

work hard, but do not get tired or out of patience. I stay till near 6 o'clock every night hearing Latin and Greek. My boys own they like me better for being so strict with them, and say they will take it patiently if I have to cuff them. — [*Autumn of 1847.*]

I have just come home from school. No good compositions yet, so I wrote one myself, trimming up some of my scholars for their habits in school. I don't know as they will take the hint; if not, I shall try to make it plainer. I had a very quiet school. Formerly they all busied and amused themselves in cutting up capers at such times; now they all sit quite still and attend to the exercises of the school. I have punished none, or scarcely punished, and when I use any severity I take care to make them feel that it is not so much for what they have done as to make them remember to do better next time. To give you an idea of how it has been here, I can tell you a short story. The son of a principal merchant here came to school a few days week before last. Last week I did not see him; this week I learned that he brought his dinner every day to his father's store and went there to eat it at noon, though he did not come to school. So Monday I wrote to his father, telling him that his son did not come to school, and that I feared he was playing truant. Tuesday morning his mother came to see me. She felt very badly; said all the boys used to play truant; that he promised now to do better, and asked me, for him, not to expose him. So now I consider him cured. My boys say he has always staid out when he pleased, and that they used to do the same. I have cured them of their filthy habits, too; the school-room is now kept clean, and nothing at all thrown on the floor to defile it. Now I begin to take some comfort in school, — but, oh, when I have you to be with me, how we shall enjoy it! I love to love you and to be loved by you; 'tis the joy of my life. I love my scholars, and feel a pleasure when the little girls come to meet me and take me by the hand, as some of them almost always do. I feel pleased to see that the boys all brighten up at my approach; but when I think of you and our love, then my heart bounds. — [*October 24, 1847.*]

THE "COLOR LINE" IN HIS SCHOOL.

I suppose the abolition question will have to come up here and that I shall be called upon to sustain the whole burden upon my own shoulders. Hitherto I have exercised all the prudence that even your father could recommend. I have not discussed the question even among our own family, — not desiring to introduce it, and not being called upon by any circumstances to express my opinion. I have avoided all religious discussions, and have contented myself with maintaining by word and manner those general sentiments of religious obligation to which all not inclined to evil can subscribe. I have been guilty of no rashness, and have attracted no observation. I mean to continue in the same course, — neither seeking nor shunning an opportunity to declare my opinions; but it seems caution will not keep me above difficulty in this matter.

Henry Booth* called on me a few nights since, and inquired what I should do if colored children came to school. He said a negro, a man of property and intelligence, who was trying to bring up his children so as to make men of them, had called upon him to complain of the prejudice which shuts the dark-faced children of God from the enjoyment of those means which God designed for all. He could send his children to none of the schools, because of this prejudice, and there were not negro children enough to maintain separate schools. He wanted to know of Booth what I would do if he sent them to me.

Booth told me it might cause an excitement; it might cause many parents to take their children out; it might break up the school.

Immediately all our plans of happiness shot through my head; I saw them all dashed to the ground at one blow, and the period of our union postponed to an indefinite future; for, if I fail here, what am I to do? Where shall we find a home?

On the other hand, I saw our brethren groping in ignorance, groveling in low debasement, unable to rise to the light which we enjoy, because they are crushed by this spirit of ferocious hate, without a friend and without a comforter, shut from the steamboat, the railroad car, from the school and college, from the falsely named house of God, or only admitted there to be reminded of their degradation by being consigned to the negro-pew. Yea, even their hope of heaven is to be let in at some back door, and never admitted to the throne in the presence of the fairerskinned saints.

I saw their lot as Fred Douglas feels it, as every negro of fine feelings and keen sensibility is compelled to feel it every day of his life, amid a generation of Christians in name and hyenas in heart. I answered, of course, that I am no critic of skins; that I teach all who come to receive my instructions, and who conduct themselves in such a manner as to promote the ends of the institution; that I never can or will give way to this inhuman and infernal prejudice, — no, not for one hour!

If I am compelled to relinquish my situation here because I cannot sell myself to the skin-aristocrats to help them in heaping contempt upon those whom God loves as well as he does you and me, — why, then so be it, so be it!

Henry approved of my resolution, as indeed no noble man could avoid doing. I know, dearest, you will approve of it too. You could never give me all of that great heart if I were so unworthy of you as to forget my principles, and unite with tyrants in contempt for our brethren; you could love me no longer if I were once untrue to myself, as I never mean to be. I will anticipate your caution, your injunction of prudence; and as I know that many words stir up strife, I will say not a word till the time comes, and then not one word more than is necessary. I hope to avoid all serious difficulty. If God wants me here, he will take care of me and keep me here. — [*Towanda, October 31, 1847.*]

* Now Judge Booth, of Chicago, and for many years at the head of the Law School there.