Republican party. "I want you to stick to them until you find the odds too heavy against them, then get away as fast as you can," he advised them, ibid. Also ibid., July 25, 1870.

87. The Daily Republican, August 20, 1870.
88. Ibid., June 24, 1870.
89. Ibid., July 7, 1870. Robert C. DeLARGE, L.J. Taylor, C.C. Bowen, all condemned Delany's past record as Bureau agent.
90. Ibid.
92. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 420.
93. Trial and Conviction, op. cit. M.R. Delany, "Homes For the Freedmen," The Daily Republican, May 2, 1870, p. 2. There were three letters on this theme. He sent one to Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts and the other two to Daniel L. Eaton, an official of the Freedmen's Bureau Bank in Washington, D.C. The Boston Public Library has copies of the three letters.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
98. Delany to Coppinger, op. cit.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid.


104. The New National Era, August 31, 1871.

105. Ibid.

106. A black Senator S.E. Gailliard recalled Delany's past attempts to frustrate black aspirations for office and said "he (i.e. Delany) ought to be the last man to growl about 'leaders'." He also attributed Delany's frustration to his failure to secure the senatorial nomination. The Daily Republican, June 22, 1871. One other critic refuted Delany's claim that the appointment of a black postmaster at Manchester, Virginia was at the request of the Democratic community. On the contrary, the person, Mr. James H. Cunningham obtained his position at the solicitation of Hon. Charles L. Porter, M.C. of Richmond Va., district who was Republican. The New National Era, Oct. 12, 1871.

107. The News and Courier ran a series on Delany's letter from August 17th to 19th, 1871.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid.


111. The New National Era, August 10, 1871. At the national level, Douglass called for a strengthening of the Republican party. "I had better put a pistol to my head and blow my brain out" he said, "than allow myself in any way to the destruction or defeat of the Republican party" ibid., July 26, 1871.


113. Ibid.


117. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 430.

118. Diary of Josephus Woodruff, Manuscript, South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia, S.C. [SCDAH].


120. R.H. Cain to Gov. Franklin J. Moses, May 8, 1873. Franklin J. Moses Papers, Box 4, Folder 3, MSS SCDAH.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.

123. R.H. Woody, "Franklin J. Moses Jr., Scalawag Governor of South Carolina," The North Carolina Historical Review, 10, April 1933.


125. Delany to Coppinger, op. cit.


128. South Carolina conservatives popularized this "population bogey" as a means of subverting radical reconstruction and preventing blacks from assuming positions of political responsibility. See The Daily Phoenix, Feb. 26, 1868, April 10, 1868.


130. Delany to Hon. J.T. Wright, op. cit.

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid.
133. Ibid.


136. Trial and Conviction, op. cit., p. 10.

137. Ibid.


140. Ibid.

141. Ibid., Oct. 3, 1874.

142. Ibid., Oct. 7, 1874.

143. Ibid., Oct. 5, 1874.

144. Ibid.

145. Ibid., Oct. 7, 1874.

146. Ibid., Oct. 15, 1874.

147. Ibid., Oct. 16, 1874.

148. The failure of white and black conservative coalition did not come as a surprise. Inspite of the charges of corruption and inefficiency, most blacks remained faithful to the Republican party. From about 1870, the conservative movement, masquerading as a "Union Reform Party" consisted of prominent planters who were very hostile to black aspirations. Consequently, blacks remained alienated from it. Lewis J. Bellardo Jr., "A Social and Economic History of Fairfield County S. Carolina, 1865-1871." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1979, p. 304.

149. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 456.
CHAPTER EIGHT

THE LAST APOSTASY, 1875-1878

RETURN TO REPUBLICAN FOLD: UNEASY RELATIONSHIP

Few expected an about-face by Delany. But it did occur. Early in 1875, like the biblical prodigal son, he returned to the Republican party. There seemed to be no option if he wanted to remain politically active. Though the conservatives had gained significantly in the last election, the Republican party retained control of the government.

The election drove home one significant lesson that perhaps influenced Delany's decision to return to the Republican party. The overwhelming support blacks gave to the Republicans seemed to confirm their dislike for the conservative scheme.

The rapprochement, if there was any, was not destined to last. Delany did not view his return as an acknowledgement de facto or otherwise, that his ideas were wrong. He had not reconciled himself to the policies of the radicals, neither had he so soon forgotten their persistent opposition to his political aspirations. In his estimation, therefore, the return was more appropriately an act of taking the struggle back into the Republican party. Neither were the radicals inclined easily to forget and forgive Delany's negative and destructive utterances and reviews. In fact, as he himself recognized, the Independent Republican Movement represented his "crowning act of infamy never to be forgotten and sworn to be punished."
From the beginning, therefore, the relationship involved strange bedfellows in which neither side felt comfortable with the other. None felt more uncomfortable than Delany himself. He conceived of the radicals as conspirators bent on destroying him. Rightly or wrongly, this perception was central to his aggressive responses.

Neither the certainty nor uncertainty of radical conspiracy could deter Delany from the path of aggressive opposition to the radicals. Early in 1875, on the invitation of the "most distinguished gentleman for position and wealth," he travelled to New York to address a gathering at Irvin Hall. His speech focused on what he called the "truths" about the South. Blacks would have become a great political force, he informed them, but for the misdirection and miseducation of radicals and selfish politicians. The result of radical rule had been to sow the seeds of discord in the South.

For the first time since the war, Delany carried his anti-radical crusade to the North. Northern public opinion had always played a crucial role in developments within Southern states. Southern politicians, irrespective of party affiliation, had always sought to maintain a favorable image in the North. Delany's speech therefore significantly undermined radical Republicanism in the North. His speech occurred precisely at a time when the Democratic resurgence gathered momentum, not just within the state, but nationwide.

Reported widely, the speech created further problems for Delany in South Carolina. The long-expected conspiracy seemed nearer. Passing by the Charleston City Hall shortly after his return, Delany claimed
he overheard someone complain that he had gone far enough and "must be put down." The state solicitor also reportedly vowed to have him in the penitentiary within two weeks of the next court session. The radicals were determined to punish, or even crush him entirely, he claimed.

Undeterred, he intensified his anti-radical crusade. Three significant factors sustained him in this preoccupation. The first was his rugged determination to destroy radical power, and the almost religious convictions of his righteousness. The second and perhaps more important reason, was his conviction that he had the moral and physical support of the "men of worth" in the state; that is, the native whites. Though politically impotent, the fact remained that they controlled the economic power of the state. Thirdly, the election of 1874, both in the state and at the national level, witnessed dramatic comebacks by conservatives. With such victories, the handwriting seemed clear. The days of radicalism were numbered.

In August 1875, Delany began a weekly, The Charleston Independent, dedicated to the fight against corruption and radical excesses. In the Charleston municipal election that year, he campaigned vigorously for G.L. Cunningham, a moderate Republican who had won the support of the state conservatives. He also used his paper to dispute and refute whatever ideas the radicals sponsored. In the end Cunningham won, and several radical candidates suffered defeats. This development, Delany claimed, further aggravated the radicals and they were determined to inflict upon him "the severest penalty known to the criminal law, even
DEATH if it was legally possible.¹⁰

One of the unexpected developments was Governor Chamberlain's appointment of Delany as trial justice for Ward 3 of the City of Charleston.¹¹ This was the same man who just one year before Delany had vehemently challenged in the state election! What motivated Chamberlain into taking a decision so obviously unpopular with other radical Republicans? He had been elected on a platform that promised reform. His commitment to reform was such that he was prepared to appoint men to offices irrespective of their past political affiliations. Consequently, he replaced many corrupt officials of previous governments with honest men, mostly Democrats and conservatives.¹² Early in 1875, he refused to commission two circuit judges (Ex-governor Moses and William Whipper) elected by the radical legislature. Delany's appointment, therefore, is explicable within the context of this policy of reconciliation.¹³

The job of a trial justice entailed the enforcement of the common laws of property, public order and domestic peace. In his office on Anson Street, Delany judged a large number of assault cases. According to Ullman, he seemed to prefer any alternative to imprisonment. Few offenders went to jail. In most cases he imposed fines or placed the offender/s on peace bonds.¹⁴

However, if Governor Chamberlain was prepared to forget and forgive Delany's past offences, other radical Republicans were not. As Delany himself rightly acknowledged, his offences had gone beyond pardon. His
appointment to public office gave his radical opponents precisely the opportunity they had long waited for. Not long after he assumed his position, a Rev. Alonzo W. Webster and three other blacks entered a suit against him for breach of trust and grand larceny. This inaugurated perhaps the most significant crisis in Delany's entire public life.

The trial began the same month he was appointed trial justice. The root of this crisis could be traced back to 1871 when he functioned as a real estate agent and note broker. As real estate agent for one Mrs. Richardson, Delany was entrusted with the sum of $200.00 belonging to the John's Island Wesleyan Church, of which the deceased husband of his client was a trustee. He proceeded to invest the sum in county claims, expecting full payment that fall. Unfortunately, payment was refused. Since the claims began to decline in value, he sued out an injunction and entered judgment for $1,131. This included sums he also held in trust for others which he had also invested.

For the first time, a judgment against the county was obtained for $12,000, and an appropriation of some $60,000 was made to pay up county claims. Even though Delany's suit was second, his claims were not honored. Another county appropriation provided little relief for Delany. Frustrated, he sought to transfer judgment to the trustees of the church, but they refused. His claims therefore remained unpaid.

Sufficient grounds existed for Delany to suspect that the entire episode had political undertones. The refusal by the county to pay his claims when all others were honored, and the fact that the
case did not resurrect this until after his flirtation with the state conservatives in 1874 seemed to justify this suspicion. The dreaded conspiracy at last materialized. The entire trial, he suggested, was stage-managed to ensure his conviction.  

TRIAL AND TRIBULATION

By 1876 Delany had come to conceive of himself as the quintessence of survival, and progress for race relations in the state. Consequently, this radical "conspiracy," if allowed to succeed, would not only destroy him personally, but also the entire foundation for peace and progress. The result would be armageddon and the destruction of blacks. To avert this, he once again turned to Frederick Douglass.

In a very lengthy letter dated February 1876, he established beyond any doubt his perception of post-bellum black struggle as one between the forces of good (advocates of peace, moderation and reconciliation, like himself) and the agents of evil (the radicals).  

"I propose to lay before the country, the true character of so-called radicalism, as it exists in the state of South Carolina," he claimed, "and the alarming extent to which it has gone, in subverting the rights and liberties of the people, especially those who oppose them whether white or black, as exhibited in my own case."  

He proceeded to narrate how since 1867, his advocacy of moderation and peace alienated the radicals. Consequently, he informed Douglass, they had persistently opposed and frustrated him politically. From 1867 to 1876, he listed about twelve offences that the radicals had charged him with. Among them were his
Independent Republican nomination and his subsequent opposition to radical candidates in the last municipal election in Charleston. Since mustered out of my four years service as a Major," he told Douglass, "they [i.e. radicals] have persistently opposed and prevented my nomination or appointment to any office, either state or federal. CRUSH me to earth they were determined."  

Success for the radicals in the grand larceny charge, he intimated to Douglass, would lead to the removal or neutralization of the only effective voice of moderation in the state (i.e. himself). The attendant intensification of radicalism would inadvertently unleash race hatred and war. The force with which whites, North and West, would invade the South would render Sherman's "a child's play." "Extermination" would be the raison d'être of the invading forces, he maintained, and their watch-word would be "every negro in the grave!" When it was all over, blacks would "only be remembered among the things of the past!"  

By addressing this letter to Douglass, one of the highly placed black officials of the federal government, Delany hoped to achieve two objectives. First, he wanted to impress upon a highly respected black leader the magnitude of the danger inherent in radicalism. Secondly, his plight would, in the process, reach the attention of the government and perhaps lead to federal intercession on his behalf in the state. This did not materialize. He had to confront the radical "conspirators" singlehandedly. Radicals and avowed opponents of Mayor Cunningham constituted the
entire twelve-man jury—five blacks, seven whites. "A more shameful perversion of truth never was perpetrated in a court of justice," Delany lamented. The witnesses, he claimed, declared one falsehood after another, all in a desperate bid to secure his conviction. He described the entire affair as a deep-seated conspiracy.

The prosecuting attorney, according to Delany, commenced his pleadings by declaring the occasion the happiest of his fourteen years in the legal profession, because, finally, he had before him the very character he wanted. He then proceeded for about half an hour of vulgar abuse, sneers, jeers, jibs, butts and mockery of Delany's personality. Then "placing himself squarely before me," Delany continued, "with extended arms, fingers almost touching my nose and with full vehemence, shouted 'you tell a damned infernal lie! It is a damned infernal lie!! You are a damned infernal liar!!!"

As the jury retired for a decision, Delany claimed he heard one of them whisper to a lawyer "He [i.e. Delany] is good for the penitentiary!" The jury decision was therefore a foregone conclusion. They returned in less than ten minutes with a guilty verdict. Delany was sentenced to twelve months in the penitentiary.

His counsel quickly appealed the decision, claiming it was a case of political victimization. Delany believed that the conspiracy was statewide. He described it as the offshoot of "a hydra-headed monster, whose heart is in Orangeburg and its body entwined and coiled through every community in the state, with its vilest hideout in Charleston."
Delany was undoubtedly a troubled man. Since joining the abolition movement in the 1830s never had he felt so depressed and almost completely powerless. Exacerbating his feeling of depression was the implications that the crisis bore for his future political career. It not only undermined and threatened all that he had accomplished in his almost fifty years of anti-slavery activities, but it also endangered his political future. The responses of several Republican newspapers branding him a thief and a hypocrite further devastated him. Though conservative newspapers would later come to his aid, Delany knew that the damage to his reputation had been done.

Delany denied any fraudulent intentions. Pending decision on his appeal, he was allowed to go free. However, he lost his trial justice job. He was ordered to relinquish it pending final decision on his case. Was Delany really guilty of fraudulently misappropriating the fund? The exact truth may never be known. An approximation however is attainable by examining his motivation. There was no doubt that at the time he was entrusted with the fund; Delany was desperately in need. After repeated failures in his political aspirations, he had turned to business and had unsuccessfully appealed to Northern capitalists. The trust fund therefore came in very handy and the temptation was there to reinvest it with a view to making personal profits. Delany, it seemed, never intended permanently to appropriate the trust fund. But the refusal by the county to honor claims that year left him vulnerable to such charges. The state conservative press, as usual, quickly came to his defence. It argued that Delany was being persecuted for his political views; because of this, the paper called
for "unusual consideration" for him in this "undeserved trouble." 34

C.C. Bowen, staunch Republican, urged Chamberlain to pardon Delany. He informed the governor that Delany had indicated a willingness to refund the money, and in fact, had already deposited the sum with him for onward transfer to the church. 35 It turned out that Delany had not actually deposited cash with Bowen, but a signed authorization to his "friends" to help raise the money. Delany later confirmed that since he could not afford the money, he had to rely on professed friends who volunteered to help. 36

Judge J.B. Reed of the first circuit court later wrote Chamberlain suggesting that, in view of the former good character of Delany, and a doubt that may be reasonably entertained as to whether he acted with a fraudulent intent, the imprisonment be remitted and he be pardoned on condition that he agreed to refund the sum. 37

The Governor did not act immediately on these requests. Apparently, he was awaiting word from Delany himself that he had refunded the money. When nothing came, the governor's secretary wrote to Delany on July 3, 1876 inquiring "why he did not enable [the governor] to act on his pardon by furnishing him with evidence that the money had been paid." 38

This came as a surprise to Delany. In reply, he claimed he had been "perplexed and concerned" by the delay, as he had left the matter in the hands of "friends" who volunteered to help. 39 The money ought to have been refunded long ago. His "friends" in whom he placed so much faith had disappointed him. "I shall proceed immediately among
my friends of ANOTHER PARTY (emphasis mine)" he informed the governor, "as I have not got the means within myself to raise the money... It shall be attended to at once by myself in person as I shall wait no longer on friends." He further told the governor that the money was actually raised, but instead of his "friends" paying the church, they had paid the mortgage on their real estate.

He did not elaborate on these "friends of another party" he intended to turn to for the money. One thing was clear, though; he could no longer trust any of his other so-called friends. It took another petition from two other colored citizens of Charleston before Chamberlain finally signed Delany's pardon on August 29, 1876.

**APOSTASY**

Crises play significant roles in human motivation. Not only do they provide a basis for flashbacks into, and reflections on, the past, but also for determining future course/s of action. For Delany, the ordeal of the trial confirmed his past suspicions of the radicals. The entire crisis, in his conviction, was politically motivated. The pardon could not completely reconcile him to the fact that he had lost his job and seen his reputation tarnished. He emerged therefore, from the crisis with one conviction: the basis for his survival within the Republican party was non-existent. Survival in fact had been the key issue for him since 1868. But if in the past he had thought only in terms of economic survival, this crisis convinced him that now his physical survival was even more at stake.
Early in September, he wrote Chamberlain thanking him for "great and beneficent favors" and pledged to support his renomination in the approaching election.\(^43\) He promised to confer with General Elliott, Chairman of the State Republican Executive Committee, on this. He described Elliott as a personal friend "even though we differ on political matters."\(^44\) To work effectively for Chamberlain's renomination, however, required funds which Delany lacked. "I regret that I am so circumscribed in consequence of my position, that I cannot command means as I should and as the respectful colored men do generally (emphasis mine)," he lamented.\(^45\) Consequently, he requested a thousand-mile railroad ticket to facilitate his movements.\(^46\)

This pledge of support notwithstanding, the letter powerfully expressed Delany's sense of frustration and dissatisfaction. He felt disadvantaged because he could not command means like other respectable blacks. He felt wronged. Less than two weeks after this letter, he publicly declared for the Democratic party.\(^47\)

There was, however, nothing arbitrary to this development. He had unsuccessfully appealed to Douglass and indirectly to the federal government for help. He had been left alone singlehandedly to confront radical witch-hunting. He felt he had been unjustifiably victimized. Since, in his estimation, the success of the radicals in the grand larceny case portended the intensification of racial tensions, he desperately sought means of averting the impending cataclysm. Since he had failed to tame radicalism from within, once again, he would attempt destroying it from without.
Unlike 1874, however, developments by 1876 seemed to favor Delany's move. Federal complacency had rendered ineffective almost all the civil and political rights blacks had won since the war. In the face of this complacency, Democratic anti-black violence reasserted itself. Also significantly, the resurgence of Democratic sympathies in the North seemed to herald better fortunes for the conservatives in the approaching election. In 1876, Delany finally won his long-drawn battle against the state radicals. The Democrats won the election, and thus, for the first time since 1865, political power in South Carolina reverted to the party of ex-planter and slaveowners. For a better appreciation of the magnitude of Delany's apostasy, it is important to digress and understand the alignment of forces and the ideological motivations of the parties in 1876.

1876: Straightoutism and Violence

The year of the centennial anniversary of the nation's independence was most crucial to South Carolina Democrats. It reminded them of what they described as their own "slavery" to Northern and black radicalism. Consequently, they were determined to mark the anniversary with a redemption of the state. 48

To achieve this, they needed a revived and rejuvenated Democratic party with well defined principles capable of effectively undermining radical Republican power through intimidation and terroristic tactics. 49 The chief targets of this Democratic resurgence were blacks. Black support for the Republican party must be effectively neutralized. 50
Democrats first drew the battle line on the elections of Moses and Whipper as circuit judges. They opposed this vehemently. In their estimation, both men deserved only the penitentiary. They also interpreted the elections as sinister moves by radicals to strengthen their control of the low country and the entire state. Consequently, they vowed to resist this to the end.

Chamberlain's decision to refuse the commission of the two judges pleased the Democrats. They applauded his decision and promised him continued support. The governor's reforms, however, went beyond the judicial elections. He vetoed many corrupt measures of the legislature. In two years he issued only 73 pardons in contrast to the 457 granted by his predecessor. His policies significantly reduced government expenditure. There was also a marked reduction in the rate of taxation. He also reduced the contingent fund of the executive office, an important source of corruption and malpractices in the past, from $47,000 (1873) to $9,000 (1876). He made similar reductions in other aspects of the public service.

Chamberlain's measures created a serious storm within the Republican party and its administration. Some of his vetoes, and his refusal to commission Moses and Whipper undoubtedly alienated the radical legislature. Furthermore, few radical Republicans saw the necessity for any compromise with, or concessions to, the state conservatives. The result was the development of an anti-Chamberlain faction that included such prominent blacks as Elliott and Cardozo. The governor, however, convinced of the rationality of reform and compromise, stood his ground and
took solace in the fact that his policies had also significantly split
the Democratic party. A strong pro-Chamberlain faction led by Francis
Warrington Dawson, editor of the Charleston News and Courier, advocated
fusion and compromise with Chamberlain and other moderate Republicans.\textsuperscript{57}
The vast majority of Democrats, however, was more interested in the
complete overthrow of the Republicans and the restoration of white
supremacist rule than in reform.\textsuperscript{58} They were not just opposed to
carpetbagger rule, but black political power. The rule of an inferior
race over the master race, they insisted, was unnatural and must be
reversed.\textsuperscript{59} They therefore objected to any call for fusion with reform-
mined Republicans. Instead, they favored a straightout platform—one
that emphasized white supremacy, and whose major objective was the
restoration of the status quo ante-bellum. Such ex-Confederates as Gen.
Mathew Butler and Martin Witherspoon Gary led this movement. They were
further encouraged by external developments.\textsuperscript{60}

Back in 1874, Democrats had won the national house of representa-
tives. White Carolinians hailed this with thanksgiving. Most of the
Democratic congressmen were Southerners and ex-Confederates. Also by
1876 almost all Southern states had been redeemed except South Carolina,
Florida and Louisiana. Even Republican newspapers in the North ex-
pressed sentiments favorable to Southerners. A special correspondent
for the News and Courier observed that Republican sympathy for Southern
blacks began declining in the North as far back as 1870. These develop-
ments, plus the internal electoral victories of 1874, convinced South
Carolina Democrats/conservatives that the days of radicalism were
numbered, if not entirely over.\textsuperscript{61}
At the Fort Moultrie centennial in 1876, thousands of Confederate soldiers, once more under arms, paraded before the people. This was accompanied by explosive Southern speeches. This renewed chauvinism soon developed into overt anti-black violence. Several blacks were lynched in Darlington County and in Ellenton. In Hamburg (Edgefield County) six blacks were killed and four wounded when armed whites descended on the predominantly black community. A powerful arm of this terror was the Klan which perpetrated the intimidations and murders of blacks in the various counties.

Unable to contain the crisis, Chamberlain appealed to President Grant for troops to aid in restoring and upholding order in the state. In July, Grant declared martial law in the most violent counties and sent U.S. troops.

The state Democratic convention, which met in August 1876, was a parade of ex-Confederates and planters. The Fusionists, who had advocated coalition with moderate Republicans, were defeated. The convention nominated ex-Confederate general Wade Hampton as its gubernatorial candidate on a straightout conservative platform.

There were two sides however to the platform. First, there was a "liberal" section designed to woo blacks away from the Republican party, and to continue to sustain a favorable Northern opinion. It accepted the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments and promised to retain and sustain whatever rights blacks had won since the war. Second, the platform accepted the "Mississippi Plan" as the strategy for redemption.
The objective was to arouse the white population to secession and nullification frenzy; and also through intimidation and terror to get blacks to vote the Democratic ticket or not vote at all. 67

Massive purchase of arms and the formation of Democratic rifle clubs followed. Most whites enrolled in Democratic military clubs. According to an authority, white Carolinians were as consolidated in 1876 as they were in 1860. 68 The intimidation and lynching of blacks intensified as armed Democrats interrupted Republican meetings. 69

The Republican state convention which met in September renominated Chamberlain despite internal division. Several blacks also secured nominations for offices. The platform, as usual, reiterated the party's continued commitment to reform and black elevation. 70

How did blacks respond to these choices? That many were disappointed by the policies of the Republican administration was not in doubt. Meeting in Washington, D.C., February 28, 1876 representatives of colored citizens from the different states launched a National Independent Political Union. Its raison d'être was to effect a reconciliation between blacks and Southern whites. There were representatives from North Carolina, Virginia, Arkansas, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. They deplored the present condition of blacks, and denounced the Republican party, accusing it of all the wrongs in Southern society. They also accused the party of discriminating against intelligent blacks in dispensing patronage. The Republican party, they insisted, had only used blacks to further its own interests. They
therefore advocated a speedy normalization of relationships between blacks and the Democratic party. 71

Conspicuously absent in this convention were notable black leaders like Frederick Douglass and Henry H. Garnet. There was also no indication that South Carolina was represented. The reason for this is obvious. Though frustrated and disappointed by the Republican party's policies, leading South Carolina blacks, including such national leaders as Douglass and Garnet, would not support a movement whose objective was the destruction of that party. Whatever its ills, the Republican party still represented the palladium of black freedom.

Equally significant was the absence of Delany. One would expect to see him in the forefront of such a movement, since it represented precisely those sentiments and ideals that he had espoused consistently since the end of the war. But this movement sprang up at an inauspicious time for him. The grand larceny case was just underway, and for Delany, this was a question of survival. It was therefore no time to indulge in any national crusade when his survival in South Carolina was in jeopardy. The significance of the National Independent Political Union was that it represented in microcosm a tradition of black leadership albeit in the minority, whose ideas formed a significant component of black liberation thought. This tradition believed the liberal rhetoric of the Democrats and assumed that they had changed and were sincere in their promises.

Generally, few blacks were deceived by the liberal pretentions of the Democrats/conservatives. At a Colored National Convention in
Nashville, Tennessee, the conservative option surfaced again. Two
Alabama delegates sponsored a resolution calling for a "new departure"
and the severance of all links with the Republican party. The over-
whelming majority, however, rejected this resolution. The delegates
condemned the Democratic party for its anti-black violence. They re-
affirmed their continued support for the Republican party. To support
the Democrats, they declared, was analogous to supporting the Devil
against God. Prominent black congressmen, leaders and ex-congressmen
attended the National Republican Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio.
In South Carolina, Democratic violence and outrages forced leading
blacks to summon a convention in Columbia on July 20. There were
addresses by Cair, Elliott, whipper and other leading blacks, who con-
demned the anti-black violence and outrages that had become daily
occurrences. In an address to the people of the U.S., the delegates
strongly deplored the Hamburg massacre, calling it an assault on black
political rights, and a threat to their physical existence. They called
on the federal government to help enforce the law in the state.

Delany was conspicuously absent, even though he had yet to formally
declare for the conservatives. However, in a short note to the News
and Courier, he completely dissociated himself from the convention and
its resolutions. "They are not my sentiments in many parts and I cannot
permit myself to be placed in a false position," he emphasized. The
conservatives equally condemned the convention. They described it as
uncalled for, and accused the delegates of attempting to inflame racial
tension.
Blacks were initially cowed by repeated violence and outrages. Very soon, however, they began to respond in kind. In counties where they predominated — Charleston, Darlington and Orangeburg — blacks, excited at the evident blow at their liberty, armed themselves and began to disrupt Democratic meetings. They also directed their anger at black Democrats, who were regarded as traitors. Perhaps the worst of black-inspired riots was that of September 6, in Charleston, when armed black Republicans attacked a group of white and black Democrats. Several people were injured and the city was virtually closed for days.

Violence and intimidation however did not bring the desired result the Democrats expected. Most blacks remained faithful to the Republican party. According to one scholar, very few blacks joined the Democratic party as the election approached. Consequently, the Democrats decided to apply economic weapons. For instance, Charleston was a pivotal county, and since the majority of blacks there (80,000) "work for and live upon whites," the Democrats decided to adopt what a Newberry woman called the "pocket argument." Some called it the "preference policy." Whatever the name, it meant one thing — discriminatory policy in the employment of blacks. To secure employment or rent land, a black had to show a certificate of membership in a Democratic club. Thousands of black Republicans suddenly had ruin, or democracy staring them in the face, and hundreds finally began to take the fatal step toward the democracy. Those who resisted lost their jobs. Every Democrat was assigned the duty of securing at least one black vote for Hampton, by fair or foul means. Thousands of blacks had liens on their crops
released, land rented to them free, supplies provided free and money
given to them lavishly by vote-seeking Democrats. In addition to
this economic blackmail, Hampton emphasized the liberal promises of the
platform. He informed his audiences that if elected, the Democratic
party would not renege on its campaign promises. Blacks would be
 guaranteed their rights under the Constitution. He promised to observe,
 protect and defend the rights of all citizens irrespective of race or
 previous condition.

"SUPPORTING THE DEVIL AGAINST GOD"

The conservative tradition of black leadership, though its plat-
form of reconciliation with Southern whites was defeated in Nashville,
remained in force as a viable alternative. Within South Carolina,
there was no doubt that some blacks favored a policy of reconciliation.
The man, however, who took up the banner of this tradition and became
the symbol of reconciliation was Delany. The Conservative National
Independent Political Union at its conference in Washington had unani-
mously voted to nominate Delany as its President for all of the states
South of North Carolina. This was a perfect and logical choice since
no other man had so forcefully espoused the policy of reconciliation
since the end of the war as Delany. Could this mean the emergence of
a third party alternative? Definitely not. This "National Independent"
movement was an attempt to institutionalize the conservative option
and thereby garner the black votes for the Democrats. In accepting
the nomination, Delany made it perfectly clear what his conception of
the movement was. First, its main purpose must be the protection of
the interests of blacks. Second, it must de-emphasize old-party interests. Most importantly, it must effect a reconciliation between the two political elements in the South—blacks and whites. This reconciliation must also involve economics. Blacks comprise "the agricultural element, the producers of the rich and important staples of the South," he emphasized. "We then produce the labor, and the white race the capital; we are the laborers and they are the capitalists. Capital and labor must go together, and without harmony and mutual association, they cannot be available." 90 If these be the objects of the Independent Movement, then "am I with you always, even to the end," he concluded. 91

There is no indication that the Independent Political Union crystallized into a strong national political force. Its ideals, however, survived and thrived in the ideas and actions of its chosen apostle in South Carolina. Delany left no doubts as to his determination to actualize his dream of a racially harmonious South. He was obviously carried away by the liberal pretensions of the Democrats. 92 Soon, he was on the campaign trail for Hampton. He frequently quoted Hampton's liberal rhetoric to back up his plea to blacks to desert the Republican party. He blamed the radicals for the political instability in the state. The conservative press described Delany as "The most original, correct and forcible thinker among the negroes in this country," and it urged blacks to "heed him, who has put forth the words of truth and soberness." 93 Black and white, labor and capital were inseparably one, Delany insisted, and they must come together if the state was to prosper. 94 He informed blacks that the Democratic rather than the Republican party
was the real architect of their freedom. The Democratic party was 
earnest in establishing the true Jeffersonian democracy, he argued. 
Democrats had been faithful in the past, and he was sure they would 
remain so in the future. After all, he reminded blacks, the Democrats 
had voted for him for Lt. governor back in 1874. This, according to 
Delany, was indicative of their sincerity to blacks. One of the 
greatest faults of radicalism, he claimed, was the elevation of blacks 
to "the highest pinnacle of political ambition" without adequate educa-
tion. This was done deliberately to keep blacks in perpetual ignorance 
and subordination. The abolition of slavery, he re-emphasized, had been 
the work of Democrats; but radical miseducation had misled blacks into 
associating the Democrats with slavery.

This was wrong. Democrats had not been responsible for the aboli-
tion of slavery. The pro-slavery forces had always been identified with 
the Democratic party. Although the Republican party assumed an ambiva-
 lent and questionable posture toward the issue of black freedom, there 
was no doubt in the minds of blacks that it remained the better of two 
evils. It had emerged in the late 1850s as an anti-slavery party and 
had fought the war under that banner. By the time of the Civil War, 
blacks had come to perceive the Democratic party, based on its activi-
ties and the utterances of its spokesmen, as the embodiment of oppres-
sion. The performance of the party since the war did not provide any 
fundamental basis for a change in black perception. Delany knew this. 
But how else could he justify his "new departure" except through deli-
berate disinformation? Democrats, he insisted, were men of high charac-
ter and intelligence. "When a Democrat gave his word, you may trust
him, "he told blacks. 101

Delany's campaign speeches were sweet music to the ears of the state Democrats/conservatives. In the estimation of many blacks, however, he had sold out. He had done precisely what the national black convention in Nashville, back in April, had warned against—supporting the Democratic party, which was considered analogous to "supporting the devil against God." On two crucial occasions he collided headlong with the wrath of his black brothers and sisters; and in one, he narrowly escaped death. His speeches blatantly misrepresented the truths about the black experience.

When on the 14th of October, he ventured to Edisto Island to attend a joint Republican and Democratic rally, angry blacks anxiously waited for him—men, women and even children. Most of the Democratic representatives addressed the rally with the minimum of interference, but when Delany mounted the rostrum "the crowd became frantic and the drums of the militia were beaten, the women cursing and pointing accusing fingers at him. He was 'howled down' and prevented from speaking." 102 He narrowly escaped death at another joint rally in Cainhoy, Edgefield County. When a colored Democrat named McKinlay rose to speak, the black militia mistook him for Delany and opened fire. As the crisis deepened, Delany and a few Democrats took refuge in an old brick house. On learning that Delany was in the house, blacks stormed the building, but he escaped. There were several casualties, including six whites and one black man. 103

To appreciate the outrage of blacks toward Delany one must recall
that the Democratic platform he advocated had two contradictory components. First, there was a dubious principle that purported to recognize and accept the political changes that the Civil War and Reconstruction had effected. Blacks were not so sure of this, especially since the second component—anti-black violence and pogroms—established beyond reasonable doubt that the liberal protestations of the Democrats were insincere. As one black put it, reacting to the promises of the Democrats: "Dey say dem will do dis and dat. I ain't ax no man what him WILL do. I ax him what him hab done." 104 The reality that confronted blacks most vividly was Democratic violence, outrages and insincerity. For Delany to attempt to sell such a platform to his fellow blacks testified to his folly and self-righteousness. There was no indication that he regarded Democratic violence as wrongful and reprehensible. On the contrary, his personal hatred for radicalism seemed to convince him that Democratic violence was a legitimate reaction to the excesses of radicalism. 105

The result of the election of that November was controversial, and for many years people debated the exact outcome. Both parties claimed victory and each charged the other with fraud. Frauds no doubt were perpetrated and both the Democratic and Republican parties were guilty. For about four months South Carolina had a dual government as neither of the parties was prepared to concede victory to the other. One contemporary described this period as one of "reign of terror." Violence on the part of both blacks and whites paralyzed normal economic activities. 106 By April 1877, the issue was resolved in favor of the Democrats,
and federal troops were finally withdrawn from the state. Behind the uncertainty of the election, however, lay one certainty: most blacks voted Republican. 107

"A PROGRESSIVE AGE?" (1876-1878)

The 1876 election gave white Carolinians what they had longed for: a return to power. To many, it was the dawn of a "progressive age." Thanks to the rapid developments in railroads, white Carolinians celebrated this "new age" with a mass "Exodus" to the plains of the state and Georgia. 108 The gaieties of that period, according to an eyewitness, rivaled those of ante-bellum days. Democrats travelled, held picnics, parties and balls in celebration of the demise of Reconstruction. 109 Blacks, not part of this "new age," organized a different exodus movement that had Liberia in Africa as its goal.

Hampton, however, did try to fulfill his campaign pledges. Delany was one of prominent blacks he appointed trial justices. He also appointed several Republicans to offices. 110 In a message to the general assembly, he urged its members to remain faithful to the campaign promises. 111 Hampton's policies, however, did not fundamentally challenge the basic "tenet that white minority would always rule the black majority." 112 Black appointments were confined to minor local offices. Hampton was no believer in black equality. Like most Democrats, the radical tendencies among blacks disturbed him. But unlike them, he regarded minor concessions to black aspirations as effective means of undermining black radicalism. His "liberalism" was therefore cosmetic and did not confer any meaningful benefits on blacks. 113
But even these limited and ineffective concessions displeased the diehard Bourbons. They had consented to a "liberal" platform merely for campaign and public relations purposes. They never intended to respect and protect the constitutional rights of blacks. A strong anti-Hampton and anti-black force soon crystallized around Martin Gary and Gen. Mathew Butler. They accused Hampton of extreme "conservatism and niggerism"; of being soft on Republican office-holders and of attempting to encourage "fusion" with non-Democrats. All these, according to them, threatened white supremacy and civilization.

For a brief spell of time, it seemed as if Delany's prediction, that white Carolinians would willingly accept blacks, would materialize. As Democrats assumed power, a period of "thanksgiving" began for a few black Democrats who found patronage positions. Those who went into private business boldly exhibited their Democratic affiliation as a badge of honor. It was common to find such advertisements on black shops: "Patronize so and so, the only colored Democratic barber (or shoemaker, butcher, etc., etc.) in town!" A few years earlier, this would have been abominable. Unfortunately, this honeymoon period was shortlived.

White Carolinians, it turned out, were not unduly concerned about what political affiliations blacks professed. They were more troubled by black aspirations for positions of responsibility, whether as Democrats or Republicans. According to one contemporary:

The whites regard the negro as an inferior animal, admirably adapted to work and to wait, and look on him 'in his proper place,' with a curious mixture
of amusement, contempt and affection. It is when he aspires to participate in politics or otherwise claim privileges that their hatred becomes intense (emphasis mine). 117

Consequently, white Carolinians turned their axe on black office-holders and those who aspired to such positions. Office-holding and political responsibilities, they had consistently maintained, belonged appropriately to whites. For blacks to hold offices would constitute a violation and disruption of the social equilibrium. Blacks must therefore be contented with their assigned "place." Thus began a relentless determination to purge the state of every vestige of black power. The state constabulary undertook regular "scouting" in search of black "criminals," who were quickly executed or sent to long-term imprisonment. The only safe black was the hardworking and respectable who docily accepted his "place." The very idea of black citizenship came under attack. 118

Redemption, therefore, meant a reversion to ante-bellum practices. It also sought to undermine and destroy those meager political gains that had accrued to blacks in the course of the Civil War and radical reconstruction. Were these what Delany had worked and bargained for? Obviously not.

For blacks, and especially for Delany and the few black Democrats who had supported the Bourbons in the election, the result was both physically and psychologically devastating. The avenging wrath of the state conservatives made no distinction between black radicals and black conservatives. Anti-black violence and terrorism mounted as whites
struggled to "purify" a civilization they felt had been contaminated by ten years of radical rule. Early in February 1876, Attorney Julian Jervey recommended to Hampton the removal of Delany because he was "unfit for the office he holds." On March 18, the Charleston delegation in the house petitioned Hampton for the removal of Delany because he conducted the office "in a manner discreditable to the present administration of the state of South Carolina, and repugnant to the feelings of both races." In a letter to Hampton, Delany requested that he be given the opportunity to vindicate himself. Although a counter-petition by some Charlestonians advocated his retention, Delany himself knew that ultimately the mounting tide of white supremacy and racism would catch up with him.

The obvious and dreadful truth dawned on Delany. He had gambled and failed. To him, and other black Democrats, Charleston, and in fact the entire state must have seemed like a world turned upside down. His dream of a reconstructed South Carolina, based on racial harmony and economic cooperation between white capital and black labor, vanished as he watched whites, robed in Confederate gray, overturn reconstruction.

Even while still a trial justice, he joined and became actively involved in the black exodus movement that sought its progressive age in Africa. In a series of letters to the American Colonization Society, prominent blacks emphasized that they no longer felt safe in a South Carolina ruled by Democrats. One could only imagine how Delany himself felt reporting to the Colonization Society: "...we have no friends among the whites of South Carolina!" This must have been
an extremely difficult admission for a man who had spent the greater part of the last thirteen years advocating racial harmony.

Nothing fruitful resulted from the new Exodus movement. Financial crisis soon crippled the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Steamship Company. In mid-1878, as chairman of the committee of finance of the company, Delany appealed to the American Colonization Society for aid. Nothing came. 125 Discriminated against and brutalized, blacks found no avenues of escape.

Delany retained his trial justiceship until Hampton's election to the United States Senate in 1878. As the redeemers assumed control of power, the days of Delany and other black officeholders were over. For the rest of his life, Delany led a disillusioned existence as he struggled to survive the racism of a government he had helped restore to power.

These retrogressive developments notwithstanding, Delany attempted one last ditch effort in his intellectual battle for black civilization. In 1879 he wrote and published his last major work: Principia of Ethnology: The Origin of Races and Color With an Archaeological Compendium of Ethiopian and Egyptian Civilization. 126 Although considered crude and amateurish in its archaeological and anthropological postulations, some of its conclusions have today been corroborated by results of scholarly research. The basic thrust of the book was the rejection of the traditional theories of origin that define blacks as inferior beings. Civilization, he argued, originated from Egypt, and the chief architects were blacks. Thus he challenged the Hamitic hypothesis. 127
Such findings, however, especially emanating from a black man, could not stem the tide of racism. The redeemed South was determined that the "errors" of the last ten years be corrected. Blacks must either learn to accept their "place" or be forced into it. In the North, the mood was for sectional reconciliation and not social justice. Consequently, the redeemers were given a free hand to reshape their society in the way they wanted.

The loss of his job place, Delany, along with most blacks, in a very precarious situation. He once again returned to his medical practice. But post-Reconstruction South Carolina was not the ideal place for a black doctor. Misfortune, unfortunately, seldom comes singly. In the summer of 1879, two of his sons, Charles Lenox Remond and Saint Cyprian, came South in search of employment. Cyprian found a job as a postal clerk in Charleston. Charles was less fortunate. He consequently proceeded to Savannah, Georgia. A week before Christmas, he drowned under mysterious circumstances while boating with friends in the Savannah river. That Christmas was a mourning period for the Delanys. For the entire family, the American Dream became the American nightmare. Though both Faustin Soulouque and Alexander Dumas had graduated from Wilberforce and got relatively nice jobs, the Delanys were far from being satisfied. Toussaint frequently fell ill. Placido and Ethiopia were still in school and money was desperately needed to sustain them.

In mid-1880 Delany once again concluded that only in Africa could blacks succeed. He wrote a very passionate account of his odyssey in
South Carolina since the war to William Coppinger of the Colonization Society. He recalled how he had worked faithfully and relentlessly for the government and for peace and reconciliation. Consequently, he was rejected and denounced by the radicals. But more tragically, he intimated, he had been betrayed by those in whose behalf he had steadfastly fought [the conservatives]. Explaining his financial predicament and his ardent desire to return to Africa, he pleaded with Coppinger to help secure any of the "many government favors worth from $2,000 to $3,000 a year for about two years." This would enable him to maintain his family, continue his children's education and proceed to Africa. 130

Late in 1880, in another letter, he enclosed his war-time record and solicited for the post of the doorman of the Senate. He urged Coppinger to plead with key senators and congressmen on his behalf. Early in 1881, he went personally to Washington to plead his cause. 131 Neither his letters nor personal supplications could win any favors for Delany. His treachery of 1876 still fresh in their memory, the Republican administration simply ignored him.

Ultimately, he managed to find a job as a campaign orator on behalf of Congressman John F. Dezendorf. A white Republican and former abolitionist, Dezendorf was running for re-election in a district in Virginia that had a large black population. Delany addressed rallies in Norfolk. But the Delany that climbed the rostrums in Norfolk, Virginia was a shadow of the vibrant and erudite Delany of the 1840s and '50s. That voice, once described as "capable of causing a whole troop of African
Tigers to stand and tremble," had lost its force. In the course of one speech, the audience continually shouted, "Louder! Can't hear you!"132

At sixty-nine, Delany was too old and feeble to cope with the campaign schedules. He was forced to withdraw. But the need to sustain his family kept him moving. He spent the greater part of 1882 shuttling between Washington, Wilberforce, New York and Boston. In January 1883, he joined other blacks in Washington to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Emancipation. There he toasted to the future and to Africa. Unfortunately, the dream of returning to Africa remained unfulfilled.

Paradoxically, the year 1883 also marked a significant milestone in the steady advance of Jim Crow. The Supreme Court nullified the Civil Rights Act of 1875, and for the first time since the war, a Democratic administration assumed power in Washington. These developments sealed Delany's hopes. In the last few years, he had turned repeatedly to Washington for aid. Now with the Democrats in power, that avenue seemed closed. The failures of the past few years combined with developments in 1883 must have accelerated Delany's physical deterioration. In 1884, he fell ill, and with nowhere to go or friends to turn to, he returned to Wilberforce, to Catherine and the children. On January 24, 1885, at the age of 73, Delany died.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER EIGHT


2. From then on Delany assumed very aggressive response to the perceived threat of the radicals.

3. Trial and Conviction, op. cit.

4. Ibid., p. 15.

5. Ibid., p. 11.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 10.

8. Ibid., p. 11.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.


13. The Democrats in fact began a forceful reorganization of their party in response to the circuit judges' election. They would resist any attempts to seat Moses and Whipper as judges. "Out of the sin and sorrow of the judicial election," they asserted, "shall be born, if we dare and do, a new South Carolina." The News and Courier, Dec. 29, 1875, Dec. 30, 1875, Dec. 28, 1875 and Jan. 21, 1876.


15. Trial and Conviction, op. cit., p. 15.


17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

21. It was the entire eighteen-page letter that was later published in pamphlet form as *Trial and Conviction* (Charleston, 1876).

22. Ibid., p. 3.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., p. 10.

25. Ibid., p. 18.

26. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., p. 18.

33. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 472.


35. C.C. Bowen to D.H. Chamberlain, April 3, 1876, Governor Chamberlain's Papers, Box 11, Folder 33, South Carolina Dept. of Archives and History, Columbia, South Carolina (hereafter abbreviated SCDAH).

36. Delany confirmed this in a letter to Chamberlain dated July 7, 1876 where he wrote "I gave to my friends my note for the money to be paid to the trustee, as I had no money and they thus proposed to pay for me, and to be my obligators." Chamberlain Papers, Box 13, Folder 13, SCDAH.

37. "The State vs. M.R. Delany" (J.P. Reed), April 27, 1876. Chamberlain Papers, Box 14, Folder 16, SCDAH.

38. R. Jones (private secretary) to M.R. Delany, July 3, 1876. Chamberlain Papers (Logbook), Vol. 4, p. 251, SCDAH.
39. M.R. Delany to R. Jones, July 7, 1876, Chamberlain Papers, Box 13, Folder 13, SCDAH.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. This last petition was written by George E. Johnston and Aaron Logan Aug. 19, 1876. Chamberlain Papers, Box 14, Folder 14. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 476.

43. M.R. Delany to Gov. Chamberlain, Sept. 1, 1876. Chamberlain Papers, Box 14, Folder 18, SCDAH.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. V. Ullman, op. cit., p. 477.

48. The Centennial Celebration, according to the Democrats, was useless unless the state was redeemed from barbarous blacks. The News and Courier, Jan. 8, 1876. The present tyranny of the state, they claimed, "was infinitely more odious and hideous than that which drove the colonies into rebellion." Ibid., Dec. 18, 1875

49. Ibid., Jan. 18, 1876, Jan. 21, 1876, Dec. 30, 1875, Dec. 29, 1875, Dec. 28, 1875. The Democrats made it perfectly clear in their deliberations that their main target was black political power. There was a conspiracy to "Africanize" South Carolina, they argued, and it must be resisted. Black political power must be resisted and under no circumstances shall it prevail. Ibid., Dec. 29, 1875, Jan. 21, 1876.

50. One way to neutralize black support for the Republican party, the Democrats thought, was to play being radical by accepting the constitutional amendment and also promise continued protection of these rights to blacks.


52. Ibid., Dec. 29, 1875.

53. Ibid., Dec. 18, 1875.

54. Ibid., Dec. 28, 1875.
55. Francis B. Simkins, op. cit., p. 227. A South Carolinian (Belton O'Neall Townsend), op. cit.


57. J. Williamson, ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. F. Simkins, op. cit., pp. 182-183. J. Williamson, ibid., pp. 405-406. Democrats used the phrase "Preventing South Carolina from becoming as barbarous as Ashantee." The News and Courier, Jan. 8, 1876. They conceived their struggle as one of preventing the state from becoming another black republic where the white man would remain under "the splay foot of the Negro." Ibid., Dec. 18, 1875.

60. A South Carolinian, op. cit. F. Simkins, op. cit.


64. V. Ullman, op. cit., pp. 481-483. Areas worst hit by the violence were Ellenton, Hamburg, Edgefield, Aiken, Barnwell. President Grant to Chamberlain, July 26, 1876. Chamberlain Papers, Box 13, Folder 28, SCDAH.

65. The prime mover in the coalition that defeated the fusionists was Martin Witherspoon Gary. He started as far back as 1875 to solicit the support of key ex-Confederate generals against fusionism. By the time of the state convention, everyone was strongly in favor of a straight-out ticket, except Francis W. Dawson and the News and Courier. The Democrats were determined that "the News and Courier
must either be made to sustain our policy or to quit the party...”
Hampton to Gen. Gary (undated). Hampton Family Papers (MSS) 31st
Jan.-14th Dec., 1876. South Caroliniana Library, University of
South Carolina, Columbia. The nomination of Hampton finally con-
solidated the Democrats behind a straightout platform. Robert
Mean Davis Papers, Box 4, Folder 48, ibid.

66. Daily Register (Columbia), Sept. 28, 1876. Also A South Carolinian,
op. cit., pp. 183-184. Reconstruction Scrapbook, 1865-1877, MSS.
South Caroliniana Library, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia. See
also Robert McKay Scrapbook, 1865-1887, MSS., Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. A South Carolinian, ibid.

69. Ibid. F. Simkins, op. cit., pp. 232-239. See also his "Conclu-
1922, pp. 335-341.

70. The News and Courier, Sept. 16, 1876.

71. Richland Democratic Club, Minutes: Scrapbook 1876-1880, MSS. South
Caroliniana Library, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia.

72. New York Times, Friday, April 7, 1876, p. 1.

73. Ibid., Saturday, April 8, 1876, p. 1.

74. Ibid., June 15, 1876, p. 2.

75. Daily Register, July 15, 1876, p. 2, July 20, 1876.

76. An Address to the People of the U.S. Adopted at a Conference of
Colored Citizens Held at Columbia, S.C. July 20 and 21, 1876
(Pamphlet). South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston (here-
after abbreviated SCHS). It was the Hamburg Riot, according to
some authorities, that finally solidified white Carolians behind
a straightout platform. George Brown Tindall, South Carolina
Negroes, 1877-1900 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press,
1952), Chapter 1. Ernest McPherson Lander, A History of South
Carolina, 1865-1960 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina
Press, 1960), Chapters 1 and 2. To some however, Hamburg repre-
sented the height of Democratic atrocities. See The Hamburg Riots.
Speech of Hon. John J. Patterson, of South Carolina, in the Senate
of the United States, August 8 and 9, 1876. Washington, D.C., 1876.

77. Richland Democratic Club. Minutes: Scrapbook. South Caroliniana
Library, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia.

78. Ibid.
79. A South Carolinian, op. cit., p. 185.

80. Charleston Riot of 1876 (Pamphlet), SCHS, Charleston (1876). In his presidential address to the South Carolina Historical Society, F.A. Porcher, its President from 1875-1888, blamed all the violence and ills of South Carolina on the radical policies of the government, and on what he perceived as the complacency of Chamberlain in the face of threats to peace and security. His voluminous address, however, reveals a lot about black Carolinians' hatred for the Democrats. Black men, women and even children strongly resented the actions of black Democrats whom they regarded as traitors. A History of the Administration of D.H. Chamberlain, Fred A. Porcher Collection, SCHS, Charleston.

81. A South Carolinian, op. cit., pp. 184-185. In spite of the promises of the various Democratic clubs, few blacks actually turned Democrat. But, as one authority pointed out, the Democratic press falsely reported large accessions of blacks. Ibid. For details of some of the "liberal" schemes of the Democratic clubs, see Richland Democratic Club, Minutes: Scrapbook, 1875-1880. MSS. South Caroliniana Library, Univ. of South Carolina, Columbia. Black Oak Democratic Campaign Club, Ads. 28 August 1876, MSS. South Caroliniana Library. The Daily Register once described black accessions to the Democratic party as a "geometric progression." Oct. 11, 1876. This was not true.

82. The News and Courier, Sept. 22, 1876.

83. Ibid., Sept. 21, 1876.

84. Ibid. See also Bernard Edward Powers, "Black Charleston: A Social History 1822-1885," Ph.D. Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1982, Chapter III.


86. Ibid., pp. 185-186.

87. Ibid.

88. The News and Courier, Sept. 21, 1876. In a speech at Abbeville, Hampton promised, if elected, he "shall render to the whole people of this state equal and impartial justice." Ibid. "If there is a white man in this assembly," he continued, "who, because he is Democrat or because he is white, believes that when I am elected governor...I shall stand between him and the law, or grant to him any privileges or immunities that shall not be granted to the colored man, he is mistaken, and I tell him right now, if that is his reason for voting for me, not to vote at all." Ibid.

90. Ibid.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid., Oct. 10, 1876, p. 4.
93. Daily Register, Sept. 28, 1876.
95. Ibid., Oct. 13, 1876, p. 4.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid. Delany's optimism ran counter to the reality that many blacks perceived.


103. News and Courier, Oct. 1, 1876, p. 3; Oct. 17, Oct. 18, 1876. Henry T. Thompson, Ousting the Carpetbaggers From South Carolina (New York: Negro University Press, 1926), p. 120.


105. If the Democrats were genuinely concerned about corruption and reforms, Delany's campaign would have appeared less offensive to blacks. Put differently, if the state Republican administration had been as bad (from the point of view of blacks) as the conservatives suggested, blacks would have been more responsive to conservative campaigns. But radical Republicanism was working. The government had instituted some reforms, and promised others. Black Republicans were also conducting themselves relatively well. However, as W.E.B. DuBois aptly emphasized, South Carolinians never wanted reforms, even in the narrower sense. What they were attacking was not corruption, but black political power. Black Reconstruction, op. cit., p. 428. Orville Vernon Burton reached precisely the same conclusion in his study of Edgefield County. Black Reconstruction succeeded in Edgefield. Edgefield black Republicans were men of impeccable character. Reconstruction
ended not because it could not work, but because it was working well. "Ungrateful servants? Edgefield's Black Reconstruction: Part I of the Total History of Edgefield County, South Carolina." Ph.D. Dissertation, Princeton, 1976. According to these two significant works, therefore, external violence, not internal decadence and corruption destroyed radical Reconstruction in 1876. On the role of violence in Reconstruction, see George C. Rable's But There Was No Peace: The Role of Violence in the Politics of Reconstruction (Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 1984), especially Chapters 1, 7, and 10. See also Ida Waller Pope, "Violence As a Political Force in the Reconstruction South." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1982. There was however, a very strong ideological dimension to the success of redemption in 1876. Joel Williamson, in his most recent work argued that the strong revivals of the age-old paternalistic ethics contributed to the success of the Democrats in 1876. White Carolinians' world view of a hierarchical social order in which blacks occupied the lowest rung of the ladder was only undermined, but not totally destroyed, by the Civil War and radical Reconstruction. As the prospect for redemption brightened in the 1870s, white Carolinians revived this idea, clothed in a paternalistic robe. Black prosperity and survival, they argued, depended upon a surrender to the leadership of the superior whites. They promised "almost everything" to blacks in a South Carolina ruled by Democrats. But a large part of this "liberal" and paternalistic rhetoric was uttered in "calculated bad faith." The Crucible of Race: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1984), pp. 79-88. For more on the role of the Ku Klux Klan, see Allen W. Trelease, White Terror: The Ku Klux Klan Conspiracy and Southern Reconstruction (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). Otto H. Olsen, "The Ku Klux Klan: A Study in Reconstruction Politics and Propaganda," The North Carolina Historical Review, 3, Summer, 1962. Francis B. Simkins, "The Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina, 1868-1871," Journal of Negro History, 12, 4, October 1927. Herbert Shaprio, "The Ku Klux Klan During Reconstruction: The South Carolina Episode," ibid., 49, January 1964. Curiously enough some historians blame blacks for the violence of the period in a bid to justify the politics of redemption. See David Duncan Wallace, South Carolina: A Short History, 1520-1948 (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1966). John A. Leland, A Voice From South Carolina (New York, 1971).


107. According to Joel Williamson, although no authoritative statistics exist, the great mass of blacks remained loyal to the Republican party. After Slavery, op. cit., p. 411.


111. The News and Courier, Nov. 29, 1877, p. 2. Also ibid., Jan. 15, 1877, p. 2. In his inaugural address Hampton reiterated the need for interracial harmony, and for the guarantee and protection of all rights possessed by blacks. Hampton Family Papers MSS. Folder 90, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina. At the Aiken Schuetzenfast, April 24, 1878, Hampton, recalling the campaign two years back said, "I spoke as a Carolinian to a Carolinian, white and black....I appealed to you that it was better to fail in struggling to do right than to succeed in doing wrong." He then proceeded to reaffirm his earlier pledge to treat blacks impartially. Wade Hampton III, 1818-1902, 4 Mps. (R) 10, 11 Jan. 1877-25 April 1878 and July 1878. MSS. South Caroliniana Library.

112. T. Holt, op. cit.


114. Hampton's "liberal" speeches and conciliatory policy toward blacks and Republicans alienated the straightouts. He was reported to have publicly denounced partisan politics. "I am no party man" he reportedly proclaimed. This threatened straightoutism, the very foundation of the Democratic restoration. Martin W. Gary to Hugh, March 10, 1878, Martin Witherspoon Gary Papers (MSS.), South Caroliniana Library. The straightouts were particularly alarmed at the prospect of a fusion between Hampton and Republicans. They accused Hampton of being soft on Republicans in the legislature. Martin W. Gary to Hugh, May 3, 1878 (MSS), ibid. General Butler to Gary, April 3, 1878, MSS, ibid. J.H. Hudson to Gary, Jan. 14, 1878, MSS, ibid. Ellis G. Gaylor to Gary, August 19, 1878, MSS, ibid. J.H. Hudson, in another letter to Gary wrote "theorists may twist and distort the matter at will, but the real issue in this and other Southern states involves white supremacy and civilization." Hudson to Gary, Sept. 7, 1878 (MSS), ibid. In the face
of this intra-party opposition, Hampton found support among Republicans. On June 18, 1877, a Republican Alfred William of Beaufort wrote urging Hampton not to succumb to the pressures of his party, but to continue his liberal policy. "The opposition within your party" he told Hampton, "can do you no harm, it only adds strength from among your former opponents, and a just recognition of their rights...will create for you a support that no power in the state can overthrow." Wade Hampton's Papers, Box 5, Folder 41, SCDAH. At the August 8, 1878 Republican state convention in Columbia, there was a considerable amount of support for endorsing Hampton for Governor. William Harrison Shirley Jr., "A Black Republican Congressman During the Democratic Resurgence in South Carolina, Robert Small, 1876-1882" M.A. Thesis, Univ. of South Carolina, 1970, p. 33.

115. Ibid.
117. Ibid.
118. Ibid.
119. St. Julian Jervey to S.J. Robinson Esq., February 15, 1878. Wade Hampton Papers, Box 9, Folder 39, SCDAH.
120. Ibid., Box 10, Folder 14.
121. M.R. Delany to Wade Hampton, ibid. (Letters received), Box 10, Folder 29.
122. Ibid., Box 10, Folder 30. The black exodus movement began as early as January, 1877. As Richard Cain wrote in a letter to William Coppinger of the Colonization Society, "The colored people of South Carolina are tired of the constant struggle for life and liberty with such results as the 'Mississippi Plan,' and prefer going where no such obstacles are in their way of enjoying their liberty." Richard Cain to William Coppinger, Jan. 25, 1877 in Delany File, London (Ontario), Cross Cultural Learner's Centre. Also in American Colonization Society Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. In another letter, Cain wrote "the political change in the South has worked wonders in the minds of the colored people, and they feel no safety, should the Democracy take control of these states." Cain to Coppinger, Feb. 12, 1877, ibid. According to the News and Courier, "it is hardly impossible not to go into a small shop kept exclusively by black men, without hearing 'the land of the molasses tree' (i.e. Africa) spoken of in terms of the wildest infatuation" Ibid., July 16, 1877, p. 4. Delany claimed that the movement developed because of the apprehensions by blacks about their subordinate position in a society they had once ruled for ten years. Ibid., April 16, 1878.
123. Ibid.

124. This was in a letter he wrote to the Colonization Society, as Chairman of the Committee on Finance of the Liberian Exodus Joint Stock Steamship Company, requesting a loan to enable the company to pay up its liabilities. Delany to H.R. Latrobe, President, American Colonization Society, July 8, 1878, Delany File, op. cit., ibid.

125. Ibid.


127. Ullman describes the book as "a pseudo-scientific tract." Much of its findings, according to Sterling, are incorrect by modern standards. Nevertheless, both authors consider the book an immense contribution to the intellectual currents of the time. V. Ullman, op. cit., pp. 510-511.

D. Sterling, The Making of an Afro-American: Martin Robison Delany, 1812-1885 (New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1971), pp. 323-324. From the very beginning of slavery, religion had played a key role in legitimizing the Peculiar Institution. A central component of religious racism has been the notion that racial inequality was divinely ordained. Black inferiority, according to this view, resulted from a perpetual curse which God had placed upon the descendants of Ham. For a discussion of the religious basis of racism, see Idus Newby's Jim Crow's Defense: Anti-Black Thought in America, 1900-1930 (Baton Rouge: L.S.U., 1965), pp. 88-90. A relatively recent and more authoritative analysis of this subject is in William Mckee Evans's "From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea: The Strange Odessey of the Sons of Ham." American Historical Review, 85, 1, February 1980, pp. 15-43. In Principia of Ethnology, Delany argued that racial inequality did not originate from God. God created everyone equal, and there was just one human race, he insisted, until the great Flood. As a result of the Flood, the descendants of Ham dispersed into Egypt, Ethiopia and other parts of Africa. There they laid the foundations for modern civilization. Modern historical, anthropological and archaeological findings in Egypt and other parts of North Africa establish that the original creators of the Egyptian civilization were pure blacks. See Ivan Van Sertima (ed.), Nile Valley Civilization: Proceedings of the Nile Valley Conference (New Brunswick, N.J., 1984).

128. Dorothy Sterling, ibid., pp. 324-325. See also Martin R. Delany to William Coppinger, Charleston, S.C., August 18th, 1880 in Delany File, ibid.

129. D. Sterling, ibid.


SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Few anti-slavery radicals of the 1850s, either blacks or whites, would have guessed that a leading member of the emigrationist movement, an outspoken critic of the peculiar institution, the Fugitive Slave Law, Kansas-Nebraska and Dred Scott, would by 1874 become a valuable and enthusiastic ally of an establishment determined to subvert black freedom. But then, few men were ingenious enough to predict what course Delany might follow from one day to the next. His ambivalence and unpredictability is aptly reflected in the misrepresentations of modern scholarship.

Determined to counter the wrongs of historical racism, the historiography of the black experience, especially since the 1960s, turned to the past for a redefinition, and positive understanding of the black experience. To a large extent, however, the values and goals of the '60s significantly influenced our perceptions of the black past. Since this period went down in history as the age of nationalist resurgence in the Third World, and of black militancy in the United States, the nineteenth century antecedents of these movements necessarily assumed radical dimensions. Since Delany played such a crucial role in the black nationalist movement of the nineteenth century, he ipso facto, appeared radical.

But to understand Delany, he must be seen as the integrationist that he was. Black nationalism in the nineteenth century espoused fundamentally anglo-saxon values. Black nationalists wanted full acceptance and integration into the middle class world of their time. When this failed, some, like Delany, embraced emigration out of frustration with
America, and not necessarily because of a genuine desire to separate. "We love our country, dearly love her" he once lamented, "but she doesn't love us — she despised us, and bid us begone, driving us from her embrace." There was a significant link between all black nationalists in the 19th century that is often obscured by modern-day dichotomy between "radical" emigrationism and "conservative" integrationism.

Modern scholarship has built a strong myth around Delany. In redeeming him from historical obscurity, modern scholars clothed Delany in robes that did not fit. This discrepancy between what Delany actually said and did and what modern scholars interpreted is itself the product of the functional orientation of black historiography. The search for what John Blassingame called a "Usable Black Past" or "Applied Black History" in Earl Thorpe's words, had led to the frantic creation of heroes. Although a strong rationale existed and still exists for a functional black history, such rationale should, however, not undermine the equally significant need to attain a true understanding of the black past and its heroes.

What had happened thus far has been to call Delany what we thought he ought to be and not what he was. Modern response to him is strongly informed by what Nathan Huggins termed "Moralistic Hero-Worship." To understand Delany and his role in the black struggle, it is significant to acknowledge and come to terms with the complexities and ambivalences that were significant facets of his vision for black America.

He did not belong to the black radical tradition. Neither was he the ideological father of the present-day black militants. In assessing
Delany, modern critics tend to overlook or underestimate the enduring nature of his ideologically conservative upbringing and education in Pittsburgh. In the Quaker state in the 1830s and '40s 'free' blacks encountered a hostile and violently racist establishment. Against this reality, however, one tradition of black leadership (Rev. Lewis Woodson and William Whipper) espoused non-violence and moral virtue. These men advised blacks to combat violence with moral weapons. Rather than confrontations, they counselled escape or emigration. It was divine to escape or emigrate from life-threatening situations. Rather than constituting a betrayal, emigration they argued was a fundamental strategy in the struggle since freedom for the enslaved depended on the prior survival and consolidation of the "free" blacks.

Delany's ideas and actions from the 1850s on reflected how much a part of him this intellectual tradition had become. In the violent world of the 1850s, he offered blacks moral virtue, economic development and emigration. Violence for him was unrealistic and unethical—"Stand Still and See the Salvation of God" represented the cornerstone of his thought. Implicit in this was an other-worldliness and fatalism, which, translated into politics, produced conservatism: In the Palmetto state in the 1860s and '70s he advocated moral virtue and non-violence as weapons in the black struggle against a vicious and violent ex-confederate enemy.

From 1852, when he "emigrated" from the mainstream of the black movement, Delany did not cease to be in conflict with the black radical tradition till the end of reconstruction in 1876. His policies from thence on worked in favor of the pro-slavery establishment. The defeat of the radicals in 1876 represented his crowning achievement.
Delany himself established, in two crucial letters, his disdain and hatred for radicalism: the lengthy letter to Frederick Douglass and another one to Mr. Coppinger of the Colonization Society, dated August 18, 1880. In these letters he asserted, in no uncertain terms, that his experience, especially since the war, had been one of consistent and relentless struggles against the forces of radicalism which he regarded as evil and vicious. 5

He stood to the far right of the traditions of Nat Turner, Gabriel Posser and Denmark Vesey. He abhorred violence. When confronted with the choice of a violent option in 1858, he cleverly opted out. Neither in The Condition, nor in Political Destiny, nor even in Blake did he advocate confrontation. While he raised critical questions about slavery and the means of elevation, his solutions comforted the pro-slavery establishment. He did not pose any immediate threat to slavery. And the long-term implications of his scheme were too uncertain to cause the pro-slavery establishment any serious concerns. Neither was his "emigrationist" convention any more radical than the Rochester convention. The demands and strategies of both conventions were, in consonance with the middle class and integrationist aspirations of black leadership in general.

Whether we define revolution in its narrower sense of immediate, drastic and sometimes violent changes or in a broader context of fundamental changes and challenges to established norms without necessarily involving violence, Delany remained well outside the tradition. For the first seventeen years of his active public life (1835-1852) he functioned within the mainstream of the black movement. His ideas, though devoid
of calls for violent revolution, envisioned a future society where blacks, economically elevated, would acquire respect and acceptability in society. It was an integrative vision that he shared with other blacks. For its time, this was radical. It challenged the expatriating and racist scheme of the Colonization Society which argued that an integrative society was both impossible and unrealistic. Integrationism therefore threatened the pro-slavery establishment and the hierarchical ethics of Jacksonian society. 6

Like other blacks, Delany believed that American racism would decline as blacks improved their social, economic and moral conditions. Consequently, he advocated moral virtue, thrift, the pursuit of industrial training and the cultivation of capitalist habits. As co-editor of the North Star, he disseminated these ideas to black communities all over the country. In the course of this, he experienced racial discrimination and deprivation. But his convictions held. His achievements won for him respect and admiration from both blacks and whites. He vehemently espoused integrationist ideas. He tried to teach blacks how to live in America. By 1852, disappointed by the failure of black efforts and achievements to change American reality, and more importantly, frustrated by his personal failures, Delany turned to emigration.

During the "Emigrationist" phase (1852-1861), he lectured widely and published profusely. This was perhaps the most intellectually productive period of his career. Certain crucial considerations underpinned his sudden loss of hope and faith in America. First, the marginalized status of blacks and persistent refusal of whites to accept blacks as an
integral and essential part of the ruling element of the country. Secondly, deprived of what he termed "inherent sovereignty," blacks could not delegate authority to anyone. Consequently, the government in his estimation, represented white interests only. The issue therefore, he emphasized, was now race, not condition. Since he perceived American racism as ubiquitous and unconquerable, he urged blacks to emigrate. He ruled out violence as a strategy. He considered it unethical, and not likely to succeed. These themes dominated his thought at this time. But these ideas conflicted with the mainstream of the black movement, which persisted in seeking integration in America. In Delany's estimation, the defiant position of the black integrationists like Douglass could result in violent confrontation — something that would hurt blacks much more than whites.

These ideas attracted condemnations from the black community. His scheme bore dangerous implications for the entire black movement. According to him, not all "free" blacks could and should emigrate — only those of "intelligence," "maturity" and "sterling worth." The fate of the other free blacks and of the almost four million slaves therefore hung in the balance. Delany offered nothing concrete to the enslaved, except the very vague and dangerous assumption that the success of the few free blacks elsewhere would undermine racism and slavery in America.

Personal survival mattered more for Delany. The atmosphere of the 1850s, in his estimation, was getting dangerous and even threatened the survival of the few free blacks like himself. They must therefore be safeguarded first through emigration. Other blacks, however, perceived
the connection between Delany's scheme and the obnoxious colonization movement. His emigrationism, *Mutatis Mutandis*, would have fulfilled a long-time goal of the colonization movement: removal of the troublesome "free" black presence.

From 1852 therefore, Delany shifted away from the mainstream of the black movement. His ideas no longer threatened slavery. Undoubtedly, he had undergone tremendous transformation. This in fact began back in 1849 when he made that critical response to the invitation to help establish a newspaper in Ohio. At that point, it seemed, he had reached the conclusion that nothing fruitful had accrued personally to him for his efforts in the black struggle. Instead of personal successes, he had only witnessed those of his colleagues. He had worked and earned nothing.

His social status had transcended the limit that could be sustained through charitable donations. With a wife and growing number of children, he required something much more concrete, assuring and lasting. By the end of his *North Star* career he had not attained this:

From 1849 on therefore, personal achievements constituted, for Delany, significant yardsticks for measuring overall black successes. Between 1850 and 1852, he struggled unsuccessfully to enhance his personal fortunes. Racism at Harvard cut short his academic career. The racism of the establishment in Washington deprived him of a patent that could have at least reinforced his economic position. Frustrated, he finally turned to emigration.

Undaunted and undeterred by widespread anti-emigrationist sentiments, Delany left for Africa in 1859. His return in 1860 and the outbreak of the Civil War marked another phase in his career. His fortunes changed
dramatically with the Civil War and the Freedmen's Bureau. With these came personal successes. The period 1861-1868 marked the golden age of his career.

The experience of successes associated with his War and Bureau services completely transformed him. It changed his perception of the black reality. Had death struck him in 1868, he would have died a happy man. He would have gone to his grave with the satisfaction that America had last opened herself to blacks. The Emancipation Proclamation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments, congressional reconstruction, the Freedmen's Bureau—all seemed to justify this optimism. Radical excesses and irrelevant demands would only threaten and undermine this openness. The onus, therefore, in his estimation, rested on blacks to prevent such occurrence. He lectured blacks on the need for compromise and reconciliation with ex-Confederates. Gradualism not revolutionary changes dominated his thoughts. He interpreted the task of his Bureau agency as one of helping to perfect that compromise that he felt the new reality demanded. Although blacks were still not part of the ruling element of the country, Delany de-emphasized and depreciated the need for political power. Such demands were not only premature and unnecessary, but would jeopardize the chances for peaceful and orderly development. Consequently, he struck hard at blacks who advocated more political power. This period fore-shadowed the greater conflict that was to come between Delany and black radicals.

To understand this conflict, which raged from 1868 to 1876, one must recall a significant theme in Delany's thought in the 1840s and 1850s—capitalistic values or what he called "political economy" as the central key to black elevation. This was in accord with the mainstream of the
black movement. However, if in the past, the acquisition of economic power had proved indispensable to elevation, the changed reality in the post-bellum period made political power equally significant. Black reconstruction failed, many have argued, because of the inability of the black leadership to agree on goals. Some wanted more economic power, others pursued narrowly political goals. While black leaders argued over what it was they really wanted, white Carolinians claimed they knew, at the minimum, what blacks did not need — political power. The domain of politics, they claimed, rightly belonged to native whites. Black needs were economic not political. White Carolinians knew that surrender of political power by blacks would render them vulnerable in every sphere, including the economic. Perceptive blacks realized this danger and refused compromise. Delany did not go along with them. He shared the white Carolinian view that blacks should seek economic fortune only.

Delany's elitist consciousness was also central to this conflict. His strong belief in the primacy of the few intelligent, mature and wealthy individuals left no respect in his consciousness for common folk. Equally significant was his negative and condescending perception of the black leadership. Because he defined black leaders as ignorant, immature and unintelligent, he perceived them as mere instruments of radical carpetbagger rule. The right and ideal coalition for progress in South Carolina, therefore, he argued, must involve people like himself and the wealthy Southern elite of the old order. Under this Union, though denied political power, blacks would benefit from the attendant economic progress. Because of his belief that the specially gifted elite held the key to social progress, it was easy for him to see individual and isolated
successes by himself and a few others as indicative of fundamental changes for the entire black community.

After his removal from the army in 1868, Delany desperately sought power. After repeated failures within the Republican party, he grew bitterly critical of its radical policies and of black associations with it. He sought to destroy the relationship and replace it with his ideal coalition. To achieve this he launched a vicious anti-radical campaign. He condemned the corruptions and excesses of the Republican state administration, and advocated honest and fair government. He was careful to highlight the need for those qualities that he felt he alone possessed—intelligence and unadulterated blackness.

In order to sell the obnoxious Democratic party to the largely illiterate black masses, he deliberately misrepresented the history of the black experience. He used deception and deliberately falsified the facts in order to redeem the image of the Democratic party. If the Democrats had been such positive elements in the black historical development, one wonders why it took Delany so long to realize it?

Few blacks doubted or denied the prevalence of corruption within the Republican administration. Fewer still questioned the need for reform. But most of them wondered if the Democratic party sincerely wanted reform. Were the Democrats prepared to accept black equality and uphold black freedom? How seriously could one take their professions of liberalism? Had they really changed? Was Democratic power compatible with black freedom? These and other questions engaged the consciousness of many blacks. The performance and utterances of Democrats inspired
little confidence in blacks.

While some Democrats welcomed Chamberlain's reforms and advocated fusion with moderate Republicans for change, hardline Bourbons wanted a total overthrow of black political power and the restoration of white supremacist rule. Delany went along with the hardliners because by then he seemed to have lost his faith in reforms and wanted complete overthrow of radical power. He chose to emphasize the phoney liberalism of the Democrats while ignoring the recurrent anti-black violence and rhetoric.

The Democrats adopted two effective weapons in their anti-radical crusade: violence and propaganda. Violence played a central role in the politics of redemption. But propaganda was also of equal importance. Its basic objectives were first, to develop negative perceptions of black political performances in the state and more importantly, in the North. By emphasizing the theme of corruption, Democrats sought to undermine public support for radical reconstruction. Secondly, within the state, Democrats used propaganda as a means of intimidating blacks. By emphasizing such factors as the numerical inferiority of blacks nationally, and their possible annihilation in a race war, Democrats hoped to woo blacks away from the Republican alliance.

Delany used precisely similar language in his anti-radical crusade. His speeches tied in adequately with those of the Democrats. He hammered on the themes of black inferiority, of corruption in government, of their numerical inferiority and of the need to avoid race war. 'Blacks, in his estimation, had failed to live up to expectations. The black leadership was largely ignorant, and assumed political power hastily and
prematurely. In public speeches, both within and outside the state, Delany helped to erode public confidence in, and support for, the black Republican coalition.

This campaign of villifying radical Republicanism succeeded. As Joel Williamson observed, many native Carolinians soon convinced themselves and subsequent generations that Republicanism meant "corruption" and that black Republicanism meant "corruption compounded."7 Northerners soon accepted the Southern argument and found in it "a certain measure of relief from a sense of guilt for their apostasy. The results were unique: the men who had lost the war in South Carolina, had won the peace."8

Few Democrats seriously wanted reform in 1876. When they advocated "reform," they meant the surrender of political power by blacks. In 1876 they offered South Carolina no significant choices. It had to be the year of deliverance. No more, no less. They offered either their party [the Democratic] and its program, or anarchy. "Aut Bourbon, aut Nihil" was the spirit of that '76, according to E. Culpepper Clark.9

Blacks were conscious of the need for reform. Nevertheless, they had no alternative but to strengthen their alliance with the Republican party. If they joined the Democratic party, they joined a movement determined more than ever to undermine their freedom and relegate them to service status.10

Recent micro-analysis of certain counties in South Carolina corroborates W.E.B. DuBois's conclusion that Democrats destroyed radical reconstruction, not because it was corrupt, but because it was successful.11 Orville Vernon Burton maintains that black reconstructionists
in Edgefield were men of impeccable character, honest and guided by Christian principles. Reconstruction ended here not because it could not work, but because it was working so well. Lewis J. Bellardo Jr.'s study of Fairfield County shows that reconstruction failed here largely because of Democratic opposition to black freedom.

Black Democrats, though relatively few, were central to the success of the conservatives. Delany epitomizes the perfect Democrat. He believed that blacks should not fight for precisely those things that scholars, then and now, acknowledged held the key to meaningful freedom. He believed that blacks should simply go to old Massa, cap-in-hand and seek reconciliation, even when Massa himself did not disguise his persistent objections to black freedom. Considering his reputation in the past, and the degree of respectability he acquired nationwide during the war, and its immediate aftermath, Delany's speeches and anti-radical rhetoric must have had tremendous impact on public opinion.

Delany chose a very unpopular option in 1876. There were blacks who felt the same degree of frustration with the Republican party. But for most of these paradoxically, there was no viable alternative to that party. The other available option would have been for blacks to remain independent of either party. But this would only have worked to the advantage of the Democrats. There were blacks, however, who chose this option. When the Democratic party sought the support of a colored man, James Davis in 1876, he told the gathering at Richland Hall in no uncertain terms that he preferred to remain independent rather than vote the Democratic ticket. "As you have seen fit to frame a ticket discarding my race" he told the audience, "I must stand alone. I have come to the
conclusion that you have made up your mind that this is the white man’s land and must forever remain so.\textsuperscript{15} There was no doubt that beyond the phoney “liberal” rhetoric, the Democratic platform offered little that was concrete to blacks.

Delany could not have been used, and considering his intelligence, it is even more difficult to argue that he was ignorant of the real implications of the Democratic campaign. He knew what he was doing. Personal power to him was now paramount. Since the radicals frustrated his aspirations, he would get even by destroying them politically. But in destroying the radicals Delany literally threw the baby out with the bath water! He destroyed black freedom along with it. This was a tragedy of monumental dimensions for a man who spent his ante-bellum years in the forefront of the black freedom movement. But there was a strong element of naivete in Delany’s actions. Again this is very difficult to comprehend. His hatred for radicalism totally blinded him to the reality of redemption politics. He de-emphasized the need for political power. He wanted blacks to surrender this and content themselves with seeking economic fortunes in a political milieu controlled by old Massa. Politically at least he would have been satisfied with a restoration of the Ancien Regime. He created a united South Carolina where both races would interact on the basis of commonality of interests;

regarding and supporting each other’s just and legal claims, promoting peace, friendship and confidence, till we shall be in our domestic relations only known as ONE PEOPLE and ONE PARTY in interest, developing the rich resources of a soil scarcely yet commenced.\textsuperscript{16}

The only obstacle to this, in his estimation, was the radical government.
Consequently, it had to go. But the interests of both races were never the same. White Carolinians would not concede to, and support the just and legal rights of blacks. In fact, as some perceptive blacks observed, the interests of both were poles apart. "You are fighting for the reins of government whilst my race is fighting to retain our liberties," James Davis told a gathering of the Richland Democratic Club. The dilemma that confronted many blacks was that no one could vouch for the sincerity of the Democrats. No one more perfectly expressed this dilemma than this same Davis; "Whilst I know that if the men that you have nominated had their way, none of our rights would be endangered, yet what guarantee have I that their opinion will be regarded?" he queried the Democrats. This was as insightful as it was prophetic, for the first thing the Democrats did on assuming power was to throw overboard their liberal promises.

Delany naively believed the phoney liberalism of the Democrats in 1876. He swallowed everything they said — hook, line and sinker. The Democrats had changed, he proclaimed publicly. Once in power, they would protect and guarantee the rights and freedom of blacks. Whereas for most blacks in 1876, what was at stake was their freedom and survival and how to guarantee these, for Delany, it was radical power and how to destroy it.

Human actions, oftentimes, are the results of less discernible domestic forces. Some critics attempt to link Delany's changing perception of, and orientation to, the black struggle especially from 1868 to developments within his family. Since Catherine, "always entered fully into his pursuits, encourag[ing] and
urg[ing] him on in his most doubtful moments," it is possible that she
influenced his actions. It is, however, difficult to determine pre-
cisely how much of his conservatism, his search for peace and reconcilia-
tion, was the work of this "invisible" hand. No doubt, as his family
expanded, domestic considerations influenced and shaped his actions. But
without concrete evidence, such as family correspondence, it is difficult
to sustain such argument beyond the realm of speculation.

It is equally difficult to sustain the argument that when Delany
used the words "Democracy" and "Democrats," he did not necessarily advo-
cate support for the party of old Massa, but for the concepts of freedom
and democracy. When he addressed blacks in those terms, he was addressing
people with real notions of their meanings and implications. When he
advocated support for "Democracy" and "Democrats" he tried to sell a party
that had degraded and annihilated blacks in the past and had given no
indications of abandoning such policy in the future. As the Daily
Republican aptly summarized "Every negro regards the name Conservative
and Democrat as meaning SLAVERY" (emphasis mine).

If the Independent Republican movement had won in 1874, South
Carolina's redemption would have happened much earlier. Green died soon
after the election; consequently, for some time, Delany would have become
de facto governor of South Carolina. He would have willingly surrendered
power to the conservatives. The redemption of the state might have
happened earlier, more peacefully and by a blackman. But as it turned
out, it happened two years later, through violence and intimidation, and
with the aid of the same blackman.
Delany took a calculated risk in 1876 and failed. White Carolinians lived true to expectations. Once in power, they instituted the process of relegating blacks to political oblivion. Hampton's "liberalism" collapsed. Delany soon discovered that what came to power in 1876 was a white supremacist party. The Bourbon had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. The age of radical Republican "corruption" and black political power gave way to that of Democratic corruption and black political annihilation. The story of the bloodied era of radical reconstruction, as it crystallized in the thinking of whites, North and South, became from the 1890s on a major excuse for disfranchisement and white supremacy. Radical reconstruction, according to the argument, demonstrated the impropriety of delegating political power to blacks. Delany had been very instrumental in the articulation and popularization of this sentiment. Had death spared him, one wonders how he would have felt in the 1890s when the full implications of his 1876 support for the conservatives reached their logical conclusion in the legalization of Jim Crow.20
ENDNOTES - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION


8. Ibid.

9. E. Culpepper Clark, Francis Warrington Dawson and the Politics of Restoration: South Carolina, 1874-1899 (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1980). See also Robert Mean Davis Papers, Box 4, Folder 49 (Document dated Nov. 30, 1876), South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.


11. Ibid.


14. The black Democrat remains the least studied of the reconstruction phenomena. It is very difficult to arrive at some precise knowledge of the numerical strength of black Democrats.

15. It is not exactly clear who James Davis was. There is no indication that he played any leadership role in the political movements of the time. He had attended a meeting of the Richland Democratic Club on the invitation of a neighbor. Richland Democratic Club (Columbia) Minutes/Scrapbook, 1876-1880. Mss. South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia.


17. Richland Democratic Club, Minutes/Scrapbook, op. cit.

18. Ibid.

APPENDIX I

BLACK POPULATION: FREE AND SLAVE, 1800-1860

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
<th>&quot;Free&quot; Blacks</th>
<th>Free Blacks % of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>893,602</td>
<td>108,435</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>1,191,362</td>
<td>186,466</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>1,538,022</td>
<td>233,634</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>2,009,043</td>
<td>319,599</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>2,487,355</td>
<td>386,293</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>3,204,313</td>
<td>434,495</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>3,953,760</td>
<td>488,070</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Historical statistics colonial times to 1957. Also see, statistical abstract of the U.S. 1963 (pages 5, 99) and The Negro in Our History, Woodson and Wesley, p. 245.

The statistics above show that the "free" black population declined proportionately to slaves as the years advanced. The onslaught they encountered was such that many had to accept re-absorption into slavery or the equally detestable option of colonization outside the United States. In short, they were an endangered species.
## APPENDIX II

STATISTICS ON COLONIZATION, 1820-1850. NUMBER OF EMMIGRANTS SENT TO LIBERIA BY THE AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Blacks Sent to Liberia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>2,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,116</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number sent by the U.S. Government: 1,044
Grand Total: 7,160


The above statistics are very revealing. In the thirty year period (1820-1850) the A.C.S. and the United States government colonized only 7,160 blacks.
APPENDIX 3

A TYPICAL CONTRACT BETWEEN FREEDMEN AND

PLANTERS IN DELANY'S DISTRICT

Article I. This contract between Justice Goodman and the freedmen, whose names are hereunto affixed, is on the basis of an equal partnership between Capital, Land, and Labor - each receiving one third of the proceeds of the productions of the cultivated plantation of Homestead Farm, Beaufort District, South Carolina, and to continue till January 1, 1867.

Article II. Each laborer is to receive (besides the privilege of firewood, with team and vehicle to haul it, and one acre of land to each family) one third of all that he or she is able to produce by cultivation, clear of all expenses except those incurred in the transportation and sale of the staple, as freight and commission on storage and sales, they supporting themselves and families; the proprietor making all advances of provisions or rations on credit (if required), finding all dwellings for the contractors, supplying all farming utensils, vehicles, machinery, sufficient working stock; and no labor is to be performed by hand or by a person that can better be done by animal labor or machinery.

Article III. All restrictions and obligations legally binding contracting parties in the fulfillment of their articles of agreement are implied in this article, and all damage for injury or loss of property by carelessness is to be paid by fair and legal assessment.

Article IV. Negligence of duty in cultivation, so as to become injurious to the proprietor or other contracting parties, either by loss in the production of staple, or example in conduct or precedent, may, by investigation, cause a forfeiture of the interest of such person in their share of the crop. Any contractor taking the place of one dismissed shall succeed to all of their rights and claims on the part of the crop left by them; otherwise it shall be equally divided between those who work it.

Article V. All Thanksgiving Days, Fast Days, "holidays," and national celebration days are to be enjoyed in all cases by contractors, without being regarded as a neglect of duty or violation of contract.

Article VI. Good conduct and good behavior of the freedmen towards the proprietor, good treatment of animals, and good care of tools, utensils, &c., and good and kind treatment by the proprietor to the freedmen, will be strictly required by the authorities; and all dwellings and immediate premises of freedmen must be kept neat and clean, subject to inspection and fine for neglect by such sanitary arrangements as the government may make.

Article VII. No sutler stores will be permitted on the place, and nothing sold on account except the necessaries of life, that such as good, substantial food and working clothes, conducive to health and
comfort, at cost, that no inducements may be given for spending earnings improperly. Spirituous liquors will not be permitted.

Article VIII. All accounts must be entered in a pass-book, to be kept by each family or individual for the purpose, that no advantage be taken by incorrect charges; and no account against them will be recognized except such entry be made. No tobacco charges above fifty cents a month will be recognized by the Bureau. In all cases of the loss of their account-books, then the account in the proprietor's books must be taken to date of loss, when another pass-book must be obtained, and entries of accounts made as before.

Article IX. In all cases where an accusation is made against a person, the proprietor or his agent, one of the contractors or freedmen selected by themselves, and a third person chosen by the two, provided neither of these three is biassed or prejudiced against the accused, shall be a competent council to investigate and acquit the accused; but in all cases where a decision is to be made to dismiss or forfeit a share of the crop, the officer of the Bureau, or some other competent officer of the government, must preside in the council of trial, and make the decision in the case. When the proprietor is biassed or prejudiced against an accused person, he must name a person to take his place in the council who shall neither be biassed nor prejudiced against the accused.

Witness our hands and signs this 17th day of February, 1866.


Note: According to Rollin, this contract embodied the very essence of the Triple Alliance.
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America, and not necessarily because of a genuine desire to separate. "We love our country, dearly love her" he once lamented, "but she doesn't love us — she despised us, and bid us begone, driving us from her embrace." There was a significant link between all black nationalists in the 19th century that is often obscured by modern-day dichotomy between "radical" emigrationism and "conservative" integrationism.

Modern scholarship has built a strong myth around Delany. In redeeming him from historical obscurity, modern scholars clothed Delany in robes that did not fit. This discrepancy between what Delany actually said and did and what modern scholars interpreted is itself the product of the functional orientation of black historiography. The search for what John Blassingame called a "Usable Black Past" or "Applied Black History" in Earl Thorpe's words, had led to the frantic creation of heroes. Although a strong rationale existed and still exists for a functional black history, such rationale should, however, not undermine the equally significant need to attain a true understanding of the black past and its heroes.

What had happened thus far has been to call Delany what we thought he ought to be and not what he was. Modern response to him is strongly informed by what Nathan Huggins termed "Moralistic Hero-Worship." To understand Delany and his role in the black struggle, it is significant to acknowledge and come to terms with the complexities and ambivalences that were significant facets of his vision for black America.

He did not belong to the black radical tradition. Neither was he the ideological father of the present-day black militants. In assessing


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