

*The Remonds of
Salem, Massachusetts:
A Nineteenth-Century
Family Revisited*

DOROTHY BURNETT PORTER

HISTORIC SALEM, founded in 1626 by Roger Conant, contributed in a large measure to the development of the Massachusetts commonwealth and the American nation as a whole. Conant built the first house on a spot now on Essex Street, almost opposite the town market.¹ As a center of commerce and the mother of many great men, Salem was considered the most important seaport town in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Salem also provided the setting for the activities of a most remarkable black family of that period and locale. The Remonds, a unique free family of ten, were intricately woven into the social and historic fabric not only of Salem but of all New England.

In 1790, Salem was the sixth largest city in the United States, with a little under 8,000 inhabitants.² Salem merchants contributed to its mixed population, since their ships touched the shores of Arabia, China, India, Africa, and other countries, from which they returned bringing back many foreigners of

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¹ Frances Diane Robotti, *Chronicles of Old Salem, a History in Miniature* (Salem, Mass., 1948), p. 15.

² Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1789-1860* (Boston, 1961), p. 79.

various backgrounds and complexions. New Englanders mingled with Englishmen, Portuguese, Frenchmen, Swedes, Germans, Irishmen, Canadians, and with the dark-complexioned people from the Mediterranean countries as well as from the islands in the Pacific and Atlantic.³ Salem merchants, after the Revolutionary War, utilized the vessels they had built for privateering to engage in vigorous commercial relations with China, Arabia, India, Africa, various countries of Europe, and with other American colonies, to which they acted as provisioners as well as buyers, relying on their own capacity to dispose of merchandise obtained by wholesale or retail from their own shops in Salem.

From the middle of the seventeenth century, Negroes, though few in number, were not only present as slaves, occasionally advertised for sale or mentioned in wills, but also as free persons of color. According to Sidney Perley, in 1680 in Salem 'there were considerable number of slaves here, Negroes and West Indians.' In 1764, Salem had only 117 Negroes, both slave and free, but by 1800 there were 308 Negroes out of a total population of 9,149.⁴

The House of Representatives of Massachusetts was informed on September 13, 1776, that two Negro men taken from the high seas had been brought into the state as prisoners and were to be sold at Salem on the seventeenth by public auction.⁵ The Salem town directory of 1837, which lists Negro heads of families by name and trade, included only seventy-one individuals under the heading 'People of Color,' a number that could not have included all the Negroes at that time in Salem. The sixth official census for 1840 estimates that there were 292

³ Barbara M. Solomon, 'The Growth of the Population in Essex County, 1850-1860,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 95(1959):82.

⁴ Sidney Perley, *The History of Salem, Massachusetts*, 3 vols. (Salem, Mass., 1926), 2: 290; Claude M. Fuess, 'Essex County Politics a Century Ago,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 95(1959):104; *The Diary of William Bentley*, 4 vols. (Salem, Mass., 1914), 3:582. See also Solomon, 'Growth of the Population,' pp. 82-103.

⁵ Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1932), 3:77-78.

free colored persons out of a total free white population of 14,791. By 1860, Salem had 277 Negroes out of a total population of 22,252.⁶ It is difficult to get accurate numbers for the Negro population since some were listed in the census schedules as foreign born and also because only heads of families were included. In some of the town's vital records listings are incomplete. Where no color is specified, all are usually listed as white; in a few cases, colored are entered under both lists even when colored and white persons are included in separate sections. In the early records, no great care was taken to list Indians or West Indians with whom Negroes intermixed.

As in other cities, Salem Negroes had organized themselves in 1805 into 'The Sons of African Society' for 'mutual benefit of each other behaving ourselves at all times as true and faithful citizens of the Commonwealth in which we live and we take no one into the Society who shall commit injustice or outrage against the laws of this Country.' On March 18, 1806, Capt. Gen. Sabe Derby, the secretary, announced that the first anniversary of the society would be held on the following Thursday. A procession was to form at the home of the treasurer and proceed to Washington Hall where services would be held. Mr. Webb Saston of the Methodist Society at Lynn was to deliver the address. A collection was to be taken up for the benefit of the society. Processions comprised one of the society's regular activities. Typically, when Robert Freeman, a member who had been a servant called Mingo, died, the members participated in a long, well-conducted funeral procession, with music, on June 24, 1806. Freeman had been brought to America by Capt. Jacob Crowninshield and held by him as his servant until the Revolutionary War.⁷

In 1796, primarily as a result of John Jay's treaty with Great Britain, ships trading in the East were subjected to the regula-

⁶ Solomon, 'Growth of the Population,' p. 88.

⁷ *Salem Gazette*, March 18, 1806; Joseph B. Felt, *Annals of Salem*, 2 vols. (Salem, Mass., 1849), 2:420; Bentley, *Diary*, 3:237.

tions of the East India Company, which somewhat curtailed their activities in India. Thus, Salem merchants looked to the West Indies for trade and, in turn, supplied much food to those islands. The *Salem Gazette* for November 16, 1798, carried advertisements for 'Trinidad sugar,' 'Port-au-Prince molasses,' 'good 3d proof St. Vincent rum,' 'Molasses Jamaican spirits,' and 'Surinam cotton.' Although war was not declared against France, a state of war actually existed on the seas.⁸ French privateers frequently captured Salem vessels and carried them to West Indian ports where both vessels and cargo were condemned under one of the decrees of the Directory. Therefore, Salem ships were half-fighters and half-traders.

An obscure incident of this quasi-war between the United States and France occurred early in 1797 when the brigantine *Six Brothers*, owned by Isaac and John Needham of Salem, set sail on April 29, 1797, from Martinique to Salem and was captured by the French privateer *Leoradie*. The ship was convoyed to Guadeloupe and there condemned on May 19, 1797, under a decree of the Directory dated January 22, 1797. On July 25, 1798, the brig *Six Brothers* was released by a letter of marque and was on its homeward voyage to Salem, from Curaçao via Saint Eustacia. It arrived in Beverly, Massachusetts, on August 24, 1798, and in Salem two weeks later.⁹

Evidence has not yet been found to show how a young colored lad managed to obtain passage to Salem on the brig *Six Brothers*, unattended by an adult, during those turbulent days in the West Indies when Salem merchants were constant

⁸ Morison, *Maritime History*, p. 175.

⁹ *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi War between the United States and France*. Published under the direction of the Honorable Claude A. Swanson, secretary of the Navy. Prepared by the Office of Naval Records and Library Navy Department, under the supervision of Capt. Dudley W. Knox (Washington, D.C., 1935); Rayford W. Logan, 'The Negro in the Quasi War, 1798-1800,' *The Negro History Bulletin* 14 (1951):128. Saint Eustatius, in the Dutch Antilles, was known as the 'Golden Rock' in the 1700s. Called *Statia* by its 1,400 inhabitants, it became a prosperous clearinghouse for merchandise shipped from Europe to the New World. See Werner Bamberger, 'Ship out of New York Celebrates St. Eustatius Bicentennial Event,' *New York Times*, January 2, 1977.

prey to French and English privateers. The date John Remond left Curaçao is documented by his own statement. John's mother had given him an 'old fashioned round bottle of Schiedam gin' the day he left Curaçao via Stacia, probably to guard against illness or misfortune. John placed a manuscript note around the bottle, in which he wrote, 'Presented to me by my mother the day I sailed on the 25th of July 1798, on the letter of marque, brig *Six Brothers*, John Needham, Master, Nathaniel Ingersoll, Supercargo, arrived in Beverly in August.'¹⁰ It has not been determined how he boarded the ship. It is certain that he arrived safely in Salem along with the ship's cargo and with the single purpose, as he later stated, 'for schooling.'

The Alien and Sedition Law of June 25, 1798, required that all persons entering the United States should be listed by custom officials. John is recorded as 'Vonreman, age 10, height 4'5, from Curaçao, complexion black.' Vonreman should probably have been written 'Van reman,' since the population of the island of Curaçao was largely Dutch.¹¹

On the ship's arrival in Salem, John Needham entrusted the youth to the care and supervision of his brother Isaac, who owned a bakery then located on High Street near Summer Street. Isaac employed John as his delivery boy. Bread from his bakery was much in demand for home use and by the ships coming into and leaving the port of Salem.

At the time that John Remond immigrated into Salem so-

¹⁰ Remond Papers, Essex Institute, Salem, Mass. In 1795, a slave insurrection occurred in Curacao, leaving social conditions in the island unstable, particularly for the free Negro population. This may have been a reason why John Remond's mother approved of his leaving home. A. F. Paula, 'From Slave Revolution to Slave Laws' (Paper based on source materials published in 1794 under the title *1795 De Slavenopstand op Curacao*).

¹¹ 'Passenger Arrivals at Salem and Beverly, Mass., 1798-1800,' Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of Customs. Record Group 36, National Archives; 'Alien Passengers—"Brig Six Brothers,"' *New England Historical and Genealogical Register* 106(1952):207; *Ship Registers of the District of Salem and Beverly, Massachusetts, 1789-1900*, copied by A. Frank Hitchings and annotated by Stephen Willard Phillips (Salem, Mass., 1906), p. 173. This entry reads, 'Six Brothers, bgtne, 150 tons, Stonington, Conn., 1793. Reg. Oct. 27, 1796. John Needham, Isaac Needham, owners; John Needham, Master.'

ciety, Negroes in Salem were occupationally employed as gardeners, chimney sweeps, barbers, hairdressers, oystermen, laborers, clothes' cleaners, mariners, stablers, and fish vendors; some maintained boarding houses or were servants for the well-to-do families in which some of them had been slaves until the Revolution. Negroes 'got religion,' and were baptized and 'dipt.' Births, marriages, and deaths were recorded for many. They died of dropsy, old age, smallpox, drowning, and other causes. The elderly and infirm were taken to the almshouse where they eventually died. A smallpox epidemic at the time of John's arrival hospitalized many at the pesthouse, where victims either recovered or died.¹²

Between 1804 and 1820, many Negro families were living at the Salem end of the turnpike that had opened for travel from Salem to Boston on September 22, 1803.¹³ Their neighborhoods were given such nicknames as 'Little Africa' or 'New Guinea.' Many of these African people were once slaves in Salem. One record declares that Mumford, 'Chief of the tribe along with Portsmouth, Newport and Tim Piper were best known of those living on the right side of the turnpike; while Prince Savage, an intelligent and highly respected black man lived on the left side.' The votes of these Negroes were sought by both political parties, the Federalists and the Republicans (Democrats) who had employed 'wire pullers' to influence them. One writer recalls that 'the Federalists had John Remond, later the noted caterer, and York Morris, waiter and father of Robert Morris, Boston's first colored lawyer, and the Democrats, Prince Farmer and Mumford.'¹⁴

John Remond, anxious to improve his lot above that of other

¹² *Salem Directory and City Register Containing the Names of the Inhabitants, Their Occupations, Places of Business and Residences* (Salem, 1837), pp. 116-17. There are sixty-five names of people of color and their occupations.

¹³ Robotti, *Chronicles of Old Salem*, p. 50.

¹⁴ Henry M. Brooks, 'Some Localities about Salem' (Paper read at a meeting of Essex Institute), *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 31(1894-95):114-15; Fred Gannon, *Nicknames and Neighborhoods, An Album of Old Pictures of Old Salem* (Salem, n.d.), p. 13.

people of his color in Salem, set off for Boston after his arrival to learn the barbering and hairdressing trade, in which many Negroes in the early decades of the nineteenth century were gainfully employed. While in Boston, he also acquired some practical knowledge of the catering business, most probably as a result of having met Nancy Lenox, his future wife, whose 'talents in the culinary art were considerable.'

John Remond returned from Boston in 1805 and was given living quarters in an apartment on the ground floor in the newly built Hamilton Hall, probably as a caretaker for the premises. At the age of nineteen, John began his business of barbering and hairdressing, as well as that of catering. He was referred to as the 'Colored Restaurateur.'¹⁵

Hamilton Hall, which still stands at the corner of Chestnut and Cambridge Streets, was designed by Salem's famous carpenter-architect, Samuel McIntire. It was erected as an assembly hall in 1805, at a cost of \$22,000, a sum that had been secured by an association of wealthy Salem merchants who wished to provide an assembly hall for social activities. Alexander Hamilton's many friends in Salem had appreciated his keen foresight during the trying times after the Revolution, and they expressed their appreciation by naming the building after Hamilton. It has been claimed that the bricks used by McIntire in its structure were brought from England as ballast for the ships of Salem's merchant fleet. The hall where the social events took place had wide Palladian windows, and it is said that the four mirrors that hung on the walls were imported from Russia. The elegant sofas, rugs, chairs, and hangings added to the decor of the plain interior. There were two stores on the ground floor. The one on the south side was occupied by John Remond, who catered most of the affairs held in the hall and also served soup at eleven o'clock each morning on his premises. The other store was occupied by a John Gray, who

¹⁵ Marie E. Fabens, *Hamilton Hall* (Salem, Mass., n.d.), p. 6.

sold groceries. This building was to be the principal scene of activity for John Remond for more than fifty years.

On the Thursday in Christmas week 1805, the first social gathering was held in the hall. A report of the event noted that John's kitchen had 'huge brick ovens and a fireplace where several fowls turned on spits, joints baked in numerous tin ovens built on the hearth, while pies and cakes baked in the ovens built into the chimney. From the musicians gallery on the second floor over the entrance to the ballroom the strains of music provided by Negro fiddlers lent an air of gaiety to the affair. By six o'clock the street was filled with carriages coming and going with matrons wearing headdresses of ostrich plumes; young ladies wore delicate pinas and muslins. Fathers and male escorts wore blue broadcloth coats, knee breeches, silk stockings and ruffled shirts.' As the music streamed out upon the winter air, Rev. Dr. Hopkins of South Church, directly opposite to Hamilton Hall, was said to have strolled back and forth before his church, waving his arms as he shouted, 'Breast to breast and back to back they are dancing their souls down to hell.' This, however, had no effect on the elegant ladies and handsome gentlemen as they enjoyed the evening.¹⁶

John Remond has been described as an aristocrat of his profession. He looked after the lighting and cleaning of the hall, as well as 'provided ladies maids who carefully checked the camels hair shawls worn by the matrons,' so that there was no loss or confusion of their valuable items.¹⁷

Fortunately, John Remond was soon to have a companion and helpmate. John and Nancy Lenox were married by the Reverend Thomas Paul of the African Baptist Church in Boston

¹⁶ 'Hamilton Hall, "An Architectural Gem" on One of the Finest Streets in America' (Salem, Mass., n.d.), a brochure; Richard Hall Weswall, 'Notes on a Building of Chestnut Street,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 75(1939):208; Gerald W. B. Ward, 'The Assembly House,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 111(1975):248; Fabens, *Hamilton Hall*, pp. 5-7, 15; M. C. D. Silsbee, *A Half Century in Salem* (Boston and New York, 1888), pp. 94-100.

¹⁷ Mary Harrod Northend, *Memories of Old Salem Drawn from the Letters of a Great-Grandmother* (New York, 1917), pp. 2, 243.

on October 29, 1807. Their intention of marriage had been published on October 3, 1807. At the time of her marriage, Nancy was an accomplished fancy cake maker, having learned the art in Boston; her skill augured well for the future success of man and wife as professional caterers of Salem and nearby towns in the years to follow.

Born of free Negro parents, Nancy was the fourth of eight children of Cornelius Lenox and Susanna Perry '(or Torey, or Toney),' who were married in Boston in 1780. Her father Cornelius enlisted in the Continental Army on February 6, 1779, and served as a private in Capt. Nathaniel Heath's company until March 1, 1781, when he was discharged. After his discharge, he served for five months under a Sergeant Richards at Watertown. About 1783, Cornelius and Susanna made their home on the bank of the Charles River near the Watertown line in Massachusetts. Records show that although Cornelius's estate was small, as a freeholder in the town of Newton he paid taxes in 1798. The house he owned was valued at \$20, and his two acres of land at \$120. He also purchased a piece of land of two and a half acres 'more or less' lying partly in Newton and in Watertown that had a building standing on it. Gen. William Hull, his neighbor, owned two or three houses, valued at \$552, and fifty acres of land valued at \$1,500. Cornelius's fourth child, who was also named Cornelius, after the war went to Detroit with General Hull, where Hull had been appointed governor of the newly organized Michigan Territory by President Jefferson.¹⁸

The families of Cornelius Lenox and John Remond were closely related, particularly in real estate transactions, family relationships, and in personal affairs. When John and Nancy Remond began their catering and hairdressing businesses, Salem's commercial activity and the social life of those who

¹⁸ Francis Jackson, *A History of the Early Settlement of Newton, County of Middlesex Massachusetts, from 1639 to 1800* (Boston, 1854), p. 363; S. F. Smith, *History of Newton, Massachusetts* (Boston, 1880), p. 312.

were its leading citizens were both flourishing. John was in constant demand for public and private affairs. The Salem Assemblies, held in Hamilton Hall after 1805, had become the pivotal occasion of a social life that now visibly aspired to those luxurious modes of social conduct consistent with affluence and national prestige.

Remond's presence in the newly built Hamilton Hall in 1805 cannot at this time be completely explained, but his prominence and authority later as chief caterer and provisioner for all the major social occasions held there was a result of arrangements mutually satisfactory to the Board of Managers of Hamilton Hall and himself. There is every reason to believe that he shrewdly exploited his initial advantage of being resident caretaker of the premises. Yet his rise to prominence as principal 'restaurateur' in Salem between the years 1807 and 1857 must be ascribed to unceasing personal industry and shrewd business acumen. The latter virtue he seems to have kept healthy by constantly striving to please. Shortly after he had assumed the responsibility for the catering service of the hall, Remond served a memorable dinner to the Salem Light Infantry.

The Salem Light Infantry was organized in May 1805, and on the evening of September 22, 1809, John served a dinner that was attended by His Excellency Christopher Gore, the governor of Massachusetts. The men were as gay as their uniforms of blue coats and scarlet facings. Their white waistcoats and pantaloons with the gold crest in their caps added to the brilliance of the occasion. Remond, on this occasion, was unusually active: 'vans arrived, having been driven over the road from Boston loaded with exotic fruits and game; farmers came with produce; a superior fat live turtle weighing 200 pounds was carried in to be made into the delicious soup for which the caterer was noted; oysters, a new delicacy were also prepared to tempt the palate.'¹⁹ The special affairs held by the Salem Light Infantry Company between 1809 and 1863 probably

¹⁹ Northend, *Memories of Old Salem*, p. 2.

would not have been successful affairs had not Remond been in charge of the service. On the thirty-seventh anniversary of the infantry held October 13, 1842, when many military guests were in attendance, Remond's 'bill of fare' was especially elaborate. During the supper a toast was drunk to 'John Remond—the crack of his rifle for thirty years has been heard with pleasure and delight by the Company and their guests both in tent and field.'²⁰

In 1808, John Remond began to collect rare and fine wines, which he sold along with choice goods in his shop on the ground floor of Hamilton Hall.²¹ Advertisements in local newspapers published in 1808 referred to him as a dealer in oysters, eggs, poultry, and livestock items, which he supplied to ships leaving the port of Salem. The Embargo Act, beginning on December 22, 1807, had greatly limited trade, since vessels were not permitted to leave for foreign countries. However, nothing prevented American ships abroad from entering the home port. Once there, however, they could not leave legally for a foreign port. The effect of the embargo was quickly felt in Salem, where one-fifth of the population was reduced to destitution.

However, by March 7, 1809, the embargo had been repealed and within sixty days ninety-eight vessels sailed away with 956 men aboard. Newly found prosperity was expressed in renewed social activities.²² Remond's trading business began to thrive. The extent to which he supplied merchants and masters of vessels by June 1825 may be gleaned from the various items that he had for sale at his store. Among Remond's goods were the following stock: 10,000 pounds of Virginia and North Carolina hams, prepared expressly for shipping; 2,000 pounds of pork shoulders, prepared for shipping; 4,000 pounds

²⁰ George M. Whipple, *History of the Salem Light Infantry from 1805 to 1890* (Salem, Mass., 1890), pp. 1, 39-40.

²¹ *Catalogue of Very Choice, and very Old Wines, Liquors, Cordials, &c., &c., Being the Private Stock of Mr. John Remond, of Salem, Mass . . . Who Commenced Accumulating this Valuable Stock in 1808* (Salem, Mass., 1866).

²² Robotti, *Chronicles of Old Salem*, p. 52.

of smoked beef (Albany-cured); 3,000 pounds of new milk cheese; 300 dozens of Newark and crabapple cider (wired and packed in slats); 300 glass pots of pickled oysters; 100 glass pots of pickled lobsters; 300 gallons of wine vinegar, suitable for the American market; and a constant supply of Albany and Lansingburg ale. In addition to these items, other commodities were advertised: 10½ boxes of Spanish cigars, 50 boxes of macaroni, 25 kegs of Virginia fig tobacco, 100 dozen madeira, sherry, Lisbon, Bordeaux, and claret wines, bottles of walnut and mushroom catsup, East India soy, boxes of olives, sacks of corks, barrels of whiskey, and split peas.²³

It is clear that by the mid-1820s the Remonds had become the proprietors of an enormously expanded catering service, which could only be sustained through heavy investment and ceaseless activity in the acquisition and sale of great quantities of food merchandise, not excluding the considerable risks involved in the importing and sale of huge consignments of wines, rums, spices, cheeses, and other perishable items. In short, Remond had entered into the business of retail merchandising. As a matter of fact, John was now listed as a 'trader,' and had boldly advertised that he had made contractual arrangements for deliveries of goods with five vessels.

Remond's incomparable experience as 'restaurateur,' his efficient connections as an entrepreneur, and his trusted reputation as a resourceful caterer made him the inevitable choice as caterer to the great dinner at Hamilton Hall on the occasion of the Marquis de Lafayette's second visit to Salem, on August 31, 1824. Remond's expense account included sixty-five different items. The large hall was never before so beautifully decorated. Wreaths and garlands were woven and draped around the mirrors, chandeliers, and balcony. A great American eagle was poised with a crown over its beak and placed above the chair that the noted guest was expected to occupy. One of the inscriptions read, 'Welcome to the brave, to the

²³ *Salem Gazette*, August 28, 1827.

house he fought to save.' In spite of the heavy rain, the streets were crowded with people. When the soldiers and music came around the corner of the hall, bystanders burst forth with the cry 'Viva Lafayette.'²⁴

Just as memorable, perhaps, as the Lafayette dinner was the one given in honor of Judge Joseph Story on September 3, 1829. For that occasion, Remond's printed bill of fare listed thirteen entries for the first course, sixteen entries for the second course, followed by six different pastries and ten special desserts.²⁵

By the end of 1848, John Remond controlled a diversified entrepreneurial enterprise involving not only a wholesale monopoly in oysters but, as has been pointed out, substantial trade with merchant ships for many other commodities and services. As an oyster dealer, he had competitors whom he kept at bay by his rather bold and aggressive mode of advertising, in which he sometimes seemed to charge them with falsification regarding the quality and quantity of stock in oysters that they pretended to have on hand. In a front-page advertisement in the *Salem Observer* for December 9, 1848, Remond offered for sale, at one dollar per gallon, or eighty cents per bushel, 1,500 bushels of New York oysters, which, as the advertisement states, was 'more than any one dealer in the state can say.' Moreover, he assured his readers, 'there is not in the County of Essex, 150 bushels of New York oysters, except those on the North River flats.' Remond noted, for example, 'that every signboard erected would have on it "New York Oysters"' and some of these establishments had not had 50 bushels of New York oysters in three years.'²⁶ John Remond's business addresses were listed as nos. 6, 8, and 14 Derby Square, and at no. 5 Higginson Square, 'the sign of the Big Lantern.'

²⁴ Fabens, *Hamilton Hall*, pp. 7-8; Whipple, *History*, p. 23; *Salem Gazette*, September 1, 1824.

²⁵ *Public Dinner Given at Hamilton Hall, Thursday, September 3, 1829, to Hon. Judge Story. Bill of Fare*. Broadside. Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.

²⁶ *Salem Observer*, December 9, 1848; *Salem Advertiser*, February 3, 1847.

In December 1848, Remond announced publicly that he was withdrawing from business because of ill health. James Shearman, John's close friend, business partner, and the husband of his eldest daughter Nancy, continued the oyster business at 14 Derby Square and at 5 Higginson Square; he also continued to run Remond's oyster bar and ice cream parlor. In addition, Shearman handled Remond's catering business for public dinners, suppers, and balls, often as far as twenty miles from the city.²⁷

There is evidence that John Remond did cater an occasional dinner during the next few years. However, Nancy never failed to assist her husband John in the preparation of his dinners and in making her fancy cakes. The *Salem Gazette* of October 19, 1849, carried this advertisement on its first page and first column: 'Nancy would inform the citizens of Salem and vicinity that she still continues to make cakes at No. 5 Higginson Square and respectfully solicits a share of public patronage. Cakes of various kinds made to order, at short notice, among which are Wedding, Plum, Pound, White, Bride, Currant, Taylor, Sponge, Compositions, elections, etc. All orders punctually attended to.' Also, at 5 Higginson Square, at the fashionable hour of two o'clock, Nancy served a dozen gentlemen 'mock-turtle soup, venison or alamode beef, roast chickens and sometimes ducks, and light not flaky pastry, a truly sample feast.' Nancy was well known for her charming manners, as well as for her good cooking.²⁸

The Remond parents were strict disciplinarians who protected their children and taught them to be industrious and economical. They exposed them to art and music. Educational materials were also provided in the home. Books, antislavery tracts, the *Liberator*, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, and newspapers published by free blacks such as *Freedom's Journal*,

²⁷ *Essex County Freeman*, February 4, 1852.

²⁸ Silsbee, *A Half Century in Salem*, p. 100; *Salem Gazette*, October 19, 1849.

Rights of All, the *Weekly Advocate*, the *Colored American*, the *Mirror of Liberty*, and the *North Star* were found in the home and in their shops. They constantly made their family and others aware of the political climate of the times.

A strong network of communication was maintained with other black families of means living in Boston, Newport, Rhode Island, New York City, Philadelphia, and nearby cities in Massachusetts. Visitation between family members was frequent, pleasurable, and always profitable. Ardent abolitionists, the Remonds liberally received many black and white anti-slavery lecturers. Their home as well as those of other Salem-ites was also a haven for fugitive slaves, who were provided with nourishment, clothing, and shelter. It was this background of family social consciousness that provided the impulse for the antislavery activities of the second generation of Remonds.

Of John and Nancy's eight children, their best-known offspring was Charles Lenox Remond who was born on February 1, 1810, one year before his father was admitted to citizenship by the Essex County Court.²⁹ Charles received his early education in the local schools in Salem. As a youth, he suffered discrimination in many forms because of the color of his skin. He had been exposed to the horror of slavery from early childhood as he listened to the conversations of visiting antislavery lecturers, both white and black (especially those of William Lloyd Garrison, who was a frequent visitor in their home), and to the stories of fugitive slaves who appeared in Salem from time to time.³⁰

Nancy Remond had hailed the publication, in 1829, of David Walker's *Appeal in Four Articles: With a Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World*, an inflammatory pamphlet of sev-

²⁹ William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879, *The Story of His Life Told by His Children*, 4 vols. (New York, 1889), 4:408.

³⁰ Dorothy B. Porter, 'Charles Lenox Remond,' in Rayford W. Logan and Michael R. Winston, eds., *Dictionary of American Negro Biography* (New York, 1982), pp. 520-22.

enty-six pages, as not just a printed pamphlet but a great event and praised the author as a 'young and noble *apostle of Liberty*.' Charles's parents and his sisters gave money to support William Lloyd Garrison's work and solicited funds for the abolitionist movement from the Salem community. John Remond became a life member of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in 1835.³¹ The Remond women served as members and officers of the Salem Female Anti-Slavery Society, the New England Anti-Slavery Society, and the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society.

From the time he was seventeen, Charles the orator had thought of himself as an abolitionist.³² In November 1832 he became an agent for the *Liberator* and in 1837 an agent for the *Weekly Advocate* and the *Colored American* newspapers.³³ In 1834 he became a member of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society of Salem, a group that was originally the New England Anti-Slavery Society. Charles was also a life member of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Following a speech he delivered on November 25, 1837, before the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, the society voted to aid Negroes in getting jobs as clerks.³⁴ In a letter to Thomas Cole, written from Winthrop, Maine, on July 3, 1838, Remond stated he had gone to Alfred, Maine, to attend the formation of a County Anti-Slavery Society. He had lectured in four different places on four successive evenings for one and a half hours each time. In 1838, the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society appointed him one of their agents, and with the Reverend Ichabod Coddington of Maine he lectured in Rhode Island, Maine, and Massachusetts, the first black abolitionist lecturer and the most eloquent until

³¹ William C. Nell, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1855), p. 347.

³² Carter G. Woodson, ed., *The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1800-1860* (Washington, D.C., 1926), p. 296.

³³ *Weekly Advocate*, January 7, 1837; *Colored American*, March 4, 1837.

³⁴ *Colored American*, November 25, 1837.

the appearance of Frederick Douglass on the abolitionist scene in 1842.

Charles Remond's first lectures in Maine, to audiences who were 'generally dark on the subject of prejudice and slavery,' were successful, and action on the part of his hearers was immediate. Antislavery societies were formed and contributions and pledges were made to the cause. In many instances, members of the audience became annual and life members of the state's antislavery society. Remond was encouraged, and he ended a letter to his friend Thomas Cole of Boston thus, 'We have everything friend Thomas, to encourage us. Slavery is trembling, prejudice is fading, and I hope will soon be buried—buried beyond resurrection; and we will write over it as over Babylon—Prejudice, the mother of abominations, the liar, the coward, the tyrant, the waster of the poor, the brand of the white man, the bane of the black man, is fallin! is fallin!'³⁵ Remond's experiences, his lectures, and his accomplishments are revealed in the many letters he wrote to friends and fellow abolitionists.

At thirty, when he was a resident in his family's new home state of Rhode Island, Charles was selected by the American Anti-Slavery Society to be one of the delegates to attend the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention meeting in London on June 12; this event was a highlight in his career. Other delegates were William Lloyd Garrison, Nathaniel Peabody Rogers, and William Adams.³⁶ Remond was almost entirely indebted to the members of the Bangor Female Anti-Slavery Society, the Portland Sewing Circle, and the Newport Young Ladies' Juvenile Anti-Slavery Society for the financial aid that made possible his attendance at the conference. The help from these women not only made it possible for Remond to travel to London but also allowed him to remain for eighteen months on an extended lecture tour in England, Scotland, and Ire-

³⁵ Woodson, *Mind of the Negro*, pp. 294–95.

³⁶ *Garrison . . . Story of His Life*, 2:351.

land.³⁷ When Remond, as a delegate to the convention, applied for cabin passage from the United States to Liverpool on the American packet ship the *Columbus*, his request was denied, and he was forced to accept a place in steerage, where he was subjected to all manners of insults, in spite of the fact that William Adams elected to travel in steerage with him.³⁸ Remond may have temporarily forgotten this discriminatory act upon his arrival in London, when he learned to his astonishment that the convention had voted against the seating of all women delegates on the convention floor. William Lloyd Garrison, Nathaniel Peabody Rogers, and Charles Lenox Remond immediately protested this form of discrimination and seated themselves in the gallery along with Lucretia Mott and the other unseated female delegates from the United States. Lady Byron (Anne Isabella Milbanke) took a seat in the gallery next to Remond and, it is said, directed much of her conversation to him. No doubt she had been impressed by the speech he had made at the anniversary meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society of the World Anti-Slavery Convention. At that lecture, Remond had stepped forward 'of his own accord' and was repeatedly cheered by the audience.³⁹

In August 1840, Garrison wrote to Henry C. Wright, stating that the rejection of the American female delegation by the London convention and that the 'refusal of Rogers, Remond and myself to become members of the same, have done more to bring up for the consideration of Europe the rights of women than could have been accomplished in any other manner.'⁴⁰

³⁷ Charles Lenox Remond to Ellen Sands, April 1, 1840, Remond Letters, Essex Institute, Salem, Mass.; Miriam L. Usrey, 'Charles Lenox Remond, Garrison's Ebony Echo, World Anti-Slavery Convention, 1840,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 106 (1970):112-25.

³⁸ William Edward Ward, *Charles Lenox Remond: Black Abolitionist, 1838-1873* (Ph.D. diss., Clark University, 1977), pp. 60-61; Otelia Cromwell, *Lucretia Mott* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), pp. 72, 79.

³⁹ William Lloyd Garrison to Helen Garrison, June 29, 1840, in Louis Ruchames, ed., *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison*, 6 vols. (Cambridge, 1971), 2:655.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 2:680.

For several days in August 1840, Charles, who had been in poor health for most of his life, was confined with inflammatory fever at the 'truly hospitable home of my dear friend John Murray, Esq. Bowling Bay.' Writing to his friend Thomas Cole from Edinburgh on October 2, 1840, Charles said that his health was not what he could wish but added that 'autumnal winds and rains do not well suit my constitution; but they are so unlike and so superior to the yearly winds and rains of prejudice in my country, that I am not in the least inclined to murmur.' Charles Lenox Remond was universally welcomed, appearing before large audiences, and always 'much commended and admired for the pertinence of his facts, the cogency of his arguments, and the fire of his eloquence.'⁴¹

After a nineteen-month tour, Remond returned home on December 4, 1841. He brought with him in his 'unduitable' baggage an address signed by Daniel O'Connell, Lord Mayor of Dublin, and 60,000 Irishmen. It urged Irishmen in the United States to 'oppose slavery by peaceful means and to insist upon liberty for all regardless of color, creed, or country.' This lengthy Irish document was unrolled and displayed at antislavery meetings. It stretched from the speaker's platform to the entrance door. However, it made an impression in the public mind for only a short time.⁴² Exhausted from his tour and a rough voyage home, Remond arrived in Boston only to be forced into the Jim Crow car for his trip from Boston to Salem. During his various lecture engagements Remond had not only traveled in the Jim Crow car, but was forced to ride on the top of the stagecoach, to occupy the forward deck of boats, and most recently to cross the Atlantic Ocean in steerage. Embittered by the treatment of free blacks in Massachusetts, Remond, on February 22, 1842, became the first black man to address the legislative committee in the Massachusetts House of Representatives to protest against Jim Crow on the rail-

⁴¹ Woodson, *Mind of the Negro*, p. 307.

⁴² Garrison . . . *Story of His Life*, 3:48.

roads and steamboats. His speech 'Rights of Colored Persons in Travelling' was one of the great orations of the day.⁴³

An antislavery meeting was held in Worcester on Sunday evening, February 26, 1860, at seven o'clock at the Old Brinley Hall, which was erected between 1836 and 1837. Old-time antislavery gatherings had been held here and the words of William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Parker Pillsbury, Stephen S. and Abby Kelly Foster, as well as other leaders had been heard. At this particular meeting, Frederick P. Brown of Ohio, brother of John Brown, and Remond were the speakers. Brown spoke for nearly an hour on his brother's death and stated that 'he did not count his death on the scaffold as a loss if it could be serviceable to the cause.' He closed with an earnest appeal to his audience 'to investigate as to what is their duty and to perform it, unfaltering to the end.' Remond followed Brown and spoke about the work of the antislavery movement.⁴⁴

Regardless of the indignities Remond suffered as a black man, he always regarded himself as a member of humanity at large. At the May 9, 1867, national convention of the American Equal Rights Association, Remond opposed the word 'colored' in one of the resolutions. At the meeting, he was elected one of the vice-presidents of the organization and served on its finance committee. In a letter dated April 5, 1869, Remond said that he 'objected to colored schools, colored churches with colored ministers and colored teachers—also to a black minister to black Hayti.'⁴⁵ Remond's speeches were described as 'crisp, vehement and dreadful.' 'His soul,' one writer said, 'was always in a spasm and when it wreaked itself upon expression, his words were as hot as if they had been steeped in a seven-fold furnace of unquenchable fire.'⁴⁶

⁴³ Carter G. Woodson, *Negro Orators and their Orations* (Washington, D.C., 1925), pp. 144-49.

⁴⁴ *The Worcester Spy*, February 27, 1860; see Edward P. Kimball, ed., *Brinley Hall Album and Post 10 Sketch Book* (Worcester, Mass., 1896), pp. 9, 13.

⁴⁵ *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, April 17, 1869.

⁴⁶ *Peabody Press*, January 28, 1874.

During the Civil War, Negroes had, on several occasions, offered their services to the Union army, but they had been rejected. Finally, in Massachusetts, the government decided to appoint Negroes as commanders, to serve with white officers. Charles Lenox Remond, Frederick Douglass, William Wells Brown, Lewis Hayden, and John S. Rock, along with other men of color, were appointed to serve as recruiting agents. Recruiting was begun on February 16, 1863, in the West End, a Negro section of Boston. Enrollment was completed within three months, and on May 18 Gov. John A. Andrew delivered the state and national colors to Col. Robert Gould Shaw, the commander of the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment, which was said to be the finest regiment in the North and the first regiment to be sent into action. The historian John Daniels noted that 'William Wells Brown, Charles Lenox Remond and Frederick Douglass did yeoman service in recruiting colored soldiers to serve the country which had denied to them the common rights and privileges of humanity.'⁴⁷

In 1865, after his Civil War service, Remond was appointed a Boston streetlight inspector. Early in 1866, he was living in Wakefield with his second wife, Elizabeth Thayer Magee, a woman of means, and their children. They lived on their own land of two and three-quarters acres, in their own house, which had adjacent to it a barn containing livestock and a carriage house.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ John Daniels, *In Freedom's Birthplace. A Study of the Boston Negroes*. (Boston and New York, 1914), p. 73; Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* (Boston, 1953), pp. 8-10.

⁴⁸ *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, June 20, 1866; *Annual Reports of the Town of Wakefield Including Those of the Auditors, Selectmen, Overseers, Treasurer, School Committee, and Library Trustees, also Town Valuation and Statistics from Town Clerks Record. For the Year Ending February 28, 1874* (Boston, 1874); *Valuation of the Town of Wakefield, and State, County, and Town Tax for the Year 1873*, p. 59. *Valuation and Tax List for the Town of S. Reading, 1866*. These original ledgers are in the office of the town clerk, Town Hall, Wakefield, Massachusetts; Amy Matilda Williams, daughter of Rev. Peter Williams of New York City and Charles Lenox Remond's first wife, died on August 15, 1856, at forty-seven; *Liberator*, August 22, 1856; *Frederick Douglass' paper*, August 29, 1856.

Remond made his final lecture tour to western New York in 1867. After that he appeared at only a few antislavery meetings held in Boston. The consumption with which he had suffered for the last eighteen months was beginning to take its toll. Nevertheless, he was appointed a stamp clerk in the Boston Customs House in 1871, a position he held until his death. He died at his home in Wakefield on December 22, 1873.⁴⁹ Remond's entire life was one of financial difficulties, physical ills, and mental anguish. The salary he received as an agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society and the few dollars he collected after his lectures were insufficient to support a family. He lived in leased homes, and when his funds dwindled he returned to his father's home. For example, to supplement his income, he opened at 5 Higginson Square a 'Ladies and Gentlemen's Dining Room, especially for families, visitors to the city and private parties' on June 25, 1856. It was to be open all hours of the day and evening and 'conducted on strictly Temperance principles, quietly and properly kept.'⁵⁰

The people of Massachusetts were indebted to Charles Lenox Remond for many changes that bettered their condition. One of the greatest debts they owed him was for the 'abolition of the odious distinction of caste, on account of condition. For up to this period, neither common white nor genteel colored persons could ride in first class cars; since which time, all who are able and willing to pay, go in them. In fact, there is but one class of cars, (except the immigrant cars which are necessary for the safety and comfort of other passengers) in Massachusetts.'⁵¹ Remond's eloquence had won for him the sobriquet 'The Colored Wendell Phillips.'⁵² Remond was one

⁴⁹ *Salem Register*, December 24, 1873; Ward, 'Charles Lenox Remond,' p. 261.

⁵⁰ *Salem Register*, June 26, 1857. In 1849, Remond complained that 'he had not received a salary of any kind for eighteen months, although he had labored faithfully for the cause.' Charles Lenox Remond to Frances Jackson, June 9, 1849, Garrison Papers, Boston Public Library.

⁵¹ Martin Robinson Delany, *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States. Politically Considered* (Philadelphia, 1852), p. 116.

⁵² Daniels, *In Freedom's Birthplace*, p. 453.

of the most talented men of his day, and the impact he made on other black abolitionists and the antislavery world is yet to be adequately treated. While no collection of his personal papers has been found, a wealth of documentation has been preserved in his many speeches and letters.

Charles Lenox Remond died at sixty-three and was buried in Harmony Grove Cemetery in Salem on December 26, 1873. His funeral was attended by John T. Sargent, Wendell Phillips, and William Lloyd Garrison, who conducted the services. Many white and colored friends from Salem and Boston were present. Charles was survived by two sons, Charles L., Jr., and Ernest R. Remond. His wife, Elizabeth, had died on February 3, 1872, at thirty-five.⁵³

Charles Lenox Remond was close to his younger sister Sarah Parker Remond, second only to Charles in fame. After Sarah's appointment as a lecturing agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1856, she traveled with her brother and other well known antislavery lecturers—Parker Pillsbury, William Lloyd Garrison, Susan B. Anthony, Abby Kelley Foster, and Frederick Douglass.

Sarah Parker Remond was born in Salem on June 6, 1824, the seventh child of John and Nancy Remond. Her early education was limited to the primary schools of Salem and a private school in Newport, Rhode Island, where her father took his family in 1835. The family remained there until 1841, so that Remond's daughters might not suffer from the discriminatory practices found in the high schools of Salem. Before going to Rhode Island, Sarah and her sister had passed the entrance examination for the Salem school in their district, but upon entering both were permitted to remain only a few days because of their color. Sarah read every newspaper, book, and pamphlet she could borrow from friends or purchase from

⁵³ William Lloyd Garrison to Oliver Johnson, June 28, 1874, in *Garrison . . . Story of His Life*, 4:253; *Salem Register*, December 24, 1873; *Evening Transcript*, December 26, 1873; *Peabody Press*, January 28, 1874; *Boston Journal*, January 7, 1874; *New National Era and Citizen*, January 8, 1874.

Anti-Slavery Society book depositories in order to educate herself and to keep abreast of the times.

'Marm' Nancy taught Sarah, as she had taught her older sisters, to sew, knit, and to cook. 'Our home discipline,' Sarah once wrote, 'did not—could not, fit us for the scorn and contempt which met us on every hand when faced with the world, a world which hated all who were identified with the enslaved race.' Nancy ruled her family by love rather than fear, and along with household duties taught them to seek liberty in a lawful manner and to oppose injustice in every form. She prepared her children well for the struggle they were to have in a world of hatred for their color and in the slave land into which they were born. She taught her family to 'gather strength from their own souls and that to be black was no crime, but an accident of birth.'⁵⁴

This background gave Sarah the strength to seek equality on many occasions. One occasion attracted attention. On May 4, 1853, Sarah Remond, her sister Caroline Remond Putnam, and William C. Nell presented their one dollar tickets to the doorkeeper at the Howard Athenaeum in Boston—having purchased tickets through an expressman—for seats in the 'Family Circle' to hear Madame Henriette Sontag in the opera *Don Pasquale*. Sarah and her friends were given the customary checks. While quietly proceeding to their seats, they were stopped by Mr. A. Palmer, the manager of the house, who refused to let them take their seats. C. P. Philbrick, a police officer at the theater, was called and ordered the party out. They were told they could get their money back or take seats in the gallery. They refused. Philbrick attempted to push Sarah down the stairs, tearing her dress and injuring her shoulder. Sarah made a legal protest against this treatment, and Palmer and Philbrick were brought before the police

⁵⁴ Maritcha Remond Lyons, *Memories of Yesterdays. All of Which I Saw and Part of Which I Was*, Lyons-Williamson Papers, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Typescript, pp. 57-58.

court. The case was tried before Judge Russell. The lawyer Charles G. Davis appeared for Miss Remond. Shortly afterwards, Sarah Remond brought a civil suit to recover damages against Palmer and Philbrick in the First District Court of Essex County. She agreed to accept a small sum on the condition that she and her friends should have tickets to the opera, for seats as good as those originally purchased on the night they were rejected. The small award of \$500 did not defray the actual expenses incurred by Miss Remond and her sister. However, she discharged her claim against Palmer, for her object was not to make money from the suit but to vindicate a right. Justice Russell delivered an able opinion in the case, 'fully sustaining the equal rights of our Colored citizens.' The case was an important one and added one more milestone by a Remond (this time Sarah) to the liberty of colored people.⁵⁵

A few months later, Sarah Remond was involved in a similar episode in Philadelphia on October 21, 1853, at the Franklin Exhibition. Here, Sarah, a Miss Wood, and Robert Purvis, Jr., were expelled on the false grounds that they had not paid for their tickets of admission. Charges of assault and battery were made by Robert Purvis, father of the young man accompanying the ladies.⁵⁶

When Sarah accompanied her brother Charles on his lecture tour in New York State in 1856, some boarding houses and hotels that had accommodated Susan B. Anthony refused to admit Sarah and her brother. Special accommodations had to be found in homes that would take the pair.⁵⁷ As one of the speakers at the antislavery convention held at Rochester, New

⁵⁵ George W. Forbes, 'William C. Nell,' Boston Public Library, typescript; *Frederick Douglass paper*, June 10, 1853; American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *The Thirteenth Annual Report Presented at New York, May 11, 1853, with Addresses and Resolutions* (New York, 1853), p. 154.

⁵⁶ Robert Purvis to Charles Burleigh, November 5, 1853, Woodson, *Negro Orators* p. 178.

⁵⁷ Aaron M. Powell, *Personal Reminiscences of The Anti-Slavery and Other Reforms and Reformers* (New York, 1899), p. 171.

York, in February 1857, Sarah spoke, it is reported, 'in vindication of that Christianity which puts in practice the Golden Rule, and that Republicanism which renders operative the living principles of the Declaration of Independence. The inadequacy of our Constitution to afford protection to coloured citizens—free or slave—or even to perfectly protect the white citizen was demonstrated and all persons were called upon to utter their protest, their indignant protest against the colossal sin of the age—American Chattel Slavery.'⁵⁸

Between 1856 and August 1858, Sarah addressed several antislavery meetings in New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. On December 21, 1858, Sarah wrote to Abby Kelley Foster that she regretted that she had not entered the lecture field earlier, adding, 'I feel almost sure I never should have made the attempt but for the words of encouragement received from you. Although my heart was in the work, I felt I was in need of a good English education. Every hour since I met you I have endeavored as far as possible to make up this loss.'⁵⁹

After two years of lecturing before American audiences, Sarah Remond, accompanied by the Reverend Samuel Joseph May of Syracuse, left Boston on December 28, 1858, for Liverpool via Halifax in the steamer *Arabia*.⁶⁰ Sarah hoped to enlist the aid of the English in the antislavery movement, and to further her own education. Samuel May noted in his diary three days after they had been at sea that 'the ship is covered with snow and ice and she pitches and rolls so much that many passengers are sick.' They arrived in Liverpool on January 12, 1859, after what must have been a frightening trip for Sarah but she regained her strength after a few days of recuper-

⁵⁸ *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, February 21, 1857.

⁵⁹ Sarah Parker Remond to Abby Kelley Foster, December 21, 1858, Kelly-Foster Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

⁶⁰ *Daily Evening Traveller*, December 28, 1858; *Anti-Slavery Reporter, n.s.*, February 1, 1859.

ation at the home of William Robson in Warrington, England.⁶¹

Sarah Parker Remond's first lecture overseas occurred in Liverpool, at Tuckerman Institute on January 21, 1859. A large crowd attended to hear her speak on American slavery. But Sarah had competition. On that same evening, Lola Montez, the actress, who was on a tour of the British Isles, was delivering her third lecture in the Concert Hall on 'Strong Minded Women.' In addition, the Christy Minstrels were giving a performance, and the Burns Centenary celebrations were also taking place.

Sarah's preparation for her first lecture in England was excellent. Without notes she eloquently told of the inhuman and unchristian condition of slaves in the United States. Her shocking illustrations of atrocities brought tears to the eyes of many listeners, while her earnestness found a sympathetic audience. All were greatly impressed with the 'great social, moral and political importance of her subject.' The *Liverpool Mercury* reported the next day that Miss Remond had expressed her 'unbounded indignation at the apathy which the professing Christians throughout the whole of the United States as a body manifested.' She concluded her lecture with an 'earnest appeal for the moral and religious sympathy and influence of free England in the abolition movement.' Sarah Remond's voice was described as clear and musical and she had at her command a 'great flow of language.' Her retentive memory was shown by her ability to quote passages from the public addresses of American senators on the subject of slavery.⁶²

⁶¹ Diary of Samuel J. May, January 1-10, 1859, Antislavery Collection, Cornell University Library; *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, February 1, 1859; William Robson to editor, *Liberator*, February 4, 1859.

⁶² *Liverpool Mercury*, January 22, 1859; also reported in *Liberator*, February 18, 1859; 'Lola Montez upon Strong-Minded Women,' *Liverpool Mercury*, January 22, 1859.

On January 25, 1859, in nearby Warrington, Sarah began a successful series of five lectures. In her first lecture, Sarah Remond said that her purpose in coming to Britain was to tour England in order to 'awaken the public minds to the evils of slavery and ask Englishmen to endorse propositions protesting against American slavery as a blot on the civilized world.' She depicted the wrongs of slavery and its effect on her people, emphasizing the 'whole country's moral degradation.' Her audience learned that, even in a democratic country like the United States, under the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law she was liable 'even in free states upon the oath of any brutal fellow to be carried into bondage, more fearful that than to which the common Negro is subjected.'

The crowds were so great at Sarah's second lecture that admission was charged for reserved seats at 6d and rear seats at 2d. This second lecture in Warrington was described as a soul-stirring address in which she further depicted the wrongs and indignities heaped upon her race. The ladies of Warrington responded to Sarah Remond's efforts by presenting her with an elegant silver watch. Sarah was so moved that she could only thank them by shedding tears. The mayor of Warrington stated that he hoped other towns would pattern themselves after Warrington and that 'wherever Miss Remond went she would realize the fact that there was not an individual in the United Kingdom who had not a strong interest in the slave.'⁶³

For the next three years, Sarah continued to lecture on the abolition of slavery, although she had planned to stay abroad only one year. Her means were limited, she said, and England was an expensive country to live in. She wrote Samuel May on October 18, 1860, that she 'had received the most hearty cooperation from genuine friends of our cause, in fact without their valuable aid in every direction, I could not have done the

⁶³ *Warrington Guardian Supplement*, January 29, 1859; *Warrington Times*, January 29, 1859; *Liberator*, March 11, 1859.

anti-slavery work I have.'⁶⁴ The question of slavery was an obsession with Sarah and was the main force driving her on to speak wherever and whenever she was invited, or whenever a lecture had been arranged spontaneously by local antislavery societies. She received small compensation on some occasions.

Between 1859 and 1861, Sarah gave more than forty-five lectures in eighteen cities and towns in England, three cities in Scotland, and four cities in Ireland. With such a heavy schedule, it is difficult to see how she attended classes at the Bedford College for Ladies, now part of the University of London, from October 1859 until mid-1861. Her classes were in elocution, vocal music, ancient history, Latin, French, arithmetic, geography, and English literature.⁶⁵

In August 1861, Sarah read a paper on 'American Slavery and its Influence in Great Britain' at the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science held in Dublin.⁶⁶ Perhaps, more importantly, on June 13, 1862, she read a paper at the fifth Session of the International Congress of Charities, Corrections, and Philanthropy. As part of its purpose, the conference intended to determine how best its members could benefit the human race. In this address, Sarah declared that 'the Negro and the nominally free coloured men and women, north and south, of the States, in every hour of their adversity, have ever relied upon the hope that the moral support of Britain would always be with the oppressed.'⁶⁷

Once emancipation of the Negro was a reality, Sarah Parker Remond lectured on behalf of the freedmen, soliciting clothing and funds for them. One lecture that she delivered in London,

⁶⁴ Sarah P. Remond to Samuel May, Jr., October 18, 1860, Antislavery Collection, Boston Public Library.

⁶⁵ Margaret J. Tuke, *A History of Bedford College for Women* (London, 1939); Registrar of Student Courses, 1856-72, Bedford College, University of London, London, England.

⁶⁶ George W. Hastings, ed., *Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science* (London, 1862), pp. 689-91.

⁶⁷ Sarah Parker Remond, 'Les Negrès Aux Etats-Unis d'Amérique, Session de 1862, *Congrès International de Bienfaisance de Londres* (London, 1863), 11:222-24.

entitled 'The Freeman or the Emancipated Negro of the Southern States of the United States,' was published.⁶⁸

In 1866, Sarah Remond went to Florence, Italy, where she enrolled in a regular course of medicine and hospital practice in the large hospital Santa Maria Nuova. In 1871 she received a diploma certifying her for 'Professional Medical Practice.'⁶⁹

Elizabeth Buffum Chace, an antislavery leader and friend who had arranged some of Sarah Remond's lecture tours before she left for England, visited her in Florence in April 1873. She wrote of her visit, 'we all went, by invitation to take tea with a Mrs. Putnam, Sarah Remond and Miss Sargeant. We had a fine visit. Sarah Remond is a remarkable person and by indomitable energy and perseverance is winning a fine position in Florence as a physician and also socially; although she says Americans have used their influence to prevent her, by bringing their hateful prejudice over here. If one tenth of the American women who travel in Europe were as noble and elegant as she is, we shouldn't have to blush as we do.'⁷⁰

In Florence, on April 25, 1877, Sarah Parker Remond, an American abolitionist, married Lazzaro Pintor, a native of Sardinia.⁷¹ He may have been one of the Neapolitan exiles whom she had met at a social gathering in Dublin in 1859. The exiles had been especially interested in Sarah when informed that she was a representative of a 'downtrodden race in a land of liberty.' On this occasion, the Duca di Cabellico begged to be presented to her and 'desired that she should be informed that as one who had himself suffered from cruel oppression, he entirely sympathized with her.'⁷²

Sarah was truly no ordinary woman but a remarkable per-

⁶⁸ *The Freedman* (London, 1867), p. 121.

⁶⁹ *The Revolution*, October 22, 1868; *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, October 10, 1868.

⁷⁰ Lillie Buffum Chace Wyman and Arthur Crawford Wyman, *Elizabeth Buffum Chace, 1806-1899*, 2 vols. (Boston, 1914), 2:42-43.

⁷¹ Archivio Storico del Comune, Florence, Italy.

⁷² *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, April 30, 1859.

son from a unique family. She died at seventy in London on December 13, 1894, where she was living with her sisters Caroline and Maritcha, and Caroline's son Edmund Quincy Putnam. Sarah was buried in the Protestant cemetery in Rome.⁷³ She should be remembered as an untiring worker in the great movement for the abolition of slavery. As with many others, white and black, male and female, she did more than her part to bring about freedom for the slave and to awaken in many the idea of equality for all humanity.

John and Nancy Remond's first child, Nancy, born in 1809, was unlike her publicly active brother Charles and sister Sarah. Her early years were spent working in the home, aiding her parents in the catering business. At the age of twenty-five, on March 19, 1834, she married James Shearman, a very close friend of her father and his assistant in his thriving oyster and catering business.⁷⁴ In 1851, Shearman took over the entire establishment when Remond's health began to fail, opening a fine ladies and gentlemen's oyster bar and ice cream parlor at 14 Derby Street and 5 Higginson Square, respectively. As stated earlier, his catering service to public dinners, supper balls, cotillion parties, military and fishing excursions extended as far as fifteen to twenty miles from the city of Salem.⁷⁵

John Lenox Remond, born in 1812, began at an early age to work with his father in his barbering and hairdressing establishment. He later continued this trade at several different shops of his own in Salem. He was not an activist in antislavery matters, and his name has appeared only on an occasional letter concerned with the antislavery movement. He married Ruth Rice of Newport, Rhode Island, on February 2, 1843, and raised a small family.⁷⁶

Susan H. Remond, born in 1814, also worked at home in the

⁷³ Protestant Cemetery Archives, Rome, Italy.

⁷⁴ *Liberator*, March 22, 1834.

⁷⁵ *Essex County Freeman*, February 4, 1852.

⁷⁶ *Vital Records of Rhode Island, 1636-1850*, 4 vols. (Providence, R.I., 1950), 4:58.

catering business, having learned the culinary art from her mother. Her pastries, jellies, confections, and fancy desserts were in constant demand and brought her excellent prices. She maintained a small, popular dining room where only the most exclusive townsmen gained entrance. Under her father's supervision, she served food of the finest quality and a variety of wines, liquors, and cordials. It was noted that 'her kitchen was a "mecca" where gathered radicals, free thinkers, abolitionists, female suffragists, fugitives and others who found rest and refreshment for mind and body.' She is described as having a natural dignity that 'courted friendliness but rebuffed familiarity.' It is also said that her constant companions were the Bible, volumes of orthodox sermons, and files of the *Liberator* and *Anti-Slavery Standard*, newspapers that were read by her family and customers. Susan worked hard during her lifetime, so that her activist sisters and brother might develop themselves intellectually and participate more fully in the anti-slavery movement in which they were engaged. She aided them financially whenever she could.⁷⁷

Cecelia, born in historic Hamilton Hall on April 12, 1816, was said to have been the oldest native of Salem when she died on May 10, 1912. She was the oldest wig manufacturer in Essex County at the time of her death. For more than seventy-five years, with her sister Maritcha Juan, she had the 'finest hairdressing saloon in Salem.' Their fashionable 'Ladies and Hairwork Saloon' was well advertised in the local and community papers as early as 1849. City directories also advertised their wig business as the largest in the state of Massachusetts. Salem was the shopping center of Essex County, and 175½ and 184 Essex Street, where Cecelia and her sister had their shops, was the Fifth Avenue of Salem. One writer, recalling life in Salem in the 1850s, said that he thought Cecelia was a lady of color, but that her 'color was never discussed nor was her professional skill criticized.' Cecilia married James

⁷⁷ Lyons, *Memories of Yesterdays*, pp. 60-61.

Babcock on December 10, 1843. Babcock was an established hairdresser whose family had been in Salem since 1740. His mother was a Narragansett Indian. In his shop at 15 Washington Street, James sold all kinds of perfume, hair tonics, hair soaps and dyes, cigar cases, razors, letter stamps, curling tongs, shirt bosoms and collars, wigs, and top pieces.⁷⁸ In 1872, James Babcock published a book entitled *How Hair is Wove*. The only child of Cecelia and James, a daughter named Cecelia, continued their business in Salem until her death on February 20, 1922.

Caroline Remond Putnam, the Remond's youngest daughter was born in 1826. Like her older sisters Cecelia and Maritcha, she was also trained in the art of manufactured ornamental hair wigs. She was a business partner of first Cecelia and later Maritcha, owning shops at two or three different addresses in Salem from the 1840s through 1885. Caroline became famous for her tonic known as 'Mrs. Putnam's Medicated Hair Tonic,' which she prepared and sold wholesale and retail. It was widely advertised as 'a medicated tonic for falling hair and a specific for quickening its growth, strengthening its roots, stimulating to the oil glands and arresting decay.' Frequently, Caroline's endorsement was sought for other hair tonics before they were advertised in the local newspaper or went on the market for sale.⁷⁹

Caroline married Joseph Hall Putnam, an assistant school-teacher in Boston who was also a hairdresser, an occupation he had inherited from his father, George Putnam, a well-known barber in Boston. Joseph Putnam made successful business trips to Australia in 1857 and 1858. He died at thirty-three on

⁷⁸ *Salem Gazette*, May 10, 1858; see *Salem Directory and Register for the Years 1846, 1851, 1855, 1857, 1859, 1878, 1879, 1883; Salem Register*, August 18, 1856; *Salem, Beverly, Danvers, and Peabody, Their Representative Businessmen and Points of Interest* (New York, 1893), p. 46; James Duncan Phillips, *Salem in the Nineties* (Salem, Mass., 1953) p. 63; Elizabeth B. Smith, 'Fashions of the Fifties,' *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 95(1959):193.

⁷⁹ *Salem Gazette*, June 15, 1849; *Salem Observer*, August 18, 1849; *Salem Directory and City Register*, 1849-76; *Salem Register*, May 3, 1858.

January 20, 1859. In an obituary statement, William C. Nell wrote, 'to the antislavery cause he gave an intelligent and unwavering support, being one of those model Colored Americans, whose theory is hatred of oppression and whose practice coincides therewith. He was an obedient son, affectionate brother, a faithful husband and kind father.'⁸⁰

After the death of her husband, and of her only daughter Louisa Victoria three months later, Caroline made her sister Maritcha her business partner, a partnership that lasted for thirty-five years. Maritcha, unmarried, took excellent care of the business while Caroline was abroad until 1885, when both sisters elected to live permanently abroad on 'free soil and where they could breath free air.'

Beginning in November 1859, Caroline, a woman of means, made many trips to Europe, traveling and visiting her sister Sarah. In 1865, she took her son Edmund Quincy to Europe for his education. He studied medicine in Vienna and later practiced in London. While a student in Europe, he served as a foreign correspondent for the *New York Herald Tribune*, the *Independent*, and the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, writing long, descriptive articles of persons, places, and affairs. Edmund married an English woman, Agnes Elliston, of Sydenham, England, on May 24, 1863. They lived in Rome for many years before her death on April 16, 1901.⁸¹

Caroline was subjected to many forms of discrimination during her travels to Europe. On her first trip to England in November 1859, she was mistreated on the mail packet *Europa*. The captain refused to honor her first-class passage and that of her traveling companions. Caroline carried her case to the press, where her correspondence with Sir Samuel Cunard was published. The publicity had its effect, for on her return trip on the ship *Arabia*, Mrs. Putnam and her party were

⁸⁰ William C. Nell, 'Joseph Hall Putnam,' *Liberator*, January 28, 1859.

⁸¹ *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, August 1, 1868; *The Hub* (Boston), April 26, 1884.

admitted to all the rights and privileges of first-class passengers. No one complained, even though there were slaveholders on board the ship. Later, in 1870, Caroline Putnam was refused accommodation at the Metropolitan Hotel in New York because her presence would create trouble for the other guests. The Everett House in New York at one time had 'handsomely entertained' Mrs. Putnam and her son. However, by 1879, the policy had been reversed and the hotel now refused to accommodate Negroes. Each member of the Remond family and their friends who traveled near or far met with discrimination. Each time, without hesitation, they fought for the right they knew was theirs. The Remonds's early family training had not been in vain.⁸²

The Remond women were members, committee representatives, and officers in the Female Anti-Slavery Society of Salem, the Essex County Anti-Slavery Society, and the American Anti-Slavery Society. They contributed funds also to the New England Anti-Slavery Society and the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. These young ladies provided food and contributed salable articles for the annual antislavery bazaars that were held as money-raising activities for the antislavery movement. The Remond women were also included among the sponsors of the bazaars.

The daughters built up extensive businesses, and those with children trained them to be their successors. They acquired financial prosperity in a period when, in the minds of most men, financial independence for women was frowned upon. The various businesses that this family of ten established, and the parcels of real estate that they purchased both for business and residential purposes for almost 125 years, indicate their unusual economic position in historic Salem, despite existing color prejudice.

We must ascribe John Remond's rise to prominence as a

⁸² *Liberator*, September 14, 1860; *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (n.s.), October 11, 1860; *National Standard*, n.s., October 1, 1870.

principal 'restaurateur' in Salem for over fifty years to his personal industry and shrewd business acumen. At the time of his death, he was one of the oldest and best-known citizens in Salem. He had fathered eight children, who played important roles in the antislavery cause or were successful in business. A man of indefatigable industry, John Remond died on March 6, 1874, at eighty-eight. His funeral was held at his residence, 5 Higginson Square. Burial took place in Harmony Grove, Salem's principal cemetery, which was also renowned as an arboretum. One obituary recorded that 'in his nature he was kind and pleasant to everybody and everybody was kind and pleasant to him. The disadvantages of color he bravely met and cheerfully overcame, and nobody who valued his friendship cared to remember whether the Caucasion or the Ethiopian predominated in his composition.'⁸³

Even though the parents John and Nancy were not the active participants that their children became in the antislavery movement, the family environment did serve to nurture and develop certain necessary attitudes and perspectives in their children. These acquired values would later manifest themselves in the second generation, where Charles and Sarah would make the Remond name synonymous with abolitionism.

The Remonds were humanitarians. They gave practical help and moral support to the needy, and with the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, the zeal of the family grew in intensity.

The Remonds did not make history in the academic or scholarly world. They did contribute to black and American history, to the business world, and to the abolitionist movement at a time when 'Negro pews' were found in houses of worship, when men and women of color were forced to ride in the Jim Crow car, assigned to seats on the top of the stage

⁸³ *Salem Register*, March 9, 1874; *Salem Gazette*, March 10, 1874; *Peabody Press*, March 11, 1874.

coach, and on the forward deck of the steamboat, regardless of weather.

This family deserves a place in the annals of our social history. Each member should be remembered for his or her courage and the fervent belief that they had a right to live as free men and women, even in a hostile world that tried to prevent them from so doing. That the name Remond became synonymous in New England with major abolitionist activity was no accident of history. Today, from our perspective in the twentieth century, we can revisit this nineteenth-century black family and reflect with them on their life and experiences with pride and a sense of major accomplishment.

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