

our own dead and build our own monuments, and all monuments which we would build to the memory of our friends, if we would not invite the continued contempt of the white race upon our heads. Now, whenever a movement shall be made for such a monument, I am with it, heart and soul, and will do my best to make it a success. So much for the monument part of your plan.

Now a word of the college. I am heartily in favor of all needful educational institutions for the present education of colored people, even though they be separate institutions. Present circumstances are the only apology for such institutions. When a colored lad or girl can go to school or college with the white people of the country, it is best for all that they should do so. Hence, I am not for building up permanent separate institutions for colored people of any kind. Even in the matter of the college, therefore, in so far as the idea of permanent isolation is contemplated, I am opposed to your plan. The lesson now flashed upon the attention of the American people, the lesson which they must learn, or neglect to do so at their peril, is that "equal manhood means equal rights," and further, that the American people must stand each for all and all for each, without respect to color or race. The spirit of the age is against all institutions based upon prejudice, or providing for prejudice of race. I, therefore, am opposed to doing anything looking to the perpetuity of prejudice. I expect to see the colored people of this country enjoying the same freedom, voting at the same ballot-box, using the same cartridge box, going to the same schools, attending the same churches, travelling in the same street-cars, in the same railroad-cars, on the same steamboats, proud of the same country, fighting the same foe, and enjoying the same peace and all its advantages. This is no new position with me. Having held it when the prospect was dark, I shall not relinquish it now when the clouds are disappearing and the heavens are bright.

But, supposing the college a desirable thing, I am opposed to obtaining it in the way proposed. As I understand the matter, you propose to establish a general collecting agency, persons to travel and solicit five hundred thousand dollars from the public, white as well as colored, to enable you to build a monument to the memory of your departed friend and benefactor, which monument you propose shall be in the form of a college, for the exclusive use of colored people. If I am right in this statement, I beg you to hear me a moment further.

A college is a college, and has its own peculiar claims, and ought to stand upon its own merits. A monument is a monument, and has its own peculiar claims and merits. The two things spring from different motives, and are suggestive of different ideas and sentiments. For a monument, by itself, and upon its own merits, I say good. For a college, by itself, (with the limitations already suggested,) and upon its own merits, I say good. But for a college-monument, or for a monument-college, I do not say good; for the things, however good separately, are incongruous and offensive when connected as now proposed. The whole scheme is derogatory to the character of the colored people of the United States. It carries on its front a distasteful implication. *It looks to me like an attempt to wash the black man's face in the nation's tears for Abraham Lincoln!* It places the paddle-wheels of the colored man's boat in the tide of the popular grief, with a view to his special advantage. I am for washing the black man's face, (that is, educating his mind,) for that is a good thing to be done, and I appreciate the nation's tears for Abraham Lincoln; but I am not so enterprising as to think of turning the nation's veneration for our martyred President into a means of advantage to the colored people, and of sending around the hat to a mourning public.

When the colored people want a college, let them beg for a college on its own merits, and in the name of the living, and I am with them. When they want a monument to perpetuate the memory of a good man, I am with them. But when they want to raise a college for themselves out of the general affection of the American people for the dead, I am not with them, and frankness requires me to say so in all earnestness. If these views are ill-founded, and you can show them to be so, I shall only be too happy to abandon them.

With best wishes and great respect for you, personally, I am, dear sir, very truly yours,

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

## FREDERICK DOUGLASS ON THE EDUCATIONAL MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.

ROCHESTER, N. Y. Aug., 8th, 1865.

W. J. WILSON, Esq.—*My Dear Sir*: In answer to your note requesting me to allow my name to stand as one of the officers of the "Educational Monument Association," I beg to state that I cannot allow my name as you request, nor can I, with my present views, favor the plan adopted by the Association. On many accounts, I wish I could unite with you in this enterprise, and not the least among them is the pleasure I experience in finding myself cooperating with yourself, and other gentlemen connected with this Educational Monument Association, for the common elevation and improvement of our condition as a people. But I must be true to my conviction of fitness.

When I go for anything, I like to go strong, and when I cannot go thus, I had better not go at all. You cannot want a man among you who cannot bring his whole heart to the work. I can't do this, and hence will not fill the place, which, if filled at all, should be filled more worthily.

You will, my old friend, naturally inquire why I cannot do this? Here there is no difficulty but the time required to answer. There is much I could say, but I must be brief. First of all, then, I must say, this whole monument business, in its present shape, strikes me as an offence against good taste, and as calculated to place the colored people in an undesirable and discreditable position before the country. Such, I say, is my present conviction. Do not consider me hostile to monuments nor to colleges; I am not to either. Things good in standing alone are not always good when mixed.

Now, a monument by the colored people, erected at the expense of the colored people, in honor of the memory of Abraham Lincoln, expressive of their gratitude and affection for their friend and great benefactor, however humble and inexpensive the marble, I could understand and appreciate, and the world would understand and appreciate the effort. A monument like this would express one of the holiest sentiments of the human heart. It would be, as all such offerings should be, free from all taint of self-love or self-interest on our part, as a class. It would be our own act and deed, and would show to after-coming generations, in some degree, the sentiments awakened among the oppressed by the death of Mr. Lincoln. A monument of this kind, erected by the colored people—that is, by the voluntary offerings of the colored people—is a very different thing from a monument built by money contributed by white men to enable colored people to build a monument. We should bury