

CHAPTER III

ELABORATE PREPARATIONS FOR THE FUNERAL BY ROCHESTER'S COMMON COUNCIL.

Action by Rochester, N. Y., Common Council.

Special Meeting, February 23, 1895.

Ald. Merton E. Lewis, president of the Board, in the chair.

Present—Aldermen Calihan, McMillan, Green, Adams, Edelman, Ashton, Dewey, Cook, Pauckner, Lewis and Harris—11.

Mayor's Office,
Rochester, N. Y., Feb. 23, 1895.

Theodore S. Pulver, City Clerk:

Sir—You will please call a special meeting of the Common Council for this, Saturday afternoon, at 2.30 o'clock, to take such action as may be necessary and appropriate in connection with the funeral of the Hon. Frederick Douglass, for many years a respected resident of this city.

MERTON E. LEWIS,
Acting Mayor.

Ald McMillan—

Mr. President—I rise to a question of privilege and beg leave to submit the following memorial and resolutions on the death of our former fellow townsman, the Honorable Frederick Douglass.

MEMORIAL.

At his residence in Washington, February 20, 1895, Frederick Douglass, a former resident of Rochester, died, and this Council have met this afternoon to honor his memory.

Frederick Douglass was born in Tuckahoe, near Easton.

Talbot county, Maryland, February 14, 1817. His early boyhood was passed in slavery upon the plantation of Colonel Lloyd. When about nine years of age he learned to read and write; September 3, 1838, he escaped from slavery and took up his residence in New Bedford, Mass., where he was first married. It was here he met and was assisted in his efforts to secure an education by William Lloyd Garrison. In 1841, Mr. Douglass made a speech at an anti-slavery convention at Nantucket which brought him before the attention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society and this society at once employed him as one of its agents; for them he lectured through New England for about four years, upon the subject which he was so eminently qualified by nature and experience to speak. So successful was he that in 1845 he made a tour of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales, receiving marked attention everywhere. Rochester was honored by his making it his home in 1847, and here he resided for the most part until 1870.

When he first settled in Rochester he began the publication of a paper known as the "North Star," an organ devoted to the abolition of slavery, and which he continued a greater part of the time until the emancipation of his race removed the cause for its existence.

Mr. Douglass filled many positions of trust with eminent credit to himself and his country. In 1871 he was appointed assistant secretary to the commission of Santo Domingo and later by President Grant as a member of the Territorial Council of the District of Columbia. In 1872 he was elector at large for the state of New York and the messenger of the Electoral College. From 1876 to 1881 he was United States marshal for the District of Columbia, and recorder of deeds for that district from 1881 to 1886. But it was as an orator and author that Mr. Douglass was perhaps best known from the time when he fired the hearts and zeal of the New Eng-

land abolitionists until his last public appearance a few years since. He was an orator whose oratory was spontaneous, natural and convincing and the citizens of Rochester have not forgotten the occasions when he held as if by magic, the large audiences which would congregate to hear him. As an author he achieved distinction by his works: "Narrative of My Experience in Slavery," "My Bondage and My Freedom," published here in 1855, and "Life and Times of Frederick Douglass."

Rochester is proud that he is one of her sons and that he will rest in her beautiful city of the dead.

In his life and life work, our youth can find much worthy of emulation and its lesson to all cannot be lost.

"Whoe'er amidst the sons
Of reason, valor, liberty, and virtue
Displays distinguish'd merit, is a noble
Of Nature's own creating."

Resolved, That we do hereby tender to the family and relatives of Honorable Frederick Douglass our sympathy in their affliction, and that this memorial be spread upon the minutes of this Council, a copy of this memorial and these resolutions be sent to his family, and further,

Resolved, That the family of Mr. Douglass be requested to permit his body to lie in state in the City Hall on the day of the funeral, and further

Resolved, That this Common Council attend the funeral services in a body.

Adopted.

Ald. Pauckner moved that a committee of five members of the Council be appointed to make arrangements for the funeral of Mr. Douglass. Carried.

The Chair appointed as such committee: Aldermen Pauckner, Adams, Ashton, Green and Harris.

On motion of Ald. Dewey the board then adjourned.

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

The committee of the Common Council, consisting of Aldermen Pauckner, Green, Harris, Adams and Ashton, met at Mayor Lewis' office February 25 and made arrangements for the funeral. All members of the committee were present as was Mayor Lewis and several interested in the completion of the arrangements. Ald. Pauckner acted as chairman.

The first business to come before the meeting was the selection of a church in which the funeral exercises should be held, Joseph Farley and Frank Van Doorn were present in behalf of Plymouth Church congregation, to offer that house of worship, in which to hold the services. It was stated that inasmuch as Mr. Douglass had attended Plymouth Church when in Rochester, that it would be appropriate to hold the services at that church. The committee decided to have the funeral services in Central Church at 2 o'clock February 26. Rev. W. C. Gannett officiated at the funeral.

J. W. Thompson appeared at the meeting and stated that the Douglass League desired to act as a guard of honor in conducting the remains to the city hall and later to Mt. Hope cemetery. The offer was accepted. Mr. Thompson was asked to appoint the active and honorary bearers which he did.

These gentlemen were appointed as active bearers: Charles P. Lee, William Allen, A. H. Harris, R. J. Jeffrey, R. L. Kent, H. A. Spencer, F. S. Cunningham and Charles B. Lee. Mr. Thompson also appointed William Oliver, Hon. H. S. Greenleaf, J. K. Post and Hon. John Van Voorhis honorary-bearers. Mayor Lewis suggested that several of the ex-Mayors of the city act as honorary bearers and it was decided that the four gentlemen named above and ex-Mayors Henry L. Fish, William Carroll, Richard Curran, Charles W. Briggs, George G. Clarkson and N. C. Bradstreet complete the list.

Superintendent of Police J. P. Cleary entered the meeting

and proposed that four members of the national guard and a like number of policemen act as a guard of honor in the City Hall. Superintendent Cleary also suggested that a cordon of police act as an additional escort from the depot and to the cemetery. It was decided to have the policemen act as an escort and to have four men stationed in the City Hall as a guard of honor. In relation to the national guard it was thought best to confer with Capt. Henderson to ascertain whether they would wish to turn out. All other organizations which wished to march were requested to report to Superintendent Cleary at 6 o'clock that evening, February 24.

It was stated at the committee meeting that Charles Douglass, son of the dead statesman, was captain of a military organization in Washington, and that it would be appropriate for any military companies wishing to be in line to do so. A band was secured to lead the funeral procession and accompany the escort from the station.

Of this committee, Aldermen Adams and Ashton went as far as Canandaigua to meet the train, and accompanied the funeral party to Rochester. At the station the party was met by one of the most imposing gatherings that has ever awaited the arrival of the remains of a private citizen. The Mayor and the Board of Aldermen were there; the Douglass League, a guard of honor from the Eighth Separate Company, and committees from several municipal and other organizations, but, most impressive of all, was the crowd. The people were there and that showed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, what they thought. The crowd, like all the crowds at every gathering place throughout the day, was representative in the highest sense. It included the leading business and professional men of the community; gray-haired citizens, whose life in Rochester dates to the older time when Douglass was here; white and colored children of the present time, and all the classes that intervene in age and character. This crowd

filled the station and its approaches so that it was difficult for those directly connected with the ceremony of reception to make their way to the train.

The party that accompanied the body of the orator from Washington consisted, in part, of Mrs. Frederick Douglass, widow of the celebrated statesman; Messrs. Lewis H. and Charles R. Douglass, sons; Mrs. R. Douglass Sprague, daughter; Misses Estelle and Harriet Sprague, granddaughters, and Joseph H. Douglass, grandson. General John A. Eton and Professor George W. Cook, representing the Howard University, were also present, and Rev. J. H. Chilcote of Asbury Church, Washington. General Eaton was ex-commissioner of education.

As the passengers alighted from the train and moved out of the station the crowd surged in with so much determination that it was all the large force of police on hand could do to keep a way clear for the procession. While it moved, the 54th Regiment Band played a funeral march, and after the casket had been placed in the hearse, the march to the city hall, via North Clinton street, East and West Main streets and the city hall, was begun. First came the 54th Regiment Band, then carriages containing the committee of the Common Council and the remaining members of that body, then the honorary bearers and the active bearers; then the hearse, under the escort of the Douglass League, followed by other carriages containing friends and relatives.

The cortege reached the city hall by way of Fitzhugh street and the casket was placed at the central point of the ground floor, where the main and transverse halls unite. The interior of the building was draped with emblems of mourning and with a profusion of flags, the latter predominating. There was also a profusion of flowers and palms and the effect was beautiful in the extreme.

At the city hall, the custody of the body was given over

to a guard of honor consisting of four members of the 8th Separate Company, under command of a corporal, and four officers of the police department, commanded by a lieutenant.

This is a bare statement of one of the most impressive scenes that has ever been seen in Rochester. All along the line of march the streets were thronged and the crowd stood with bared head, and in silence, as it passed; then as though by common consent the people fell into line and followed on to the city hall to take their turn with the waiting multitude in looking upon the face of the dead. Although everything practical was done to hasten the movements of the crowd it remained undiminished, so far as any one could see, until it became necessary to remove the casket to the church, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

The higher grades of the public schools were dismissed at 10 o'clock, and, in charge of their teachers, passed the dais upon which lay the body of the man, who, when their parents were school children, had been compelled to plead for the right to send his own little ones to the public schools of Rochester, because they were black. The thousands who passed the catafalque, in silent and respectful interest, included many who were unborn during the stirring days of the active life of Douglass and other thousands who did not set foot upon American soil until after it was all done. But, with one and all, there was the same evidence of sorrow and of respect.

CHAPTER IV

FUNERAL CEREMONIES AT CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

When the time came for the ceremonies at the church, it was necessary to force a way to the casket and to clear the building. The line of march was formed on Fitzhugh street with the right resting on West Main street and was, perhaps, the most imposing that was ever seen in the city of Rochester to march so short a distance. It was as follows:

Captain McDermott, four lieutenants and forty-eight men from the police drill corps.

54th Regiment Band.

Eighth Separate Company, commanded by Captain Henderson, 65 men.

Mayor M. E. Lewis and members of the Common Council, including the committee.

Police commissioners.

The hearse, followed by the active and honorary bearers and Douglass League, T. E. Platner, commanding, as escort.

The family, relatives and friends of the deceased.

The active bearers were the following members of Douglass League: Charles P. Lee, William Allen, A. H. Harris, R. J. Jeffrey, R. L. Kent, H. A. Spencer, F. S. Cunningham and C. B. Lee.

The honorary bearers were: Hon. H. S. Greenleaf, Hon. John Van Voorhis, J. K. Post, William Oliver, E. A. Frost, and ex-Mayors Henry L. Fish, William Carroll and Charles W. Briggs.

The line of march as directed by Superintendent of Police Cleary was through Fitzhugh to Church street to the Central Church. The policemen formed in line at the Church street entrance to the house of worship and the procession entered

at this side and marched down in front where the remains were deposited in front of the altar. Five hundred seats were reserved for the family, relatives, friends and escort.

The procession moved by way of Fitzhugh street, West Main street and Sophia street and stacked arms, the details of the guard of honor accompanying the remains of the dead orator to the church, while the street was held by the company at large.

Long before the procession reached the street, all the seats in the great auditorium, except the 500 reserved for the immediate friends of Mr. Douglass, were filled and the street was thronged with people who would have been glad to obtain admission but could not do so. The casket was placed in front of the platform and was surrounded by the wealth of floral gifts that had come from this city, from Washington, Boston, Mass., and elsewhere. Every seat and every available bit of standing room in the great church was occupied when the services began.

Seated upon the platform were Rev. Dr. H. H. Stebbins, of the Central Church; Rev. Dr. William R. Taylor, of the Brick Church; Rev. Dr. J. P. Sankey, of the United Presbyterian Church; Rev. H. Clay Peepels, of the Park Avenue Baptist Church; Rev. Dr. W. C. Gannett, of the Unitarian Church; Rev. G. W. Peck, of the North Presbyterian Church; Rev. Wesley Ely, of Zion Methodist Church; Rev. Dr. J. E. Mason, presiding elder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the district; Sherman D. Richardson, Miss Mary Anthony and many others. Mayor M. E. Lewis and the aldermanic committee, consisting of Messrs. Pauckner, Harris, Ashton, Adams, Green, McMillan and Superintendent of Police Joseph Cleary also occupied seats on the platform, as representatives of the municipal government.

It is not easy to say anything about the services from first to last, without the danger of growing over-eloquent. The

church full of people that sat or stood through the long service was one that it would be difficult to draw on any occasion, however important, and impossible to bring together upon an occasion of less significance. The last time that the church held such a gathering was when Douglass sat on the platform with President Harrison on the Sunday before the unveiling of the soldiers' monument in May, 1892.

After the procession had passed down the aisle, and the casket had been placed before the altar, Dr. Taylor of the Brick Church, led in the opening prayer. After this Sherman D. Richardson read the following poem:

I saw the slave of Maryland
Upon the soil of freedom stand.
The waves that once the Mayflower bore
Were dashing on New England's shore.
The Stars and Stripes showed Northern will
On breezes from old Bunker Hill,
And as he drank in liberty,
I saw the man from serfdom free.

I saw him like a monarch stand,
With Lincoln's edict in his hand;
With lips infused from heaven's fire,
With thoughts that would all time inspire,
Transfigured on Columbia's sod;
A living type from Freedom's God;
Incarnate soul of Liberty
He stood—A race and land were free.

I saw again God's Pioneer,
In grand repose upon his 'bier.
The lines that showed the reaper's path,
Were softened with death's aftermath.
But yet that face more grandly taught
Of will and power, of battles fought,
Of victories won for Liberty—
The crown at last, the soul was free.

At the conclusion of the poem, and after music by the choir, Miss Mary Anthony, who was one of the warmest and staunchest friends of Mr. Douglass, in his days of trial, read a spirited sketch of his life and work.

Then, after another musical selection, came the address of the day, delivered by Rev. Dr. W. C. Gannett, which was, in part, as follows:

"This is an impressive moment in our city history. There was a man who lived in one of its humbler homes whose name barred him from the doors of the wealthier mansions of our city. This man has come home to a little circle of his best beloved ones. He has come, as it were, alone, and our city has gone forth to meet him at its gates. He has been welcomed for once in the most impressive way. His remains have laid in our city hall. Our school children have looked upon his face, that they may in the future tell their children that they have looked on the face of Frederick Douglass. What a difference! Think of the contrast! What does it all mean? It means two things. It is a personal tribute and it is an impersonal tribute. It is personal tribute to the man who has exemplified before the eyes of all America the inspiring example of a man who made himself. America is the land of opportunities. But not all men in this land can use their opportunities. Here was a man who used to the utmost all the opportunities that America held forth to him and when opportunities were not at hand he made them. Nature gave him birth, nature deprived him of father and almost of mother. He was born seventy-eight years ago, forty years before anti-slavery was heard of as a watchword.

"That was his home, his welcome to the earth. It was heaven to be born a slave in Maryland. He was born at a time when the laws of that state were links to hold the black man to the ground, and you know what the North did in the way of keeping the law which required that fugitives from

slavery should be sent back to bondage. You know what the public opinion in the North was against the slave. You know that Northern law sent back a slave, if he escaped, to his Southern master. He had no school, not even the college of the wood pile to which so many of our Northern statesmen point so often with pride. All the school he knew was the lash with which his cruel master laid on his back with force.

"The kind mistress he had three or four years gave him in her innocence the A, B, C's. A hard master gave him the lash. Both caused him to be Frederick Douglass. Read in his autobiography how the boy made up his mind to obey his master until he was abused unlawfully. Read the story of two hours' combat between the master and slave. He did not hurt his master, but he did not let his master strike him. At the end Douglass was a free man in his soul. He had dared death and nothing else had any terror for him. This was the last flogging Frederick Douglass ever received.

"Then came the escape. He went to a little anti-slavery convention in New England and made a little speech. The next day Douglass found himself famous. New England suddenly discovered that it had discovered an orator and you who heard him knew his eloquence came from his heart. Meanwhile history was making. All the rivers in the great valley to the west run into one. All the streams in national life were running into one stream during the years 1860 and 1861 and that stream was slavery. The war followed. Then history was being made and the war being done, Douglass became an American citizen; he became presidential elector for New York state; Douglass became the honored minister of the United States to Hayti; Douglass became the honored guest in all the North; Douglass became a part of the country's history.

"He is not simply a self-made man, although he was one of the greatest. A man self-made but large hearted. Who ever



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had better opportunity to be great hearted? Who ever needed to be a greater hearted man more than Frederick Douglass? Think of the chronic results for which he labored almost to the end of his life. Notwithstanding that the lash had been lifted from his back, still he encountered shrugs of the shoulders, lifting of the eyebrows and an edging away from his fellow men when he approached them, always under that opportunity of insult.

“His great heart had a chronic forgiveness. The sweetness of his nature grew in the latter part of his life till it touched the features of his face. Charity, ever growing charity, should always accompany our thoughts of Fred Douglass, because his life was charity personified. No sweeter nature could be imagined. How true it is, the word of Emerson: ‘The things of the man of which we visited were once in the dark and the cold.’ There will never be a tribute like this awaiting us when we come to our last day. Yea, and often he lived in the darkness of coldness and insult, to-day we bring him into the sunlight of true appreciation.

“But that was not all. It is not simply a tribute to the man. The personal tribute rises and loses itself in a grander and nobler thought. It becomes transfigured into an impersonal thought. We are in an era of change on a great subject. White people here are honoring a black people. An exception? Yes. Great men are always exceptions. An exception? Yes, but an instance as well, an example of how the world’s feeling is changing. Not only that. I like to think over our 140,000 people of Rochester and pick out the two or three or four who will be called our first citizens twenty or thirty years hence. Very few in Rochester are famous through the North; very few are famous through the nation; very few are famous throughout the world. Yet the papers of two continents had editorials about the man whose remains lie before us. We have but one

bronze monument in our streets. Will the next be that of Fred Douglass, the black man, the ex-slave, the renowned orator, the distinguished American citizen? I think it will be. In and around our soldiers' monument we group the history of war. It is not only the monument of Lincoln, although Lincoln's figure is represented there.. It is the monument of the war.

"The nation to-day, thank God, is not only celebrating its emancipation from slavery, but also its emancipation from the slavery of prejudice and from the slavery of caste and color. Let me end with one great word. It is his word. There are but six words in the sentence and it is one of the great sentences worthy to be painted on church walls and worthy to be included in such a book as the Bible. It is: 'One with God is a majority.' "

A prayer and the pronouncing of the benediction by Dr. H. H. Stebbins closed the services at the church, but the crowd which had gained access to the building joined the hundreds who had lingered outside, and waited until the casket had been placed in the hearse, until the relatives and immediate friends had taken their places and the procession, headed by its cordon of police and by the militia, had taken up its march toward Mt. Hope. The band and the dual escort went only to the gates of the cemetery. Beyond that point the funeral was like that of any other citizen. There was a brief prayer by the Rev. W R. Taylor in the chapel, after which the same clergyman spoke the few words of formal committal to the receiving vault, where the body remained until spring, and was then buried in the family lot, 26, Sec. T.

There was a noticeable increase in the number of arrivals upon incoming local trains on all lines, showing the high esteem in which the great man was held in all this region.

CHAPTER V

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY VARIOUS OFFICIAL BODIES.

BY THE MONUMENT COMMITTEE.

Resolved, That in the death of the Hon. Frederick Douglass, this city sustains the loss of an eminent citizen, whose life and services in behalf of human rights will illumine one of the most interesting and exciting chapters in the history of the nineteenth century. In Rochester his earlier struggles for equality and humanity were commenced. His phenomenal success and honorable career, combined as they were with strict integrity, inspired by unfaltering zeal for his life's mission in behalf of his race, commanding for him, as citizen, patriot, emancipator and statesman, the respect and admiration of the civilized world, unite to render him one of the unique characters in history.

We deem it appropriate that in our city, where he built his first home as a freeman, he should find his last resting place, and that here the last sad rites should be performed over his mortal remains, by interment in the same fair city of the dead where repose so many of his former compatriots.

Recalling the fact that his home in our city commanded a view of Mt. Hope and of the adjacent grounds, now known as Highland Park, we would respectfully suggest to the honorable, the Common Council, and to the Board of Park Commissioners of Rochester, that appropriate action be taken to change the name of that park to Douglass Park, and that we hereby request the co-operation of all to the end that at the earliest practical date, a life size or heroic statue of the distinguished fellow citizen, whose death is so generally deplored, but whose memory we will ever honor, be erected on the loftiest spot therein.

Resolved, That we will attend the funeral of the deceased as a body.

Resolved, That we tender the family of the deceased, dwelling in the shadow of their great sorrow, our heartfelt sympathy.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be communicated to the honorable, the Common Council, and to the Board of Park Commissioners of Rochester.

H. S. GREENLEAF,
C. S. BAKER,
GEORGE A. BENTON,
JOHN W THOMPSON,
HENRY A. SPENCER,
CHARLES P. LEE,
Committee.

BY THE DOUGLASS LEAGUE.

A special meeting of Douglass League, an organization of colored men named in honor of the dead leader, was held at its headquarters last evening. This memorial upon the death of Mr. Douglass was adopted:

Whereas, God in His wisdom has removed from the scenes of an active life our most distinguished brother member, Hon. Frederick Douglass; and

Whereas, We feel that his death leaves a vacancy which cannot be filled; therefore

Resolved, That by the death of Mr. Douglass this organization loses its most illustrious member, the race a trusted friend and counselor, the country one of its greatest orators, an able diplomat, a wise statesman and a patriotic citizen, and the whole civilized world a shining light.

Resolved, That we recognize in him a leader whose ability was of the highest order, his wisdom far reaching and in whose integrity we sincerely believed and implicitly trusted.

Resolved, That we will ever honor his name and cherish

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his memory and hand down to our children and children's children the example he has set for their emulation.

Resolved, That when we take in consideration the condition which surrounded his birth, and pursued him in his flight toward the polar star, still harrassed in the land of suppressed freedom until his manumission was purchased with gold, yet followed during his whole life by an unjust, unreasonable prejudice, which had its birth in slavery; the severity of which prejudice was diminished only by his intellectual power and force of character, may be truly called one of the world's greatest men.

Resolved, That in memory of our departed brother, the headquarters of the league be draped and each member wear a badge of mourning for the space of thirty days.

Resolved, That these resolutions be recorded on the minutes, published in the daily papers and a copy sent to the heart-stricken family.

Resolved, That we extend our sincere condolence to the sorrowing family in this their great bereavement, and that we attend the funeral in a body.

J. W. THOMPSON,
A. H. HARRIS,
R. L. KENT,

Committee.

BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION.

At a meeting of the Board of Education the following memorial was adopted:

In the death of Hon. Frederick Douglass the people of this country sustain a great loss and the people of his race will miss a staunch friend and a noble example. Upright in manhood, the strength and purity of his personality will command respect and honor in all future time.

As a former citizen of Rochester, as a friend and patron of our public schools, Mr. Douglass will be personally re-

membered by our citizens with great pride. It is well to honor the memory of that distinguished citizen whose life will serve as an example to the rising generation of sterling and stalwart Americans. He was generous and kind; he never betrayed a friend or a cause and in his personal life he was a distinguished example; be it

Resolved, That this board record its appreciation of his great services to his country and the cause of freedom.

As a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased orator the pupils of the Free Academy and of the upper grades of the grammar schools visited City Hall and viewed the remains.

BY THE STATE ASSEMBLY.

Hon. James M. E. O'Grady, of Rochester, introduced and the Assembly adopted the following:

Resolved, That the Assembly hears with regret of the sudden and unexpected death of the Hon. Frederick Douglass of Washington, born in slavery, thrown upon his own resources at an early date, self educated entirely, and endowed with great natural ability he successfully filled the positions of orator, editor, diplomat and statesman.

His death removes one of the foremost citizens and most striking figures of the republic as well as the most distinguished member of his race of modern times.

As a former resident of this state and who has been signally honored by our citizens, it is fitting that we should take public notice of his death.

CHAPTER VI.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF THE MOVEMENT TO ERECT A MONUMENT.

At a meeting of Eureka Lodge, No. 36, F. and A. M., held in the city of Rochester, N. Y., November 20, 1894, after making a short address, J. W. Thompson made a motion that a committee be appointed for the purpose of erecting a monument in memory of the Afro-American soldiers and sailors who had fallen in the Civil War. Mr. Thompson was elected chairman of the committee and authorized to appoint others to act with him. At the next meeting he announced the following committee: Hon. George A. Benton, Hon. Charles S. Baker, Hon. William Purcell, Hon. H. S. Greenleaf, treasurer, Hon. Richard Curran, Messrs. R. L. Kent, Thomas E. Platner, H. A. Spencer, C. J. Vincent, Leon J. Du Bois and F. S. Cunningham. Before the committee had a meeting the chairman sent a communication to Hon. Frederick Douglass in regard to the project. In answer the following was received:

Mr. J. W. Thompson: Anacostia, D. C., Dec. 3, 1894.

My Dear Sir—I am more than pleased with the patriotic purpose to erect in Rochester a monument in honor of the colored soldiers who, under great discouragements, at the moment of the national peril volunteered to go to the front and fight for their country—when assured in advance that neither by our own government nor that of the confederates would they be accorded the equal rights of peace or of war. The colored soldier fought with a halter about his neck, but he fought all the same. I shall be proud if I shall live to see the proposed monument erected in the city of Rochester, where the best years of my life were spent in the service of our people—and which to this day seems like my home.

Yours very truly, FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

December 21, the same year, appeals were made for funds in all of the city newspapers and splendid editorials appeared approving the effort to honor the memory of the heroes in granite and bronze, those who died for their country's flag. The movement met with some opposition from unexpected quarters among the colored people, who claimed that one soldiers' monument represented all who were killed in the Civil War. Chairman Thompson did not see it in that light, as he stated at a meeting held in Zion's Church. "I have visited the monument in Washington's Square," said he, "and made an examination of the bronze figures. The features of three represent the American white soldier and sailor, one the Irish soldier and one the German, while the Afro-American is not represented in features." The next day after this meeting Hon. H. S. Greenleaf, Hon. Charles S. Baker and Chairman Thompson met in Mr. Baker's office and decided to erect a shaft in memory of the soldiers and sailors and place upon it a bronze statute in honor of Frederick Douglass. The committee then entered upon its duties and the soliciting of funds began for the purpose.

On the night of February 20, 1895, news reached the city that Frederick Douglass died suddenly at his Anacostia home. Mr. Thompson made the announcement in the morning newspapers that the monument would be erected in memory of the late Frederick Douglass. In 1896 and 1897 the financial condition of the country was in a worse state than it had been since 1873. Money was hard to collect. The most of the committee after a short struggle turned in their books or refused to try longer to do anything, but the chairman declined to give up the work, and in 1897 he appointed as members of the committee Mrs. R. Jerome Jeffrey, T. Thomas Fortune, New York Age; Bishop Alexander Walters, N. J.; Thomas H. Barnes, Olean, N. Y.; E. R. Spaulding, Owego, N. Y.; Benjamin F. Cleggett, Geneva, N. Y.;

Theodore Duffin, Geneva, N. Y.; Rev. James E. Mason, D. D., Rochester, N. Y. With these newly appointed members to the committee, J. W. Thompson continued his effort to raise the needed \$10,000 to complete the work, and the grand completion and unveiling was the proudest day of his life.

MR. J. W. THOMPSON BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY.

Mr. Thompson appeared before the finance committee at Albany, N. Y., January 24, 1897, and asked an appropriation of \$5,000 for the Monument Fund. Mr. Thompson said: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen:

To stand within the walls of this capitol building the very essence of architectural beauty and elegance, the wealthiest and most influential state in the union, to address this honorable and respected committee of the Assembly of the state of New York on this occasion, for a few brief moments asking an appropriation to aid us in erecting a monument to the memory of the late Frederick Douglass, in the city of Rochester, N. Y., where he resided for nearly forty years, I esteem it the honor of my life.

I shall make no effort, however, to speak for this ex-slave leader and statesman who has fallen by the will of the Almighty, after reaching the highest round in the ladder of fame. Last Friday as I stood at the foot of his grave, watching the six United States flags placed there by myself last Decoration day, and as they were being tossed by the winter's wind, I said to myself the remains of Frederick Douglass wrapped in the narrow confinement of the grave, resting under our National flags in their magnificent silence, are more eloquent than any words that could be used by me to-day, I shall therefore give a few reasons why the state should make the appropriation asked for.

Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery in the year 1838. He went to New Bedford, Mass., and worked in a ship yard

for nearly two years. There the *Liberator*, a newspaper edited by William Lloyd Garrison, fell into his hands. He said the sentiments expressed in that paper against slavery were the sentiments of his own soul. He left that city and went to Europe, and on his return to Rochester, N. Y., he established a newspaper known as the "North Star," in the interest of freedom and justice, by which he created a sentiment against human slavery that caused hundreds of thousands of New York's bravest men to declare that they would march to the front and put down the horrible and wretched curse of slavery. They went with thousands from other states but the work was not accomplished until the Afro-American was adorned with the uniform of the United States and marched side by side with their brothers to the field of battle in defence of the American flag, and in this Frederick Douglass was an important factor. He traveled in every state this side of the Mason and Dixon line soliciting volunteers to preserve our glorious Union. In this he declared as a citizen of the United States and the great state of New York, I shall do my duty. He was chosen by the citizens of Rochester to deliver a Fourth of July oration in the year 1855. Later on he came very near being elected a member of Assembly from the city of Rochester. He was a great orator, and a prominent figure in the history of our state; he was a Presidential elector from this state; he attended many National Conventions and received votes for the highest office in the gift of the American people. He was Minister to Hayti; he was United States Marshal under President Hayes; he was Recorder of Deeds of the District of Columbia. So great was his ability and his high character that at his death the State Assembly adjourned in respect to his memory; the 26th day of February, 1895, his remains were received in Rochester in the honored presence of the Mayor and Common Council of that city and thousands of

citizens with uncovered heads; his remains lay in state in the City Hall, schools were closed that teachers and scholars might view for the last time the picturesque form of Frederick Douglass.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if you will grant us the appropriation asked we will add to that the \$2,500 already pledged; we will solicit the balance and unveil the monument of Frederick Douglass very shortly, and will place those features and form in bronze that these same children and the people of the world may know that the citizens of the Empire State regard a man and a statesman as such, regardless of his color or previous condition. Now, sir, grant our appeal and gladden the hearts of millions of our citizens; grant this appeal and we shall rear a monument which shall testify that we are not unmindful of him and his noble work. Far beyond that—by the erection of such a memorial we may leave a witness which shall speak long after our tongues are hushed, a witness whose silent testimony shall be eloquent, which shall be a inspiration for generations to come, inciting American manhood to love of country; to unconquerable devotions to a great cause, telling our boys that the humbleness of birth is no insurmountable barrier to eminence, that all doors swing open to those who keep their heart right, and give themselves with unremitting toil and high purpose to the work which lies before them.

Happy am I to speak for his monument, and happy, thrice-happy, will be those who by your recommendation will be given an opportunity to vote for this appropriation.

THE BILL AS PASSED FEB. 3, 1897.

The bill, changed by the Finance Committee from \$5,000 to \$3,000, was introduced by W. W. Armstrong, as follows: An ACT making an appropriation to assist in the erection of a monument to the memory of the late Frederick Douglass, at his former place of residence within this state.

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The sum of three thousand dollars is hereby appropriated out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated for the purpose of assisting in the erection of a monument to the memory of the late Frederick Douglass at the city of Rochester, N. Y., his former place of residence within this state for which contributions are now being publicly solicited of the citizens of this state by the colored people, and the comptroller is hereby authorized to pay the same to the committee having the same in charge whenever it shall be satisfactorily shown by such committee that the collectible subscriptions for such purpose together with the sum hereby appropriated will be sufficient to purchase and erect such monument.

Sec. 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

The bill as amended passed in the Assembly and Senate unanimously and was signed by Governor Frank S. Black. The whole sum was paid to Chairman Thompson during August and September, 1898.

THE ROLL OF HONOR.

The names of those who donated their services to help raise the funds by assisting in entertainments were: Miss Susan B. Anthony, Miss Mary E. Sampson, Rev. Anna Shaw, Philadelphia; Mrs. Victoria E. Mathews, New York; Prof. Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee, Ala.; Hon. J. M. E. O'Grady; Miss Florence Sprague; Mrs. R. Jerome Jeffrey, Mrs. J. W. Thompson; Col. J. S. Graham; Col. N. P. Pond; Col. Sherman D. Richardson; Mrs. A. E. Stockton; Ludwig Schenck; Frank Mandeville; Miss May Lepeon; Miss Olive Franklin; Miss Maude Bannister; Miss Marion Curtis; J. F. Marshall; Prof. James H. Cash; Arthur Coleman; J. Frank Washington; J. W. Thompson; D. L. Ainsworth; Miss Ma-

line Thomas; Miss Ella M. Young; Miss Carrie Sprague; Thomas H. Barnes; Miss Pearl Fundy; Elliott Sprague.

The juveniles took part in helping to build the monument by presenting a little drama entitled "The Ten Virgins," taken from incidents found in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew. The bride was Mary Burks, and the groom, Edward Buckingham. The ten virgins were: Pauline L. Thompson, Emma Miller, Gladys Myers, Emma Gibbs, Kittie Mason, Elsie Townes, Gertrude A. Thompson, Vera Burks, Ethel Gilbert, LaBell M. Kent, Chriselda Cash, Abbie Franklin.

Much credit is due Messrs. Ira S. Wile and Percival DeW Oviatt, two prominent young men of Rochester, N. Y., for their efforts to raise the sum necessary to take up the note that had been given the Smith Granite Company by John W. Thompson, chairman of the committee, for \$2,000. The entertainment took place at the Lyceum Theater February 20, 1899, but less than \$200 was realized. The participants of the effort were some of the best local talent, among them being Mrs. O. W. Moore, elocutionist; University of Rochester Mandolin Club; the Cedar Hill Quartette; Henry J. Schlegel, soloist; George E. Fisher; Charles E. Van Laer; Charles R. Osgood, soloist; Robert P. Levis; Richard Sutherland; Walter W. Arnold; George P. Culp, and M. S. Taylor.

The patronesses were Mrs. R. Sibley, Mrs. W. E. Hoyt, Mrs. C. W. Dodge, Mrs. W. Eastwood, Mrs. W. H. Montgomery, Mrs. W. S. Little, Mrs. F. S. Newell, Mrs. Joseph O'Connor and Mrs. Martin W. Cooke.

This entertainment for so noble a cause took place just four years to the very day after the death of the statesman for whose monument the fund was to be applied. It was a notable fact that the night was the coldest of the winter which had much to do with the small attendance.

ACTION BY A. M. E. ZION CONFERENCE, JUNE 4, 1898.

J. H. Anderson, D. D., offered the following resolutions which were unanimously approved:

Whereas, We have heard with pleasure from Mr. J. W. Thompson, of Rochester, N. Y., that the proposed Douglass monument to be erected in Rochester is an accomplished fact so far as the collection of funds is concerned, there having been appropriated \$3,000 by the state of New York, \$1,000 by the Haytien government and about \$2,000 raised by his own efforts, thus there being about \$6,000 raised of the \$7,000 necessary to erect the monument; therefore,

Resolved, That we heartily commend the energy, tact and successful efforts of Mr. Thompson, and that the New York Annual Conference of the A. M. E. Zion Church, of which Frederick Douglass was an honored member, contribute \$100.00 to this highly commendable enterprise in which is involved the interests of the entire negro race in America.