

## A CALL FOR A CONVENTION OF THE COLORED CITIZENS OF THE NEW ENGLAND STATES.

### FELLOW CITIZENS:

We issue this call to invite you to attend a Convention to be held in the City of Boston, commencing at 10 o'clock, on Monday, the 1st day of August, 1859.

The primary object we have in view is, to take into consideration the Moral, Social, and Political elevation of those with whom we are identified, by complexion and condition, in the New England and other States.

In all, except five of the Eastern States, the colored citizens are deprived of the privilege of voting on equal terms with the whites.

Free suffrage is the basis of a free government, the safeguard of a free people, the strength of the strong, the defence of the weak, a powerful auxiliary to respectability, wealth and usefulness; and just in proportion as men are deprived of this, they are shorn of their strength, and are subject to poverty, disgrace and abuse.

We are convinced, fellow citizens, that not only our political, but our depressed condition in all other respects in the Free States, is owing in a great degree to the fact, that we are politically weak, not possessing the unrestricted use of the elective franchise. The national body politic see in us nothing to fear, and no favors to court.

We therefore urge upon colored men in all sections of New England, to evince their self-respect and love of freedom in efforts to promote their moral, social and political elevation, by assembling at the above time,— a day consecrated by the signal and successful example of Great Britain emancipating 800,000 men, women, and children, in her West India colonies, and hence eminently suggestive to us to strive in securing equality to the half free colored citizens of the Northern States, and thus hasten the day of full emancipation to the millions yet groaning in the Southern prison-house of our country.

We cordially invite our brethren from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the far West, to meet with us, that the cause of our several grievances may be discussed, and the remedy sought.

With the exception of Connecticut, the New England States have magnanimously acknowledged our political rights, and great progress has been made in our moral and social elevation within the past twenty-five years. But let us, fellow citizens, extend the words of encouragement to our brethren struggling in other States, until the rights of colored Americans shall be granted and respected everywhere.

This call is issued by authority of a public meeting held at Bethel Church, Boston, Tuesday, May 3, 1859.

- WILLIAM WELLS BROWN,
- LEWIS HAYDEN,
- WILLIAM C. NELL,
- JEREMIAH HARVEY,
- JOHN J. SMITH,
- NELSON L. PERKINS,
- HENRY WEEDEN,

*Committee.*

MARK R. DEMORTIE,  
GEORGE L. RUFFIN,      *Secretaries.*