

1847. Frederick Douglass' *North Star*, 1847 (Aptheker 265-266)

Notwithstanding discouragement and even bitter attack from elements within the Abolitionist movement, Frederick Douglass, with Martin R. Delany as co-editor, launched his own newspaper, *The North Star*, in Rochester, N.Y., on December 3, 1847. From this number are taken the following editorials addressed in the first instance, to Negroes and, in the second case, to Abolitionists generally:

To Our Oppressed Countrymen

We solemnly dedicate the "North Star" to the cause of our long oppressed and plundered fellow countrymen. May God bless the undertaking to your good 1 It shall fearlessly assert your rights, faithfully proclaim your wrongs, and earnestly demand for you instant and even-handed justice. Giving no quarter to slavery at the South, it will hold no truce with oppressors at the North. While it shall boldly advocate emancipation for our enslaved brethren, it will omit no opportunity to gain for the nominally free complete enfranchisement. Every effort to injure or degrade you or your cause--originating wheresoever, or with whomsoever--shall find in it a constant, unswerving and inflexible foe. ...

Remember that we are one, that our cause is one, and that we must help each other, if we would succeed. We have drank to the dregs the bitter cup of slavery; we have worn the heavy yoke; we have sighed beneath our bonds, and writhed beneath the bloody lash;-cruel mementoes of our oneness are indelibly marked on our living flesh. We are one with you under the ban of prejudice and proscription--one with you under the slander of inferiority--one with you in social and political disfranchisement. What you suffer, we suffer; what you endure, we endure. We are indissolubly united, and must fall or flourish together. ...

It is scarcely necessary for us to say that our desire to occupy our present position at the head of an Anti-Slavery Journal, has resulted from no unworthy distrust or ungrateful want of appreciation of the zeal, integrity, or ability of the noble band of white laborers in this department of our cause; but, from the sincere and settled conviction that such a Journal, if conducted with only moderate skill and ability, would do a most important and indispensable work, which it would be wholly impossible for our white friends to do for us.

It is neither a reflection on the fidelity, nor a disparagement of the ability of our friends and fellow-laborers, to assert what "common sense affirms and only folly denies," that the man who has *suffered the wrong* is the man to *demand redress*,-that the man STRUCK is the man to CRY OUT-and that he who has *endured the cruel pangs of Slavery* is the man to *advocate Liberty*. It is evident we must be our own representatives and advocates, not exclusively, but peculiarly-not distinct from, but in connection with our white friends. In the grand struggle for liberty and equality now waging, it is meet, right and essential that there should arise in our ranks authors and editors, as well as orators, for it is in these capacities that the most permanent good can be rendered to our cause....