

#### 1844. Fifth Annual Convention of New York Negroes (Aptheker 244-245)

Indicative of the unflagging efforts of Negroes for full suffrage rights are the following resolutions adopted at the fifth convention of New York Negroes, held in Schenectady, September 8-20, 1844. Eighteen cities were represented with eighty-four delegates, including several women.

Whereas, in a republic its great and distinctive feature is the "consent of the people," they signifying approbation *for* or their dissent *from* such rules and laws as have being by the exercise of their voting power,- and where as a numerous minority of the people of the State of New York (viz: the colored portion thereof) are not permitted fairly to vote and are as a consequence governed without their consent, therefor

*Resolved*, That for the completion of the feature of Republicanism in our state government hereabove instanced, we are called upon by every motive of self political emancipation to adopt all lawful and energetic means to secure an equally free exercise of the suffrage; and the majority of the people of the state are bound, in order to be consistent with their professions, to alter that Anti-Republican clause in our constitution which restricts us in the exercise of the franchise, and thereby render the state just and impartial in this essential feature of the Democratic governments.

*Resolved*, That our brethren throughout the State be requested to commence immediately circulating petitions, praying the Legislature to extend to the colored citizens of New York the right of suffrage.

*Resolved*, That the delegates from each country be a committee to circulate petitions in their districts, and that they forward them to Legislature at an early period of their session, or to the Central Committee\* by the first of January next.

*Minutes of the Fifth Annual Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of New York, (Troy, 1844). Copy in Columbia University Library.*