4. Heroism

Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro (1855)

His parents escaped with their three-year-old son Samuel from a plantation in Maryland in 1820. After they reached New Jersey and later, New York, Ward began a career as a teacher, pastor, journalist and political candidate for the Liberty Party. Not least, he became a well-known abolitionist and active public speaker, and quickly entered the league of Black leaders in the nineteenth century. He was renowned for his sharp rhetoric as an orator, and has been "ranked next to Frederick Douglass" (Winks, "Ward"). Ward has become part of the canon of African American oratory and anti-slavery discourse.[1] A "militant" supporter of abolition and the rights of black people, Ward later advocated the cause on an international platform in Great Britain (see Winks, "Ward"). His involvement in transatlantic anti-slavery work also reflects his international, cross-border life. From his birth as the son of two slaves in the United States to his death on Jamaica in roughly 1866, he lived and worked in numerous places in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. Ward was therefore even more widely traveled than the otherwise highly mobile figures of Smallwood, Steward, and Warren in this book.

However, despite being considered "ahead of his time" in his erudite assessment of a necessarily interracial abolitionism and the place of Canada in this work, scholars still consider him "an enigma" (Winks, "Ward") and an ambiguous figure (see Watson 104; 108). Representative of Ward's critical assessment by scholars, William Andrews, in his authoritative *To Tell a Free Story* (1986), sees in Ward a straightforward writer and speaker who dealt openly with racism in Great Britain and Canada, and opposed it to black superiority (see 198), but he

1 Philip S. Foner and Robert J. Branham, for example, include Ward's speech against the Fugitive Slave Law in their anthology on African American oratory, *Lift Every Voice* (1998; 217-19).

nevertheless calls Ward compromised in his relation to England's upper class (see 194). In terms of Ward's literary project, Andrews recognizes Ward as a "threshold figure" for literary history who asked questions ahead of his time (203), but who struggled to overcome the label of "fugitive" and "ex-fugitive," an attempt which necessarily failed due to the limits of a romantic ideal of an essential self (see 200-01).[2] As such, Andrews's final assessment of Ward, too, is torn between the two poles of his figure: On the one hand, Ward appears as the nostalgic romantic writer; on the other hand, Andrews ascribes to Ward the establishment of a Black progress genealogy as a "sustaining myth" for the black population (198). It will be part of the work of the present chapter to trace this tension in Ward, and to link the discursive strategies of what I call his heroic genealogy to an ultimately conflicted expression of Ward's allegiances to Great Britain that he needs to incorporate into his personal vision of the future for black people.

Ward also appears as a central reference in Erica Ball's 2012 study *To Live an Antislavery Life*. Ball argues convincingly that the idea of committing oneself to an anti-slavery life, together with the notion of "respectability," constituted the heart of the black middle-class' "personal politics" in the antebellum North (40). In her line of argument, Ward becomes a crucial figure in pointing out the possibilities that revolutionary anti-slavery lives offered young, aspiring free Blacks (see 4). Through his *Autobiography*, Ward becomes the representative black self-made man embodying the core value of self-improvement, an exemplary figure reminding free young Blacks of their duty and "the positive rewards" of engaging in the freedom struggle (3). Ball intersects with Andrews in pointing out how Ward consciously stylizes his experience into an "archetypal significance" for emulation (Andrews 198; see Ball 3), but does not subscribe to Andrews's idea of the romantic hero in perpetual search for an identity. In fact, Ball reads Ward as actively engaged in a discursive and ideological network which shaped a very clear and distinct identity for free Blacks, namely the self-made man and dutiful anti-slavery activist. The present chapter will take Ball's work on Ward's anti-slavery life one step further in linking it to the theoretical project of the *Autobiography*, which wraps the self-made man in the guise of the heroic fugitive and black gentlemanhood.

2 Andrews describes how in the *Autobiography*, the fugitive becomes a heroic figure in the "recuperation and maturation of [his] essential self," which corresponds to "the romantic ideal of antebellum Afro-American narrative" (200). In Andrews's point of view, however, Ward has not "undergone the transforming self-restoration" he had hoped for (201).

Tim Watson's 2008 study *Caribbean Culture and British Fiction*, although published before Ball's, must be considered separately here because it offers the most elaborate and most critically engaging assessment of Ward to date. It also is the first study to situate Ward in a clearly international context by considering that his "transatlantic life" makes him a part of several Atlantic (literary) histories (12; see 110). At the same time, Watson is also the one to recognize that Ward remains hard to place geographically, and that "histories that use national frameworks" fail to describe him adequately (106). Where Andrews had highlighted Ward's establishment of the black progressive genealogy, Watson actually sees in his writings an expression of black conservatism (see 109) at the same time that they reflect Ward's "curious compound figure" of the "modern Negro" (106). In analyzing Ward's written output, Watson's focus lies primarily on Ward's final years after his arrival in Jamaica and his sharp dismissal of the Morant Bay rebellion in 1865.[3] Ward's pamphlet *Reflections upon the Gordon Rebellion* (1866), which he wrote as an intervention in favor of local government and against the black rebels, paints thus a very different picture from the *Autobiography*. The fundamental tension for Watson, therefore, lies in Ward's representation of black uplift and internationalism that can be articulated only from "within the framework of the British empire and Victorian respectability" (106). The present chapter concurs with Watson in seeing in Ward's apologetic attitude toward Great Britain, along with a classism regarding certain groups of black people, a possibly irreconcilable "dilemma" (111).

This chapter contributes to shedding more light on Ward's *Autobiography* as his major work and, consequently, highlights the different points of view articulated in it, while also considering Ward's involvement in two other geographical locales, Canada West and Great Britain. In fact, the *Autobiography*, ten years before the rebellion in Jamaica, reveals that insecurity and tension were very important topoi that marked Ward's life as well as the articulation of his theories. The text also reveals the struggles of a black elite author to straddle the claims for black subjecthood and allegiances to an imperial center. The elaborate

3 The Morant Bay Rebellion began on October 11, 1865, with a protest march led by Paul Bogle. Several of the participants in the march were subsequently killed by the militia, in return of which the situation escalated further, causing the death of several, mostly white, citizens. Governor Edward Eyre quickly declared martial law and in the following month, several hundred people were killed, often without trial. Bogle and other fellow insurgents were captured and executed. Watson explains that in Jamaica, the Rebellion "is firmly established as one of the most significant events in the period between emancipation in the 1830s and the rise of the nationalist and labour movements in the 1930s" (104-05).

Autobiography is reminiscent of Austin Steward's lengthy narrative of 1856, and is yet more obviously experimental and different in focus. This is partly due to Ward's different point of departure in writing his text which, too, sets him apart from the other authors of this book. He is becomes a fugitive as a toddler, when his parents escape with him from Maryland. With the shadowy vestiges of slavery still lingering about his early childhood, he nevertheless grows up as a free black man surrounded by his core family and as a part of an intellectual, activist black elite. The text is therefore marked not as a conventional slave narrative but an "autobiography," and still is labeled as the story of "a fugitive negro" in its title.

Most importantly, this chapter argues, the *Autobiography* embraces fluid genre boundaries and plays with a number of textual formats to accommodate a variety of lived experiences and potential futures for black people. Similar to Thomas Smallwood, Ward's text challenges genre conventions and expectations towards black antebellum writers. If his title already suggests that he will propose a different trajectory to recreate his journey from enslavement to freedom, a look at Ward's elaborate table of contents reveals the triad on which his life narrative is based. It is, in fact, autobiography, travel report, and *anti-slavery* narrative. With Erica Ball's study, we are able to understand that these three are inseparably intertwined for Ward, as they represent his religious anti-slavery life as a prism of these constitutive elements. In this way, Ward produces not merely the narrative of a traveling life but his traveling life narrative, using his writing to explore the possibilities of cross-border literature.

This chapter will keep Ward's original structure to take a closer look at what themes and topics tie these elements together. It will show how his concepts of religious anti-slavery, the black gentleman, and the black yeoman, as they emerge in the parts on autobiography and the United States, inform his complex allegiances to Canada West and Great Britain. It will also carve out Ward's genealogies of heroic fugitives and black intellectuals which constitute the heart of his text in the part on Canada and are anchored in a theoretical approach that connects the black gentleman, the suitability of Canada West for fugitives, and his allegiances to the imperial center. Finally, the chapter will suggest that his types of genealogy can be read as that form of alternative minority historiography that Ward himself deems necessary in an age on the brink of modernity. While the *Autobiography* remains, *in fine*, ambiguous on the stance he takes toward Great Britain and Canada as grounds to explore black progress in an environment still marked by discrimination and open racism, the life narrative also stands as an experiment to leave behind the confines of the slave narrative in order to reveal both literary-discursive as well as practical potentialities for modern Blacks in the nineteenth century.

4.1 WARD'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY: ALTERNATIVE BLACK LIFE WRITING

The opening part, Ward's actual autobiography, only spans the first four chapters of the whole narrative. Composed at the end of his tour in Great Britain in 1855 and just before setting sail to Jamaica, the rest of his narrative, twenty more chapters in total, are dedicated to Ward's "Anti-Slavery Labours" in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. In genre terms, Andrews considers "the narrative of travel and exploration" to be "a new form of first-person writing in Afro-American letters [...] [evolving] out of the European travel correspondence" (Andrews 170). While Andrews cites Frederick Douglass and William Wells Brown as the first of such "correspondents" (170-71), he fails to list Ward here as one of the most important and elaborate representatives. Indeed, Ward frames his life narrative explicitly as an "account of [his] travels" he was asked to produce and thus avoids the more typical slave narrative framework of the life and sufferings of an individual (Ward v).

The autobiographical beginning is crucial for the way it navigates between elements of the slave narrative and black autobiography. The first three chapters are central to embedding Ward in the history of his family and cover their escape and life after slavery. Chapter four already marks the transition to the following part of the *Autobiography*, which is dedicated to his travels and anti-slavery labors. Ward uses the beginning to create a first type of genealogy, that of family heritage, which foreshadows his genealogy of heroism in later parts of the narrative. At the same time, he lays the conceptual foundations for the black yeoman and the black gentleman that he will develop throughout. Fundamentally, however, Ward articulates these concepts as part of his process of transforming the slave narrative into black life writing. While the *Autobiography* acknowledges certain elements of the genre, possibly to appeal to a white British readership, it in fact offers an alternative life writing for Blacks who cannot (and do not want to) be reduced to a former status as "slave".

Ward's inclusion of a dedication and a preface are indicative of this transformation. Both elements might either be typical for the slave narrative's requirements to authenticate the black author or simply a staple of autobiographical writing at the time that speaks to the reputation of the author through a friend, business partner, or the like. Similar to Smallwood, Ward uses the dedication and the preface to operate an authentication 'in reverse' and lay claim to his own

authorship and writing. The letter of dedication to the Duchess of Sutherland,[4] for example, is a testimony to Ward's recently ended tour of Great Britain and of his connections to the English upper classes. While the Duchess becomes a stand-in for Great Britain as "the noblest of all lands," deeply invested in an anti-slavery sentiment "from the prince to the peasant," she is also a powerful figure who let Ward into her "circle of [...] influence" (iii). This not only created numerous opportunities for Ward to follow his anti-slavery mission (see iii) but also to form personal alliances. Despite the polite submissiveness of the letter, however, it should not be overlooked that it is the only prefatory letter in Ward's narrative and from his own *plume*. In similar ways to Smallwood, therefore, it is Ward who authenticates the Duchess as a philanthropist and reliable anti-slavery supporter.

The preface, too, appears to be a deferential introduction of his work to a prospective readership. Yet, it serves Ward to boldly assert himself as an author in control of his work. Usually, the accepted convention of introductory letters placed new publications under the patronage of a respected sponsor and presented the author as a humble scribe with self-professed mediocre talent. While this placed the origo of the work outside the author's hands and into that of the "coaxer," as Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson have called it (50),[5] leaving her/him with the mere process of writing, Ward operates an important twist on this motif by reappropriating his work immediately. Although he explains that friends and acquaintances urged him to write the Autobiography (see Ward v), Ward re-assumes authority and control through the actual process of writing. He is humble and downplays his writing abilities, but counters this with the double responsibility that prompted him to write at all: "As a Negro, I live and therefore write for my people; as a Man, I freely speak my mind upon whatever concerns

4 Harriet Elizabeth Georgiana Leveson-Gower, duchess of Sutherland (1806–1868). The duchess is a highly interesting choice of patroness by Ward. She was a confidante of Queen Victoria and Mistress of the Robes at the court, while her sympathies for the anti-slavery cause were both well-known and mocked (see Reynolds). Her patronage of Harriet Beecher Stowe, and particularly her meeting at Stafford House in 1852, while not being "particularly important in bringing about the end of slavery," drew considerable attention for the movement (Reynolds). Absent, however, from Ward's letter—as from Reynold's biographical sketch—is the Duchess' family's involvement in the infamous Highland Clearances, which drew cringing criticism from Karl Marx. For a discussion on the allegations —justified or not—, see Richards (1970) and Pugh (1980).

5 Smith and Watson define the coaxer, or coercer, in the terms of Plummer as "any person or institution or set of cultural imperatives that solicits or provokes people to tell their stories" (50, Plummer qtd. 21).

me and my fellow men" (vii). In his version of 'double consciousness', Ward both outlines his indebtedness to the black population, which underlines the text's telos as an anti-slavery narrative, and anticipates another of his key concepts, black subjecthood, which he will develop as black gentlemanhood further on in the narrative.

What is more, the preface illustrates the fluid genre boundaries in his text. He admits that readers might wonder that he "freely made remarks upon other things than slavery, and compared [his] own [life] with those of other peoples. I did the former as a Man, the latter as a Negro" (vii). In fact, as a black author, his narrative is full of stories other than his own. Similarly to Austin Steward, for example, who also included family anecdotes and fugitive stories, Ward's text reflects the ties to other famous black abolitionists and leaders. At the same time, Ward is making the point that slavery as a dominant topic as well as a cruel reality does not define his being. Having been made a fugitive by his parents as they escaped from Maryland, he has known life only in freedom: "In what sense I am a fugitive, will appear on perusal of my personal and family history" (vii). Ward re-emphasizes black personhood through claiming a say and a voice in whatever he deems important. He therefore makes several suggestions in the preface about how his own *Autobiography* should be considered. Although Ward himself remains unclear on what exactly his text is genre-wise, he distances it from a literary piece, "for it is not written by a literary man" (vii). Offering this highly interesting comment on the status of autobiography between fact and fiction (see Smith and Watson 7-8), Ward also suggests several other terms to qualify his text, such as "some *account* of my travels," a prospective "*memorial* of my visit to England," and an "*embod[iment* of…] the opinions and arguments I had often employed to promote the work of emancipation" (Ward v-vi; all emphases added). In this way foreshadowing his combined text of travel and anti-slavery narrative, Ward embarks on rendering his autobiography as a basis.

After the dedication and the preface have marked Ward as a black gentleman of letters with connections to the English ruling classes, he begins the actual narrative by returning to his origins, which are dominated by a tension between ambiguity, insecurity, and his discursive strategies to counter these states retrospectively. Unlike many who were born into slavery, Ward is able to give the exact date of his birth—October 17, 1817—but does not indicate the location any more precisely than the "Eastern Shore" of Maryland (3). This important reversal of the slave-narrative pattern indicates that Ward is somewhat extraordinary. In fact, the beginning of his life is steeped in "secresy (sic) and mystery" (4) that, on the one hand, connect him to the marginalized slave author in the sense that it forecloses the detailed account that (white) readers would expect in an account of

a life: "Generous reader, will you therefore kindly forgive [...] if I do not tell you the name of my native town and county, and some interesting details of their geographical, agricultural, geological, and revolutionary history [...]" (4). On the other hand, however, the "mystery" of the circumstances of his birth only brings Ward closer to his core family and their shared experience of marginality.

Ward is only about three years old when his parents escape with him (see 3). Consequently, his parents are the actual fugitives he mentions in the title of his life narrative; they are yet between slavery and freedom, making him a fugitive by extension, while leaving their then only son and later, his brother, "quite ignorant of their birthplace, and of their condition" (3). Therefore, Ward offers no direct affirmation of his condition at birth, but rather hovers between confirmation (only the fifth sentence reads "I was born a slave") and doubt: "I never received direct evidence of [my condition as a slave], from either of my parents, until I was four-and-twenty years of age; and then my mother informed my wife, in my absence" (4). Ward is impacted by this state of suspicion, which also affects the birth of his brother in New Jersey. His parents, he explains, "suppose[d] (as is the general presumption) that to be born in a free State is to be born free, [and] readily allowed us to tell where my brother was born; but my birthplace I was neither permitted to tell nor to know" (4). The "general presumption," however, does not resolve the underlying threat the parents—including their son—faced as being in constant danger of arrest and recapture, even while the family lived in New Jersey and New York "for many years" (3).

Ward manages to counter-write, this tense suspicion with the detailed description of his family whose members function as the constant presences in his early childhood years. The elaborate portraits of his parents, as well as those of his brother and other escaped family members are strong arguments against the slave narrative's tragic absences of (paternal) origins. Similar to examples in Austin Steward's narrative, Ward is here engaged in creating a genealogy that not only provides these origins and a sense of stability and belonging but also creates a list of meaningful individuals that Ward will later connect to that of the heroic fugitive. Ward's father, for example, was very present into his adult life. What is remarkable is the time Ward spends in revealing to readers a very close father-son relationship as part homage, part obituary.[6] Ward's picture of his father is crucial not only for revealing the latter's royal African heritage but also for pointing to the (oral) "tradition [...] as poor slaves may maintain" and which has enabled this side of the family genealogy to be remembered despite the fact that it is generally

6 This resonates with Austin Steward's history of his African grandfather. He recounts how his grandfather was snatched from his mother in Africa and made to suffer the middle passage to be sold as a slave in America (Steward 336-37).

"rather difficult [to] trac[e]" one's ancestry under slavery (5). His father, thus, is not only part of royal African blood and a "straightforward Christian" with whom his son as an aspiring minister can freely converse about life and death (5). Most importantly, Ward sees his father as a representative of "the black gentleman": the pinnacle of the self-liberated former Christian slave who has educated himself and has led an exemplary life in freedom (5-6). Erica Ball's comment about the power of slave narratives and conduct literature "to create the framework for a middle-class ideal of black manhood[,] the black self-made man[,]" is particularly apt here (40). Ward therefore links the family genealogy to his key concept of the gentleman via the figure of his own "self-made" father as a role model, but he also authenticates the latter with as much detail as possible, inscribing him into the long list of memorable black individuals that slavery would otherwise swallow up.

Ward's portrait of his mother is equally important. Here, too, oral tradition "is [the] only authority for [his] maternal ancestry" (Ward 7). Ward's delineation of the maternal line reaches back to the great-grandmother, a white woman and daughter of an Irish slaveholder, "one of the largest [...] in Maryland" (8). On the plantation in Maryland, Anne Ward becomes the constant provider for her enslaved family, and her "sickly child" Samuel in particular, who profits from hiring herself out (14). As such, Ward also places her at the heart of the cruel market economy of slavery: according to the "the parties owning us," the mother's task is to care for the constantly sick boy in order to make him fit "for the market" (14-15). The attempt to reduce the mother's love for her child to "its value in dollars and cents" is counteracted by Ward's strategy to dehumanize the slaveholders into "parties," in line with his deferral of his slave status in the first chapter (15).

His mother also emerges as the fierce protector of her family. She speaks out against the continued mistreatment of her husband "in pretty strong language," which puts herself in great danger (15). Ward turns to free indirect discourse to develop a long mock-monolog that mimicks the slave owners' strategic assessment of the mother's "insolence" (15). Ward uses this strategy effectively. On the one hand, it allows him to dismantle the effect of slavery upon slaveholders: Anne Ward's act of open resistance poses a threat to the "very foundation of slavery" and the neighboring plantations, and she must therefore be silenced (16). On the other hand, Ward is able to stay in control of the scene by yet again refusing to let the slaveholders appear in person and have a voice of their own. At the same time, he ridicules them by alluding to the impressive stature of his mother—"she was strong enough to whip an ordinary-sized man; she had as much strength of will as of mind" (16)—which scares them enough to hold off a flogging. What is more, Ward uses this stand-off as an interesting comment on

gender expectations and the social restrictions on marriage. "Marriage must succumb to slavery," but the story is not as easily told with Anne and William Ward (16). Anne is ten years his senior (see 7), she provides financially for the family, and by her outward appearance, is not the image of the slave wife in need of protection. Imbuing his mother with tasks and traits traditionally ascribed to men, Ward brilliantly insinuates how slavery forces the family to function differently from white norms, but also how these alternatives are lived by black families.

Finally, Ward's mother becomes the trigger for the family's escape. Although Anne's sale due to her 'insolent' behavior is put off as long as Samuel is sick, Ward's narrative tone is changing to the sentimental in order to describe his mother's crisis as she ponders the threat of being separated from her family. Ward stylizes his mother into a model Christian woman, an equivalent to her husband, who yet values her "womanhood [and] her theology" over simple submission to slavery's demands (19). Her convictions lead her to resist yet again—to "fully embody resistance to slavery," as Ball phrases it (4)—and make her the driving force in the plan to escape. The decision is one of a mother and a leading woman: "She said it with energy; [...] [my father] hesitated; he was not a mother" (Ward 20). Ward is also free to admit that his own family—as an alternative to white standards—is only one example of "where the wife leads," reinforcing the alternative family model under slavery and paying tribute to his mother as a challenge also to the cult of True Womanhood (20).

The chapter dedicated to the actual escape maintains the focus on family and reimagines the pivotal moment of escape not as a time of trial suffered by an individual but as an event that is suffered conjointly and that is unable to separate the family members. While it reinforces Anne Ward's role as the acting subject, it also continues to reduce the slave owners to passive objects. The latter are made to bear the escape of their 'property' "submissively" (21), as Ward suggests, and as something outside of their control. Ward achieves to establish the greatest possible distance to the former owners by placing them outside the kind of oral tradition that he had established to sustain his own family, explaining that "information on these questionable topics [of how they reacted to the escape] was never conveyed to us in any definite, systematic form" (21).

Instead, Ward remains focused on his mother's "palpitating heart" and on each step she takes off the plantation with her child (21), thus reverting to a sentimental description of the pivotal scene usually at the heart of every slave narrative. Since Ward himself can hardly remember the escape, but is aware of this "all-important journey," he adopts omniscient narration to recreate his parents' thoughts and their struggle (24). Ward switches to third-person singular to reflect upon himself as

"the burden [...] of a child" who nevertheless serves to strengthen the bonds between his parents during their "exodus" (23), or, "hegira" (20). The scene is crucial not because it partly caters to the typology of slave narratives but also in view of Ward's convictions as a Christian minister, since religion becomes a strong sustaining factor during the escape. Like Richard Warren, for whom religion was closely related to the maternal and memories of his mother, Ward sets his own few recollections of the escape against the background of his parents' faith in the "God of the oppressed," describing them as infused with "[his] earliest recollections of maternal tenderness and paternal care" (24). Consequently, Ward not only reinforces familial ties as a refusal of prevalent images on the slave family, he also originally recognizes the key function of the escape for the strengthening of the family unit, to the effect that "[he] would rather forget any facts of [his] childhood than those connected with [the journey]" (24).

The Wards successfully reach Greenwich, New Jersey, in 1820, but their initially peaceful life with friends, neighbors, and "schoolfellows" for Samuel, becomes increasingly fragile as the narrative returns to the topos of insecurity that has haunted the family before (26). His parents eventually decide to leave for New York City in August 1826 to avoid the "numerous and alarming" incidents of kidnappings in New Jersey (26). Ward's disillusionment with city life, however, is obvious. The evident contrast to rural Greenwich is marked by New York's large black population and the recent emancipation of slaves.[7] Even though his parents are able to connect with relations—we learn, for example, that Henry Highland Garnet is Ward's cousin (26)—Ward's picture of New York is dire. He quickly learns that a city cannot protect from kidnappings, and accuses the dependence of "the mercantile and [...] political [along with religious] classes to the slave system" (26). Yet, Ward manages to align his personal experience with the lot of many urban Blacks. Growing up as a teenager, this means both being poor and finding oneself in the dilemma between work and the need for education, as Ward describes: "Poverty compelled me to work, but inclination led me to study [...]" (28). Ward also identifies the rampant racism in the city, which he calls "Negro-hate," as an aggravating factor that weighs on black youth (28). Rhetorically, this outline of conditions becomes important as it serves to bolster Ward's critique of the double standards applied to the right of black people to voice their complaints. Given the omnipresence and ferocity of this type of racism, Ward explains that accusations at the hand of Blacks should not only be not

7 Austin Steward, too, laments in his narrative that black people tend to flock to the "crowded city" where "there is no escape from the crushing weight of prejudice" (167). He criticizes a tendency amongst the free population to "flock to cities" only to become "barbers and waiters" instead of independent businessmen (167).

surprising but are still relatively "mild" (29). Ward subscribes to the idea of a "peculiarly American spirit" as furthering this racism[8] and offers several examples of discrimination on the grounds of race from his own youth, the work place, and not least, from the church which he calls complicit with slavery (29).

By contrast, Ward shapes his parent's house in Greenwich as the rural ideal, the place of "[his] earliest recollections," and the first time he relates a sense of belonging to a specific place (27). Significantly, the descriptions of his childhood in Greenwich mirror his later support for an agricultural ideal and the black yeoman that he hoped to realize as a farmer in Jamaica, where he moved the year he published the *Autobiography*. Greenwich becomes the "most sacred spot of earth" because it is the site of his father's garden and the place where he acquired literacy (27). Ward passes on the knowledge to read and write to his mother by reading the Bible to her. Despite this cherished scene between mother and son, Ward admits, almost bitterly, that the "love of books" has distracted him from a life dedicated to "the hoe" (27).

Despite this dire outlook for Ward, he finally becomes a clerk of Thomas L. Jennings (1791-1859) and David Ruggles (1810-1849), and thus enters into close contact with two of the leading members of the black community.[9] According to his biographer Ronald Burke, his early introduction to the circles of the black intelligentsia will be essential, too, in cementing Ward's position as a respected leader by his peers (see 13; 33) Unlike the other authors discussed in this book, therefore, Ward's background is distinctly more elitist. He also describes the year he begins to work for Jennings, 1833, as the year of his religious conversion (30). Coincidentally, 1833 marks also a pivotal year for the anti-slavery movement as the year the British Parliament passed the Slavery Abolition Act. With this subtle coincidence, Ward illustrates Erica Ball's argument centered on women and men who epitomize the dedication to an anti-slavery life tied to his religious convictions. The description of his career further exemplifies the interconnection of his vocational religious life and his beginning anti-slavery labors. For example, about six months after he is licensed as a preacher in Poughkeepsie, he accepts a position as traveling agent of New York's Anti-Slavery Society (31). He works in his first pastorate in South Butler, NY, from 1841-1843, before resuming "public

8 Ward also subscribes to the idea that it can be easily transferred to new immigrants to the United States. (see 29).

9 Both Jennings and Ruggles were freeborn African American abolitionists. Jennings held the first patent of an African American in the United States, for the precursor to dry-cleaning. Ruggles was a bookseller in New York City and defended Frederick Douglass in 1838 as a member of the New York Vigilance Committee (see Larsen; Manos).

and continuous anti-slavery labours, in connection with the Liberty Party," which adds another, decidedly political, layer to his commitment (32).

Aside from other eclectic educational interests and first editorial ventures, Ward announces his marriage and the birth of his first son in 1838 (31).[10] Despite the rapid succession of events in the final chapter of his autobiography, Ward pauses to note that at "twenty-one years and twelve days" of age, he had not only transitioned into adulthood but had now become "a family man" (31). Set against the background of his own family memories, his son's name (Samuel "the younger" 31) indicates that he is now ready to start a genealogy of his own. In fact, Ward here comes full circle at the end of his autobiographical section by renouncing the intellectual interests in favor of his father's representation of the black yeoman. In view of his imminent departure for Jamaica at the time of writing the *Autobiography*, he admits that "[...] at the age of eight-and-thirty I am glad to hasten back to what my father first taught me, and from what I never should have departed—the tilling of the soil, the use of the hoe" (34). Consequently, in what Andrews has described as making his own life experience an example for emulation (see Andrews 198), Ward gives young black men a piece of advice which is centered on finding and accepting a place of "duty" (34). With this, he illustrates Ball's observation that "African American writers characterized self-improvement, self-advancement, and the independence increasingly associated with a discrete set of middle-class occupations as a duty—a racial imperative for young African American men" (3).

4.2 UNITED STATES: RELIGIOUS ANTI-SLAVERY AND THE BLACK GENTLEMAN

With his autobiography completed, Ward's introduction to abolitionist work in the United States constitutes a programmatic part of his text that one could consider his anti-slavery narrative. Ward takes these years to cement his concept of a decidedly religious anti-slavery activism and to hone the idea of black gentlemanhood. His years in the United States, which culminate in his precipitated flight to Canada in 1851 after his engagement in the Jerry Henry fugitive rescue case, turn into an occasion for Ward to offer the theoretical foundations of his understanding as a black religious abolitionist and are, too, most illustrative of his

10 He briefly studies medicine and law, and engages in journalistic responsibilities as the "editor and proprietor" of two newspapers, the *True American and Religious Examiner* (1845-1848) and the *Impartial Citizen* (1849-1851).

abilities as a preacher and a speaker. In several instances, Ward seems to take to the pulpit to lecture on the conditions of his time, thereby offering a black perspective on abolitionist work. In doing so, Ward does not only insert black activists into white-dominated abolitionist circles but also, similar to Smallwood, reverses traditionally fix roles in becoming the one to authenticate the reliability of several white abolitionists and to call for more interracial cooperation. Alternating theoretical chapters with those focused on his practical career as an abolitionist, Ward carves out the *Gretchenfrage* for the United States at mid-nineteenth century as tied to both religion and slavery. At the same time, he positions Blacks as equal members of society who are supported by a longstanding genealogy of black intellectuals pursuing black progress. In the closing scenes of the Jerry rescue case, Jerry Henry becomes a protagonist who can be read as the epitome of Ward's theories and as the embodiment of the black gentleman, foreshadowing the concept of the heroic fugitive, which will occupy the part on Canada West.

If the part focusing on the United States is therefore shaped as a religious anti-slavery narrative, Ward first begins by turning the black gentleman into an expression of anti-slavery dedication. Ward sets out to prove successfully that life writing and anti-slavery report inform each other, and that his anti-slavery report is, too, a form of life writing. His opening words can be read in this vein: "It may be thought that the biographical portion of this volume is brief and summary; but it will be seen, as we proceed, that some points, deserving more attention, belong more properly to other parts of the work" (37). Ward's definition of "anti-slavery labours" (37), which forms the backdrop for his further discussions, clearly reads as a reflection of the ideal of the black gentleman and of the values of a black middle class. He understands anti-slavery work not simply as a political involvement but as a behavioral pattern as well as an expression of individual improvement. Anti-slavery labor, then, for Ward, is the occupation of the black gentleman, the sum of "upright demeanour, gentlemanly bearing, Christian character, social progress, and material prosperity, of every coloured man" (37).

Anti-slavery work consequently becomes a personal, clearly masculine, attitude and a lived agenda. It reflects a performativity of anti-slavery that engages the stereotyping racism in the United States which "den[ies the black man] his capacity for improvement or progress" (37). For Ward, the practice of an anti-slavery life encompasses more than an intellectual side. The strong focus of his understanding lies on the individual and the omnipresent key term of "cultivation" or self-improvement (42). Reiterating the importance of finding a "vocation," he embraces the professional black man as the embodiment of a concrete, everyday expression of anti-slavery (43). Black professionals, from doctors to mechanics,

are signs of "the cultivation of all the upward tendencies of the coloured man" and as such, living refusals of color prejudice (42). Ward himself comes full circle in asserting what for Erica Ball is the central quote of his text: "my labours must be anti-slavery labours, because mine must be an anti-slavery life" (43).

In tying anti-slavery life to black gentlemanhood, one other aspect is of importance in Ward's argument. Anti-slavery work as a necessity in the United States is cast primarily as an issue of class. Ward's focus remains on the United States as the *origo* of evil and the worst of situations for the black man of the present, pinning down his argument on a seeming innateness of American racism in a marked rhetorical synthesis: "this feeling is so universal that one almost regards 'American' and 'Negro-hater' as synonymous terms" (39). With the many expressions of discrimination in several realms of life, Ward makes sure to distinguish the United States from "the "middling and better classes of all Europe," who display a more courteous behavior to black people (40).[11] In contrast, he describes the "early American settlers…in many parts of America" to have been of "very low origin," derivative of the "lowest of the English population," and still imbued with great hostility toward the free black population in the North (40). Ward's impression of a deeply ingrained American prejudice reveals the importance of class and, possibly, social prestige. Although Ward details incidents of discrimination at the hand of British immigrants in the States, these adopted practices do not lead him to address an outright prevalence of racism in British society itself. Instead, these naturalized "Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen" become examples for a more severe degree of racism which Ward sees prevalent "by non-slaveholders, in non-slaveholding States" (39).

As Ward resumes his narrative, he returns to the events of the 1830s and 1840s that outline his practical involvement in abolitionist activities in New York. As a witness to such landmark events as the founding of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 and the eventual split between William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879) and other members, Ward's main concerns lie in the attempt to reconcile his personal and his professional networks, the black community and white abolitionists, and to restore faith in and stability to New York's abolition movement.[12] Most importantly, he pushes the necessity of interracial cooperation.

11 Ward lists numerous examples of discrimination that span several aspects of public life for Blacks, affecting public meetings, church worship, and the exclusion of active political participation (see 38).

12 William Lloyd Garrison co-founded the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833, but a schism occurred in 1839 due to fundamental differences between those that advocated immediate abolition and those in favor of a more gradual approach. Some members, led by Lewis Tappan (1788–1873), formed the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society

To illustrate this necessity, Ward takes it upon himself to promote the trustworthiness and moral uprighteousness of a string of white abolitionists, In fact, one chapter is almost entirely dedicated to the minute portraits of Gerrit Smith (1797-1874), Beriah Green (1795-1874), and William Goodell (1792-1878), whom Ward recommends to his fellow black brethren.[13] As a part of New York's organized abolition movement himself, Ward is able to portray these prominent representatives from a period before they gained national fame. At the same time, this reflects how Ward directs his own career amongst them.

Most importantly, Ward feels able to connect to them on the basis of a shared gentlemanhood. Ward talks at large about Smith, for example, with whom he would become involved in the Jerry rescue in 1851. He paints a heroic portrait of Smith as a "gentleman," uniting Smith's superior intellect and rhetorical capacity with his religious piety (54). It serves Ward as a defense of Smith against "his enemies during his short career in Congress," but also to form him into a personal role model in order to underline Smith's credibility (54). Listening to one of Smith's speeches in 1838 allows Ward to powerfully redeem Smith in the eyes of the black community and turn him into a truthful convert to the anti-slavery cause. Smith finally receives highest honors in Ward's final comparison to a British philanthropist as "the Shaftesbury of America" (58).[14] This positions Smith in one line with Ward's admiration of Great Britain in the anti-slavery effort, but also finalizes Smith's version of the 'from-rags-to-riches'-motif. Ward both authenticates and propagates this success story and endorses Smith through his position as a black community leader, anti-slavery advocate, and black gentleman.

Ward himself is formally initiated to the abolition movement in the wake of New York's first anti-abolition riots of 1834, which opened what has been called a "great 'riot year'" (Prince 1). Ward's biting account of what would become the severest riots in New York until the Civil War, extending way beyond what Ward is covering in his narrative, is initially still presented as an act of open resistance

and the Liberty party in 1840. Ward was a candidate of the Liberty Party (see *BAP* 62; 189-90).

13 Smith and Goodell were founders of the Liberty party in 1840 and later co-founded the Radical Abolition party in 1855 (see *BAP* 423n2).

14 The reference is to Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 7th Earl of Shaftesbury, called Lord Shaftesbury (1801-1885). He is associated with labor and factory reforms in the 1830s, notably the Factory Act of 1833, whose outcomes Ward admires, but is also remembered as an "evangelical crusader in politics" and a philanthropist (Wolffe).

of the assembled Blacks to their white aggressors.[15] At first, this is an empowering scene for Ward who states that "The blacks were victors; every white man was driven from the place" (47). The scene is quickly reversed, however, when white reinforcement appears and violently attacks the remaining black men. Ward's initial triumph soon turns into disbelief when the authority, "the public watchman," arrests and locks up the black men instead of the white rioters, while the mob continues to damage Lewis Tappan's house (48).

After a first night in a prison cell, Ward and those arrested with him witness a farce of a hearing which reveals the pervasiveness of institutional racism in the judicial system. Ward is offended that he and his friends are treated the same as the regular prisoners and that, despite the fact that "none appeared against [them]" to bring forth charges, the magistrate sends them on to Bridewell prison (48). There, Ward is outraged at the "most filthy state [of] that cell" where he must stay with 'real' criminals (49). Their night in a prison cell is also a fight for their "innocence and [...] dignity" (49). The sense of violated propriety and respectability clashes again with Ward's description of both the New York magistrate, whom he describes as a "New York Dogberry" insulting Ward and his friends, and the lower-class diction of the watchman who arrested them without charge (48). The episode closes only when Ward's father pays to release Ward from prison. He reflects that this injustice "initiated me into the anti-slavery fraternity" (49). More than a somber rite of initiation, his imprisonment is a veritable transformative moment for Ward, in which he "[pledges] allegiance to the antislavery cause […] in that cell on the 7th of July, 1834" (48). In this sense, the scene bears resemblance to an instance of religious conversion. In addition to hearing the call of the gospel years before, Ward has now also heard the call to *do* anti-slavery.

These religious overtones in framing anti-slavery work lead Ward to a more theoretical section, a lecture on the fundamental *Gretchenfrage* that he observes to be dividing the United States. This central question casts the conflict between pro- and anti-slavery forces as centered on the parties' interpretation of the state and practice of religion in the United States. Aside from rhetorical mastery, Ward's analysis equally demonstrates his astute understanding of the American psyche around mid-nineteenth century. To begin with, the practice of slavery as a Christian nation is the fundamental difference, in Ward's view, that separates the United States from Great Britain. "People in England," Ward claims, cannot comprehend the "inexplicable mystery" that the United States represent to them

15 Linda Kerber observes that tensions in the city had been running high before the outbreaks in 1834. It was amidst this atmosphere that "hatred of abolitionists would become a password covering a multitude of political sins" (30).

by claiming "the Christian religion, and [...] republicanism [...] and yet hold[ing] slaves" (61). While this seems to indicate European superiority in the sense of having resolved this paradox in Great Britain years ago, Ward does remind readers of the long-standing opposition, in the Old World, to the abolition movement. Indeed, Ward draws transatlantic parallels between the two movements and the opposition they had to face. He compares the objections "in the British senate" to the well-known English abolitionists "Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Buxton" to the "same class of arguments" (62) brought forth "in the American senate *now*" against such figures as "Sumner, Wilson, Seward, Giddings" (61-62, original emphasis).[16]

Particularly in the United States, however, Ward sees the main reason for the stance against abolition among religious and benevolent societies as an effort to preserve "harmony" and avoid offending their slaveholding members (66-67). In addition to being submissive to the South, a well-known argument in abolitionist literature, Ward identifies an underlying "contempt" of black people as the motivation to oppose abolition—a point of criticism that is meant to resonate in both North and South (67). Slavery, he claims, is nothing else than the "buying, selling, the image of God and the members of Christ's body" (68). By describing slavery metaphorically as the violation of the religious body (community) of which black people are naturally a part, a pro-slavery stance must appear anti-religious as well as illogical. Most important is Ward's direct address of pro-slavery refusal to speak out on "sins which the Church and the Pulpit ought not and need not rebuke" (69). Ward seems to suggest that the purpose of abolitionism is also to remind people of their duty: the church is under the obligation, as Ward has his fictive abolitionists say, to "rebuke and to denounce the specific forms of iniquity," the contrary of which would otherwise be called the "most practical form of infidelity" (69-70).

Therefore, Ward exposes the true character of the conflict between pro- and anti-slavery proponents in the United States as transcending the question of freedom and equal rights for black people. It is far more an issue at the heart of the "nature of our religion," revolving around contrasting understandings and interpretations of "the honour of Christ, the purity of the Church, [and] the character of God" (70). Paired with a worrisome religious "influence of the American people [...] at home and abroad," Ward challenges the fundamentals of societal self-understanding. For Ward, explicating the conflict in this way proves also a means to impress upon readers, white and black, the significance and

16 Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786–1845), Thomas Clarkson (1760–1846), and William Wilberforce (1759–1833), British abolitionists, founders of the British Anti-Slavery Society in 1823.

magnitude of the question of slavery that challenges each individual to reconsider her and his basic practices of faith. Ward then puts his finger on the wound of "the American pro-slavery Church" (71) by recalling the logical incommensurability, from his rhetorical point of view of as a speaker, of 'owning' those who should be fellow-worshippers (see 71). After having thus dissected a perverted religious understanding that he sees dominating in the United States, Ward's first central question and task for abolitionism then becomes "Whether that Church can be reformed or not" (72). For Ward, America at the crossroads is not merely a question of pro- or anti-slavery stances. For him as a religious abolitionist, it hinges around the place of religion in society: "shall religion, pure and undefiled, prevail in the land; or shall a corrupt, spurious, human system, dishonouring to God and oppressive to man, have the prevalence?" (72).

In addition to assigning abolitionism a task that is grounded in his understanding of the religious nature of anti-slavery, Ward also praises the abolitionists for having identified the core issue of American politics at this time. The two issues are related for Ward: "[T]he real political issue is, not whether the black man's slavery shall be perpetuated, but whether the freedom of any Americans can be permanent" (77). This reformulation of the core assertion of the Declaration of Independence mirrors Ward's astute understanding of the American political psyche.[17] Slavery, he explains, stands as a monument to the arbitrary application of rights, and the consequences are severe: "[The abolitionists] see that, if the principle be admitted that a black man may be legally, righteously enslaved, so may *any other man*; that slavery is altogether regardless of the colour of its victims [...]" (77; added emphasis). Therefore, the summary that Ward offers proves that in his interpretation, the question of slavery as it is manifest in the struggle of abolitionists against their opponents, will not only determine the "weal or woe of the American Church" but will decide on "the very existence, of the republic" (78). The issue of slavery therefore poses a question that touches the nation's political and religious self-understanding. It will have repercussions on basic and comprehensive "American rights"—"affecting all classes, [...] their best institutions, [...] all constitutional government" (78). Ward, writing between 1853 and 1855, has grasped the fundamental importance of the question of slavery, which would mark the decade of the 1850s as it accelerated toward the Civil War. His rhetoric also marks the climax of his theoretical outline of anti-slavery life as he understands it.

Ward's appointment to a pastorate in South Butler's Congregational Church in 1841 as a testing ground for his hypotheses is illustrative of how his religious

17 I refer here to the famed assertion in the Declaration that "all men are created equal" and their rights "inalienable" and thus, permanent (Declaration).

vocation and his anti-slavery work are inseparably intertwined. At the same time, South Butler is indicative of the challenges Ward is facing as a black preacher in a white congregation, with equal responsibility to black community members: he becomes a representative black leader faced with the crucial task to create sustainable, livable, practicable leadership and activism in an environment of ever-increasing racial tensions. The pastorate reflects the great responsibility to encourage his fellow Blacks while finding himself enmeshed in a fight for acknowledgment and racial equality. While the episode condenses Ward's different struggles—religious, personal, and political—it still serves him to outline with equal force the bright future for black people, which ultimately shakes the foundations of white American self-understanding.

As Ward embarks on his pastorate in South Butler, he is aware of the fact that he becomes the "'new thing under the sun'" for bringing the only black family into an all-white congregation (80; Ecclesiastes 1:9). Being the black pastor of a white congregation is a matter of great responsibility to Ward, not simply in a professional sense of caring for the flock, but very consciously as an anti-slavery pastor who is also a representative of the black community. Ward knows that taking on the pastorate in South Butler makes him the target of scrutiny and possibly, criticism, with regard to both of these aspects. Again, the facets of his individual life are inseparably linked to the greater good of the black community and to his overarching goal to end slavery and discrimination. As he explains, his performance as a preacher in the pulpit will influence "the [whole] anti-slavery cause [… *just as*] the people of colour" (81; added emphasis). While the pressure on Ward to be judged as the representative of success or failure of an entire community is palpable, he is still optimistic about the chances his position holds. After all, his success could have a significant impact in empowering and motivating "young black [men…] to qualify [themselves] for a position of usefulness" (81).[18]

Moreover, Ward perceives his hands-on grassroots work as an opportunity to spread both the "gospel of Jesus" and the 'gospel' of abolitionism at the same time, like a missionary who also calls on the sense of "dut[y] of American citizens" to position themselves vis-à-vis both doctrines (82). At the same time, Ward's appointment among the South Butler congregation is filtered through an interesting commentary on the "peculiar character" of the South Butler congregation and their reactions to his preaching (82). In fact, his description of them as "my own people" reflects a sense of familiarity and professional appreciation that is yet met with a certain distance that Ward seems to be intent on

18 Erica Ball notes that African American leaders "offered virtuous political models and exemplary figures for elite and aspiring northern black readers to emulate" (2).

keeping as a narrator (82). Ward calls the small-town South Butlerites the "honest, straightforward, God-fearing descendants of New England Puritans" who are open to being instructed on the tenets of the Bible and venerate the authority of the preacher as a direct mediator of "God's truth" (82). Yet, although the majority seems not to be interested at all in Ward's skin color, "some might ridicule [him]" after all (83). Finally, he leaves open to interpretation how serious or frequent these incidents are, and rather focuses on his approach to preach anti-slavery in times of its high unpopularity by grounding it in biblical tenets and by placing the fight for abolition as a logical behavior.

Ward's important position in South Butler also forces him to engage in an astute ethnography of preaching that reflects his double function as preaching abolitionist to two different congregations. When he speaks to his fellow Blacks, Ward approaches speaking from the pulpit with a sense of mission and responsibility: he intends to speak directly to "influence […] our character and our condition" (83). His function as a pastor exceeds the engagement with the Gospel, as Ward must grapple with the situation of black people in the area. Deprived from voting, as Ward explains, the "temptation to hate their white fellow-citizens" is not an abstract lure but a very real and "natural" threat (84). Ward openly identifies with his fellow Blacks in this regard; based on his personal experiences, he acknowledges that whites are deserving of this hatred for the mistreatment of black people. Ward's (self-)restraint that he musters in order to not give into this rage might be surprising, but serves also to reinforce his core tenets: remembering Christ's sacrifice and suffering for all, practicing his forgiveness toward whites, recalling the support of some whites in the anti-slavery struggle (see 85). While Ward sees precisely his own pastorate as "a sign of hope," he tries to bridge the gap between a religious understanding of 'temptation' and the social reality of discrimination (85). He cautions his black congregation emphatically against the threat of giving in to the desire to hate their fellow white men because it will lead to damnation.

When addressing his white congregation, Ward does not deliver a simple sermon but knows that his preaching is inevitably linked to "pleading the cause of the blacks before the whites" (86). At the same time that Ward is performing his profession before an audience, he reveals that his performance is also an attempt to uphold his private "self-respect" and standing (86). Just as Ward outlines his project to claim "Justice [as…] every man's birthright" for the black community, he fiercely condemns the quest for and the deliverance of pity, false sympathy, self-humiliation (86). Outlining the equality of black people to whites *in front of* whites constitutes an at times painful dilemma for Ward. As much as he wants to

avoid this "degrad[ing]" exposition of the obvious, he feels compelled to do it, and finally manages to turn it into a powerful outline of black progress.

In fact, Ward's narrative drifts into a portrait of a "respectabl[e]" free black urban population, a segment of the populace which, as Ward seems to say, *right now*, is regrouping as a model citizenry of propriety, self-support, law-abidance (88). In line with his own definition of a black gentleman, Ward unfolds a long history of black people that has been ignored by whites, a fact that is in part responsible for the unequal treatment of Blacks in society (see 87-88). What is more, Ward rehabilitates another type of history, namely that of black civilization as made up of its scholars, scientists, philosophers, and intellectuals, which spans the ages from "the ancient Negro" to the "modern" (87). Ward does not fail to point out that the line of black ancient thinkers from "Cyprian, Augustine […to] Euclid, and Terence" long preceded origins of "the present Anglo-Saxon race" (87). Much like Smallwood had done in claiming allegiance to David Walker as a model black leader, Ward's example figures for the contemporary black intellectual include the most well-known personalities and abolitionists of the day. For example, Ward inserts himself as "the schoolmate" and "the friend and associate of" such well-known black leading figures as H.H. Garnet, Alexander Crummell, Frederick Douglass, J. McCune Smith, and others (87).

His portrait of the history of Blacks through time is based on the view that intellectual progress is inseparable from class "progress" and moral integrity—a combination, Ward realizes, which is a thorn in the eyes of their "bitterest enemies" (90). The core problem, according to Ward, is then not simply the refusal of black intellectual capacity by whites, but the refusal to acknowledge the existence of the black educated gentleman along with the incapacity to admit the possibility of white inferiority (see 92). In turn, those instances in which it has been possible for "intelligent and prominent" black men to gain the friendship and respect of "the very best classes of Americans" are to be seen as the outcome of Ward's personal motto "Do the thing you do in the best possible manner", mirroring a continuous strife for perfection in order to make oneself indispensable in whatever profession one exercises (94-95).19 In Ward's view, such an attitude combines honor and manliness and can be found naturally amongst the black community, showing to which degree the struggle for respectability as one pillar of anti-slavery was part, too, of a conservative, patriarchic value system (95-6).

Equipped with these prerequisites of model citizens, Ward's final assessment of the condition of black people in the United States is far from desperate. That

19 To underline his motto, Ward quotes Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) "Honour and fame from no distinction rise:/Act well your part—there all the honour lies" from the "Essay on Man" (1733-1734; Epistle IV).

they are now "in no hopeless circumstances" relies on the improvements that Ward sees as having taken place in previous decades, such as the self-organization of the black population through regular "State or a National Convention[s] of black men" (96). In fact, the improvements are such that Ward shifts his tone to finish the chapter in a strong speech of empowerment and optimism, from a point of view of progress and future-orientation. This portrait of black people in the United States shows Ward's acknowledged mastery of rhetoric, but what is more, his mastery of the American imaginary. Blacks, he says, are only at the beginning to develop their full potential, and the reason for this is that "They are Americans" (97). As such, Ward positions them at the heart of a shared American identity, body and soul, which underlines the undeniable claim to be recognized as humans, citizens, and equals: "they are well taught in the history of their native country; they know the avenues to, and springs of, the most important and characteristic feelings of the American heart" (97). The dilemma arises from an alienation from "what they know ought to be American principle" through discrimination, while at the same time, they are "connected socially, by choice and by force, with the subjects of the most cruel oppression on the face of the earth" (97). "The anti-slavery field of labour" as the most paradigmatic area in which this dilemma plays out is now in the hands of black anti-slavery leaders, as Ward explains: "Already has the anti-slavery advocacy, for all effective purposes, passed into their hands" (98). This is a tribute to the rise of black leadership, of which Ward is a part, and the authority Ward ascribes them within the organized anti-slavery movement, but also marks this movement as an integral part of black progress.

In a masterful last stroke that challenges and reverses the American myth of (white) progress and the rise to riches, Ward envisions a chiastic future development in the United States. Whites, endowed with all privileges and satisfied with base pursuits of "money and […] pleasure," will descent into lethargy (100). Black people, on the other hand, on the brink of developing their potential, will use their energy to rise from "their very midst" into "the real American character, its manliness, its enterprise, its love of liberty" (100). Teacher and student will reverse roles, and though Ward refuses the role of a prophet, he offers a state of the art that casts the black population not just as a force to be reckoned with, but as having the potential to outdo America's whites. [20] With such radical statements, as well as his own emphasis on black intellectual history,

20 In this way, Ward predicts black loyalty to the British Crown at a time when the debates on "annexation or conquest" of Canada West through U.S. troops are running high (220). It seems that the willingness to show their allegiance through arms, which would also be a direct fight to maintain their freedom, is part and parcel of "the onward progress of the Canadian Negro" (221).

it is obvious that Ward qualifies as a member of Smallwood's genealogy of radical intellectual leadership. He is both part of this leadership and instrumental in calling attention to it, as was his contemporary Smallwood. However, Ward's own focus lies more strongly on the element of the heroic as a link to his allegiances to the British Empire in the following part of the *Autobiography* on Canada West.

Despite the fact that progress and a bright future are in store for Blacks, Ward and his family witness the crumbling political atmosphere in the United States, which reaches a personal climax for Ward in October of 1851. He describes how the news of the Christiana Riot triggers their decision to leave the States, as it now seems utterly hopeless in their eyes for the country to be saved (see 116-17).[21] This feeling is paired with Ward's increasingly "embarrass[ing]" financial situation, as his anti-slavery lecturing does not "find bread and education for one's children" (117). Significantly, then, Ward casts the decision to move to Canada as a joint decision of his family, relying on the prospects of a peaceful life "in a free British country" (117).

However, putting their project into practice is delayed by what has become the classic fugitive slave rescue case of William "Jerry" Henry. Ward's involvement, along with other Liberty Party members and abolitionists, will ultimately force him to head to Canada in order to avoid arrest. At the same time, Ward's extended description serves as a form of testimony of what Monique Patenaude Roach has called "a quintessential example of the opposing forces of anti-slavery and racism in the heart of the Burned-over District" (135). She reads the rescue as a clear sign that "[t]he simplistic antislavery image of the Burned-over District during the antebellum years fails to encompass the region's dichotomy" (138). For Ward, the Jerry Rescue brings him face to face, for the first time, with the destabilizing force of slavery. Most importantly, William Henry becomes the epitome of a gentleman fugitive, whose individual heroism foreshadows Ward's theoretical outline of heroic fugitives.

Upon his return to Syracuse, where Ward then lives with his family, he learns that Jerry Henry is pursued under the Fugitive Slave Law (FSL) by his master/father (see Ward 117). He heads to prison with abolitionist Samuel J. May

21 The Christiana Riot occurred on September 11, 1851, when Southern slaveholder Edward Gorsuch and eight other men tried to arrest four fugitive slaves under the provisions of the FSL. William Parker, a fugitive slave himself, together with "a large group of armed black men and women," resisted the men. In the ensuing skirmish, Gorsuch was killed, and many others on both sides were wounded. Parker fled to Canada; no one was sentenced in the aftermath of the riot. One person, who was wrongly accused, was not found guilty, and the case became "fuel for the abolition movement" (Kopaczewski).

to meet "[a] poor Mulatto man" and for the first time that he can remember, finds himself face to face with "a chained slave" (117-18). Ward is visibly shaken, bewildered, yet fascinated by Henry, and although he identifies as a fugitive himself in the title of his autobiography, Ward's reaction is reminiscent of somewhat of a culture shock. Ward's fascination with Henry lies, partly, in the latter's status as a "mulatto", embodying not only the outrage of slavery's sexual exploits but the extremes of the FSL as such. Ward reverts to a heavily descriptive narrative tone to present the distressed Henry, turning the prison cell into the stage for Henry's pathos-laden lament and appeal to his defenders, which mark him as the exemplary heroic fugitive.

As such, he impresses Ward with his appeal of "fervid eloquence as I never heard before nor since from the lips of man, to break his chains, and give him that liberty which the Declaration of Independence assumed to be the birthright of every man" (118). Ward mediates Henry's monolog "as far as [he] can revive his sentences in [his] memory," turning Henry into a mouthpiece of his own ideal of virtuous citizenship (118). Henry's rhetoric mirrors the claim to equal rights and treatment, "because I am a man, and an American" (120). Therefore, while the actual rescue of Henry a few paragraphs on is the climax of the episode, Henry's emotional speech should be seen as the climax of Ward's part on his anti-slavery labors in the United States. Ward reduces the FSL's merciless claim to Henry as a fugitive to "a love of that liberty which we all declared to be every man's inalienable right," but also reveals Henry's complex ideological position in this drama (121). Henry figures as the embodiment of the contradictions inherent in the FSL as well as the system of U.S. slavery at large. Henry is an "American by birth" and yet, a slave (121); his father is white, yet Henry follows his mother's slave status; he is a Christian patriot, yet pursued for an alleged crime; he is rhetorically skilled and versed in American foundational documents, yet "arrested and held under a law made by 'Us the People'" (122).

Ward himself seems at a loss of how to react to Henry and his imprisonment when a large crowd begins to gather in front of the prison—"certainly five-and-twenty hundred of us, wild with excitement in behalf of our chained brother" (124)—demanding a speech from Ward. If Ward publicly endorses Henry's appeal to liberty, it also proves the aspect of performativity inherent in anti-slavery work: Ward acknowledges that Henry has proceeded according to a ritual that has earned him the right to be shielded and saved from the community: "I have heard a speech from Jerry. I feel for him, as for a brother; […] Yonder is my brother, in chains. Those chains press upon my limbs" (123). Henry has credibly confessed before the congregation, which grants him acceptance into a community of the

saved and the worthy-of-saving. At the same time, Henry has also taken his place as a worthy black gentleman.

Henry is eventually rescued by force during his court hearing and reaches Canada.[22] With his name appearing in the papers and Secretary of State Daniel Webster in pursuit of the participants, Ward fears for his life, and his plan to leave for Canada is no longer an option that can be put off. Consequently, he gives no details about his journey to Canada, only that he precedes his family for about "a month or two" (127). Significantly, the reunion there is cast in happy terms, immediately identifying himself and his family as "the most loyal and grateful of British subjects" (127). Ward also draws the parallel to Jerry Henry: from the narratological safety of Canada, Ward reveals Henry's (short) life in "Kingston, Canada" where he died in 1853 "a free man, by virtue of living in British soil" (127). Ward has now prepared the ground for the next part of his *Autobiography* to flesh out the ties between individuals like William Henry as heroic fugitives and Canada West (as a stand-in of Great Britain) as an apt destination for black emigrants turned towards the future.

4.3 CANADA WEST: A THEORY OF HEROIC FUGITIVES

Ward's chapters on his years in Canada West are marked by two larger strategies. First, as Ward enters the country, he rewrites a staple scene of many Canadian slave narratives. In fact, his arrival is set as a piece of travel writing and initiation story instead of the endpoint of a long, perilous journey of a fugitive. As the beginning of a new phase in his life, Ward sets about incorporating Canada West into his theoretical elaborations of a religious anti-slavery life. Struggling to reconcile this ambiguous place of both possibility and discrimination for black people, Ward nevertheless manages to include Canada as the suitable destination for black emigrants by linking it to the ideal of the black yeoman and, not least, to a feeling of patriotism for Great Britain that receives Blacks in the province. In a second move, Ward proposes his theory of the figure of the fugitive slave who finds a harbor in Canada West. Describing how the fugitive undergoes three interconnected phases that transform him from slave into freeman, Ward creates a genealogy of heroic individuals who are characterized by superior endurance and willpower. In turn, these idealized fugitives-turned-free settlers make for valuable new citizens of the province to the North, a fact that Ward outlines in his travel report through several black settlements in Canada West.

22 For detailed information about the unfolding of the rescue, see Patenaude Roach.

Ward's arrival on Canadian soil is laden with symbolic meaning. But although he was forced to escape to Canada in a hurry, Ward does not partake here in the typical fugitive story that climaxes in reaching free soil. There is no "scene…of nautical transit and transformation" into Canadian freedom as Alyssa MacLean would have it (iii). In fact, there is no information at all on how Ward made the journey other than the circumstantial necessity of going there. Rather, the voyage to Toronto constitutes one of several landscape descriptions, episodes of romantic travel writing that introduce his English reading audience to an iconic 'Canadian' season, the Indian summer. At the time of writing his *Autobiography*, Ward is still visibly impressed by the "St. Lawrence River scenery in October;" and he confesses that "[t]his is my third autumn in Europe; but never, in the British Isles, did I witness such splendour of landscape as that river presents, in autumn" (133).

In this way, Ward opposes the precipitated movements of a fugitive's escape to the slow-motion luxury of taking (narrative) time to revel in the beauty of his new home. In this sense, there is an important waterway in Ward's transition from the United States to Canada after all, as MacLean had postulated with regard to slave narratives, but instead of the dramatic Lake Erie Passage, it becomes a peaceful encounter with "the great watery highway to the ocean," the St. Lawrence River (135). The river serves to initiate Ward to Canada and introduce him to its most iconic scenic features. As the land- and waterscape unfolds before Ward, the St. Lawrence represents the harmonious interplay between natural beauty and the "continuance of navigation" and industry (133-34). Overwhelmed by the rich colors "of unspeakable beauty and of most imposing grandeur," Ward promotes the passage from Montreal to Kingston as the most "delightful" representation of the "picturesque in nature" in British North America (134-35).

If this presentation of Canada is unique in black autobiographical writing of the time, so is Ward's self-portrait as a new arriver in the new country. Indeed, Canada is not entirely strange to him, who had been to several places in Ontario before "as a mere visitor" (133). Although necessity and immediate threat force him to come to the country as the "fugitive negro" from his work's title, he presents this move as one of determination and inspired by a clear telos. Clearly distinct from the usual fugitive slave narrator, Ward claims that, paradoxically, "[he] made [his] entrée into Canada, as a resident and a fugitive," and underlines that he fully embraces the necessity of "[his] going as a settler" (133). An attribution as a "settler" and, even more importantly, a "resident", has him in full control of the decision to move there and shows his intentions in line with a larger project to establish allegiances to Great Britain.

The identification as resident-settler also represents a strong link to the ideal of the yeoman farmer, whose "industry and enterprise" he conjures up while

observing the cultivation along the banks of the St. Lawrence (135). The yeoman is a crucial motif for Ward, not only with regard to his own father but also in view of his own project of farming in Jamaica, which he is about to realize at the time of writing the *Autobiography*. Ward fleshes out the image of self-sufficient yeoman life, which conforms to a romantic middle-class ideal of what living off the land should look like: the way of cultivation that he observes along the St. Lawrence prove to Ward the underlying farmers' "industry and enterprise" (135). Ward admits that it is this process of cultivation in apparent harmony with nature that contributes strongly to the appeal of the place and "the beauty and interest of the scenery," implying the suitability of Canada as a place for newcomers (135). The description of "beautiful fields […]; neat […] elegant, farm houses, […] orchards and ornamental trees, and nice rustic gardens" even foreshadows Ward's tour through the black settlements of Canada West, which fit these descriptions and close the logical circle of black settlers as suitable Canadians (135).

It is no coincidence, therefore, that Ward connects this description of the yeoman farmer on Canadian soil to a strong feeling of nascent patriotism by which he demonstrates his allegiance to Great Britain. The St. Lawrence, for instance, is both "noble" and "majestic," and the right bank is "the British side," the one which attracts Ward most (135).[23] If we can speak of a transformation in Ward as he enters Canada, a feature which MacLean has established as an "iconic image in many abolitionist texts" (50), it is the sudden upsurge in what he describes as "a sort of patriotic feeling to which all my life before I had been a stranger" (135). Wrapped in powerful language, Ward's message is one for his English readers as it is one for his fellow Blacks: the "fellow feeling" with the Canadians is rooted, as he observes, in a blossoming sense of recognition and belonging (135). It is not clear whether he observes this new sensitivity mainly as the retrospective author or the protagonist of the *Autobiography*, but Canada here becomes the place for Ward "in a sense in which no country ever was before, my own, and those people my fellow citizens" (135). These few powerful phrases cement Canada's place

23 With "the right bank", Ward refers quite possibly to the British Conquest of Canada during the Seven Years' War, after the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and the surrender of Montreal in 1760. The Treaty of Paris regulated the British takeover of New France, expanding the British sphere of influence considerably in North America. This means that although the St. Lawrence runs through today's Quebec, which even at the time was French-dominated, the British takeover made the right side of the river "British", too. On the other hand, Ward is silent about the fact that the British also maintained and expanded the practice of slavery in the territories, which Marcel Trudel has discussed at length in his *Deux siècles d'esclavage au Canada français* (2009, originally 1960).

both as the official representative and stand-in for Great Britain—British North America—and the offer of the possibility of citizenship and belonging.[24]

After this two-day initiation into Canada, Ward arrives in Toronto where he immediately enters into contact with the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada. Ward quickly offers an important digression into why Canada needs to be put on the map of anti-slavery work, despite being "a free British colony" (137). This necessity is grounded, essentially, in Ward's understanding of the "fluid frontier" between Canada and the United States. Ward identifies this geographical proximity and the presence of "our very border" as a decisive factor (137) —either to produce corruption of Canadians, or possibly to exercise a "good influence" on Americans (138). This touches on Cooper's definition of the "malleable and porous" border zone as a "creator of new social, political, class, and other identities" ("Fluid" 131). Ward's description extends this definition in highlighting also the inherent dangers of such a border region for Blacks. Indeed, the adjoining United States invite "a vast amount of intercourse" and contact between the two countries, creating a border region characterized by "traffic", "travel", but also the potentially dangerous exchange of the ideology of slavery (138).

In an acid tone that has left behind his initial romanticism, Ward explains that the proximity to "the history of Northern pro-slaveryism" demands a firm stance on the part of Canadians in order to avoid possible moral corruption (137). One means to counter this influence is what Ward identifies as mandatory cross-border cooperation between abolitionists, whose bold presence in the border region offers strong, positive possibilities to counter the threat of slavery:

> "I felt, in living so near them [i.e. the abolitionist colleagues in the States], I was not entirely separated from them, though in another country, so far as political relations were concerned. I knew very well, and so did the society, that co-operation and sympathy with these benevolent men and women was an object well worthy of our labours." (139)

Important examples for Ward are the cooperation in fugitive assistance and the existence of the Underground Railroad, but also visiting each other's annual abolitionist meetings (139). Nevertheless, Ward portrays Canada's position in abolitionist efforts as distinct from that of the United States. Focusing on the

24 Ripley illustrates in the introduction to the *Black Abolitionist Papers* on Canada that "Canada's image as a haven developed from three conditions: the absence of slavery, protection from extradition, and the civil rights Canada offered to all its citizens regardless of color" (6). They add, however, that in reality, "if black political and legal rights were rarely questioned, black social equality was" (7).

"instant[…]" humanity-granting, "practical freedom" of Canada, which he calls "our country" now, the respective labors and joys "on one side of the line [and] on the other[…]" are parallel to 'consigning' people as "goods" in the United States, but receiving them as "men" in Canada (139).

However, Ward's most difficult task lies in making sense of Canada West's inherent ambiguity. The necessity of anti-slavery work there forces Ward to address "unwelcome facts" that reveal a darker side of the province (139). In what follows, listed by Ward as "1st, Pro-slavery feeling; and, 2nd, Negro-hate," he pursues the two topics for which he has become known, i.e. his open address of Canadian racism and discrimination (139).[25] It is crucial that Ward identifies prejudice against black people as an equally Canadian problem, namely that of "British-born subjects, who in Canada exhibit these two sentiments in a manner that no Yankee can excel" (140). A pro-slavery attitude, he explains, can be detected in several groups of people, such as former West-Indian planters, former U.S. slaveholders, and beneficiaries of the slave system such as slave-drivers. Just as dangerous, as Ward points out, are ignorant travelers in the South who "go […] through a country with both eyes wide open, and seeing nothing but just what they wish to see" (140-41), supporting the idea of slavery as 'a positive good'.[26] In Ward's promotional language, Canada might therefore not be a virgin land but certainly a "sacred soil [which is] polluted by the unholy tread of pro-slavery men" (142).

Given the open prejudice against black people, it becomes increasingly difficult for Ward to balance his impression of Canada. As with the case of the United States, Ward employs the lens of class again to offer an explanation. He observes that

"[t]his [pro-slavery] feeling abounds most among the native Canadians, who, as a rule, are the lowest, the least educated, of all the white population. Like the same class in England, and like the ancestors of the Americans, they have not the training of gentlemen, [… and]

25 Ward details numerous examples mainly from three main areas of public life that are pervaded by discrimination: public transportation, services, and education. When Ward's family joins him in Canada West in 1851, they are discriminated against on board their ship by the Scottish captain, on the grounds that their presence inside the cabin "would be offensive to the passengers" (147). Ward addresses the issue of "Canadian Negro Hate", as he called it, even more prominently in other venues, most notably in letters published in Bibb's *Voice of the Fugitive* and his *Provincial Freeman* (see *BAP* 224-37).

26 This epithet figures programmatically in John C. Calhoun's (1782-1850) speech "Slavery a Positive Good" from 1837 (excerpts in Engler and Scheiding 586-87).

know but little, next to nothing, of what are liberal enlightened views and genteel behaviour." (143; added emphasis)

Class becomes the signifier to mark the non-gentleman and to create distance between those who maintain racism and Ward who has repeatedly proven to see himself as a black gentleman. Ward makes an important point in identifying such people as especially prone to "petty jealousy towards those coming into the country," particularly if they are black and/or upwardly mobile (144). The core problem, he explains, is the contentedness of these uneducated (Canadian) whites to "remain as they are," which demonstrates an apparently unbridgeable rift and diametrical opposition to the defining strife of black people of improvement through education and moral integrity (133). It is evident that Ward writes not only as a part of a black intelligentsia but also as a gentleman and connoisseur of English genteel society and its customs. Class then also becomes the signifier to mark the relationship to the "British gentleman". Ward essentializes a noble attitude as a British feature, thereby underlining his allegiance to Great Britain: "[T]he British gentleman is a gentleman everywhere [i.e., also in British North America], and under all circumstances" (150). Therefore, Ward finds reasons remain optimistic yet about Canada's race relations. Connecting class and a "strong British feeling" among various anti-slavery groups and organizations, Ward is able to incorporate Canada into his conceptions of interracial, religiously grounded anti-slavery work (153).

Ward's second major strategy of his part on Canada begins less as an elaboration on the "signs of betterment" of both the "better class" and "the other classes of my own people" (153), and neither as a fact-based rendition of the condition of black people in Canada. Instead, it should be viewed as the theorization of the figure of the fugitive within a three-phase framework from slave to freeman. Consequently, the escape from slavery is cast as a transformative process involving various roles the black individual adopts. The arrival on free soil forms an integral part of this process and not simply its endpoint. Similarly to Richard Warren's rhetoric of Canada as the place where the former bondsman can exercise his God-given calling, Ward's vision of Canada as a free, sacred soil is made to correspond to the needs of the ambitious fugitive. The triumphant freedom that it offers is the equivalent of the triumphant individuals who arrive on its shores. Entering into a dialogue with the other narratives discussed in this book, this part of the narrative sees the climax of Ward's underlying project to establish a genealogy of heroic fugitives who enjoy the fruits of their heroism in Canada and inspire pride and admiration.

In very programmatic language, Ward demonstrates that not only does Canada correspond to the ambitious fugitive, who will become the prospective settler, but that the reverse is very much true. With the number of incoming fugitives steadily growing, Ward also sees the share of 'good immigrants' increasing, as they are part "of the very best classes of the free blacks of both the Northern and the Southern States, who have cast in their lot among us" (154).[27] Ward sees many reasons why Canada is an attractive destination: promoting "impartial British liberty" as the utmost quality, along with practical considerations such as "the most pleasant and the most salubrious [climate] on the American continent," and the promises of "excellent" and "cheap" land (154-55). Canada emerges as the ideal spot for the prospective settler, and the black yeoman. Indeed, it invites "persevering labour" of "a vigorous people" (155-56)—everything the black settlers are willing to offer, according to Ward (see below). His language of the power of Providence and Manifest Destiny turns Canada, as George Elliott Clarke has put it, into "the *true* land of opportunity" ("'No Hearsay'" 26n36; original emphasis).

This idealization is due in part to the "design[…]" (155) of Providence, but also to the fact that it aligns itself with what appears to be a general mindset among the black settlers: future-orientated, seeking self-improvement and a place to realize these desires. The literal "manifest"-ation of a "restless and resistless desire for improvement" among a part of the black population seems to match them perfectly with the land to the North (156). In every way commendable and respected examples of citizens and settlers serve Ward to underline the "condition, prospects, progress, enterprise, manhood" furthered, as it were, on Canadian soil (156). Since fugitives mainly represent "young, single men," as Ward observes, they will be not simply a "most loyal, [but mainly a] most useful population" for Canada (151; 157).

Ward invites readers to consider the escape of the (s)elect few as an outstanding achievement, as only a "few comparatively" overcome the difficulties of the escape journey north (158). Like Smallwood, who had praised the black pioneer settlers in the Queen's Bush in 1843 (see Smallwood 55), Ward casts the

27 Ward paves the way for his theory of the heroic fugitive by engaging the "facts." Although the census of Canada represents a rather unreliable source, as he explains, the black population in Canada is estimated at "some 35,000 to 40,000" of which he believes the "majority [to be] refugees from American slavery" (154). In the whole of the Province of Canada, Ward believes are not even "3,000 free-born coloured persons" (154). Asserting any secure number for black fugitives in the Canadas has proven futile, however. Historian Robin Winks already asserts that there can be no definite numbers in this respect for either fugitives or the black population (*History* 234-35).

fugitive to Canada as a superior individual (Ward 160). His own narrative having foregone a classic rendering of the fugitive's desperate arrival in Canada, Ward nevertheless offers an astute interpretation of the act of escape and its impact on the individual. He takes up this widespread trope of the poor fugitive and engages its supposed meaning as "sublimest sight in North America" (158). The "leap […] from a boat," Ward explains, is sublime for two reasons. On the one hand, it is evidence of a transformation "from a marketable chattel to a free man," which, in Ward's opinion, transcends even the sublime character of the iconic Canadian site of Niagara Falls not in the least as the marker of the important border of slavery and freedom (158). Instead, Ward operates a crucial shift in focus from the arrival in supposed freedom to the individual, the escapee, and the dangerous journey he (for Ward is talking about men, really) has survived. The sublime nature of escape, then, relies in the fact of "the consummation of long and fondly cherished hope" and, implicitly, the accomplishment of a carefully devised plan (158). Achieving freedom in the guise of "real true manhood" becomes the well-deserved recompense of "an effort of peaceful though energetic heroism" (158-59). This quality, along with the moral integrity of fugitives, makes them a "most welcome accession to our population" (159). Canada and the fugitives are made for one another.

Ward, however, does more than just propose the heroic fugitive as a prospective model citizen. At the same time, he urges readers to become aware of the fugitive and the process of escape as crucial steps in the becoming of the free black man. The text consciously draws attention to his choice of a "peculiar nomenclature" to describe the arrivers "as slaves, as fugitives, and as freemen"—three phases of a life he wants to see clearly differentiated for the particular qualities and circumstances that influence the individual (159). Ward's observation seems as obvious as it is essential: "The fugitive is different on the plantation from what he is flying. When he reaches Canada, he is no longer either a slave or a fugitive, but a freeman" (159). With this, Ward also challenges readers to reconsider labels and what we ascribe to them. When slave narratives 'stop at the border' to Canada (or any other 'free' destination, really), they fall short to consider the complexity of the individual, whose 'second' life in freedom has only just begun.

In focusing on the process of escape, the fugitive, as it were, becomes the sum of his overcome obstacles. Ward begins with stage one, the black man as slave on the plantation. There, Ward illustrates the totalitarian control and surveillance the slave is exposed to, while referencing also the psychological impact on so-called white 'masters'. While the slave faces "all manner of obstacles" to a potential escape, owners live in constant "fear of his running away" (160). Therefore, the

latter devises schemes to discourage his slaves from escaping to Canada as a place of "bad climate and worse customs," but Ward portrays the slave as undeterred "interpret[ors]" of these schemes (161). In delineating the slave's preparations for escape, Ward also criticizes the double standards applied to the assessment of a desire to freedom in the contemporary public mind. In what appears to be only a side remark, Ward clarifies that what "would be called bravery and fortitude in a white man" is decried in a black man as "stubbornness" (161). In fact, it becomes clear that it is this character trait that is at the core of a slave's ability to devise the act of escape under extraordinary circumstances. Once the plan is formed to run away, he must muster superior secrecy and good acting in the presence of the slave owner, to whom he has to appear "best satisfied with slavery" (162). Ward also makes clear that this planning stage already is a transformative one: "A man entrusted with a plan of importance grows with it," especially if it is a plan "of his own thoughts" (163). For Ward, the slave and soon-to-be-fugitive is already a "moral or physical hero" and has entered "that class" of special individuals characterized by their superior tenacity and will-power in the face of numerous obstacles and life-threatening danger (163).

By means of the genre of the runaway ad, which abounded in antebellum newspapers, Ward explores the mental and physical superiority of the fugitive. He claims that "slaves advertised as having run away […] are men and women of mark […] as a rule" (164-65). "[P]atience, fortitude, and perseverance" then become physically visible signature traits of the fugitive, whose romanticization comes full circle with a religious subtext when Ward chooses to speak of the "exodus" and the martyrdom that the fugitive undergoes (165). It is therefore a logical consequence for Ward to call the escape, phase two, a transformative and "improving" process that "purif[ies] and ennoble[s]," turning eventual liberty into a marker, in a sense, of nobility of the fugitive-turned freeman (165-66). This freeman-upon-arrival "is first, what the raw material of nature was; and, secondly, what the improving process of flight has made him" (166). The new freeman, in phase three, enters a reciprocal relationship with liberty, which is both the recompense of his labors and an attribute which he now "more highly […] appreciate[s]" due to his transformation (166).

Ward's examples to illustrate the superior fugitive are grounded in real events, on the one hand, and come mediated through a well-known intertext, on the other. In this way, the case of Madison Washington, leader of an insurrection on board the *Creole* in 1841, demonstrates how Washington displayed heroism in several instances.[28] Washington epitomizes the fugitive arriver in Canada, who is

28 Madison Washington was head cook on the *Creole*, which was on its way to bring 135 slaves to New Orleans. The revolt left "all of the […] slaves free in Nassau" (Weinauer

then recaptured trying to save his enslaved wife in Virginia, and finally leads a revolt on a ship that leads to his freedom and that of his fellow enslaved. Ward underlines that the two acts, rescue and revolt, are both signs of "heroism" and "noble manliness" (166). Along with Pompey Garrison and Ben Blacksmith, who serve as the two chief assistants in the revolt, Ward compares Washington to three well-known European freedom fighters, "Tell […], Mazzini […], and Kossuth […]" (167-68).[29] This interpretation of Washington aligns Ward with Frederick Douglass, whose fictionalized version of the revolt, *The Heroic Slave*, was published in 1852. Douglass, too, calls Washington a "heroic chief and deliverer" as well as an adherent to British freedom (239).[30] In his novella, Douglass has Washington write a letter after his safe arrival in "Windsor, Canada West," praising the safety under "the British lion" and "and atmosphere too pure for *slaves,* slave-hunters, or slave-holders" (205; original emphasis).

Thus, both Ward and Douglass describe Washington's transformation into a freeman. With a real-life-turned-fictional precedent for individual heroism, Ward makes a strong impression for his project of establishing a genealogy of such heroes that complements Smallwood's radical intellectuals. Mirroring Garnet's authentication of Walker, and Walker's of Allen, Douglass becomes enmeshed in two ways in Ward's genealogy: first, as an intellectual archetype with a public reputation as a hero in his own right and second, as a contributor to this tradition of heroes through his text. Ward himself emerges again as part of the black intellectual elite of the time, showing his indebtedness to Douglass as well as his astute sense of the need for an inspiring tradition in the view of black immigration to Canada. Douglass, he observes, "is just such a man as our new country needs—a lover of freedom, a loyal subject, an industrious man" (Ward 170).

194). The case tested relations between the United States and Great Britain, but Britain eventually released the 'mutineers'. According to historian Howard Jones, the case deserves much more attention than it has received as a possible precursor of the Civil War: "Because the Creole revolt occurred in 1841, not 1861, it eventually took its place as a minor incident in antebellum history; yet its potentially explosive nature justifies more attention [because…] it constituted a microcosm of the ideas and actions of later years" (28-29).

29 Jones does not list Garrison but Blacksmith and two other men as helpers (Jones 30n7).

30 Indeed, Weinauer explains that contemporary testimony—white and black—"described[…] Washington as a man of restraint, humanity, and self-control—as the diametrical opposite of Nat Turner and, thus, an appealing figure around which to focus the public understanding of black resistance" (194).

However, aware of the fact that not every fugitive is "so fortunate [as Madison Washington]," Ward sets out to modify the former, bold assertion of representative heroic fugitives by presenting a more balanced picture of those who did not make it to the papers (170). His collection of eleven heterogeneous fugitive stories, like brief vignettes, are reminiscent of the inclusion of such stories in other narratives of this book, such as those of Thomas Smallwood and Austin Steward. They range from the story of an anonymous fugitive (170-71) to more publicized cases (181-82), from a few lines to a more extended account, and were either told to Ward directly (170) or to one of his friends like William McClure (176-77). In any case, Ward serves as the authenticator of these stories and, in many instances, gives additional information on the network of assistance that was in place for fugitives who arrived in Canada West, most notably by "Ladies' Society for the Aid of Destitute Fugitives" in Toronto (172).

At the same time that he authenticates these stories, Ward also (re-)creates them, demonstrating again that he masters the elements of classic slave narratives as well as other text formats, from scenes of hot pursuit of the fugitive who can only escape at the last moment, the betrayal of fugitives to slavecatchers, and the actual leap from the boat onto Canadian soil—including "three cheers for the British sovereign" (178-79). Eventually, then, the stories reflect instances of individual heroism and show how ordinary individuals react in extraordinary situations. Additionally, the stories invite us to reconsider Ward's genealogy of heroic fugitives. In fact, if Ward considers the protagonists here as examples of the "not so fortunate" (170)—some fugitives have to leave behind their families, for example, or arrive in Canada severely hurt by their former 'masters'—what position then remains for the 'heroic former slave'? It seems as though Ward opens up his genealogy to include the more bottom-up approach of presenting an array of individual stories that would otherwise go unnoticed, but yet represent the fate of ever so many fugitives from slavery. This then also suggests that the concept of 'heroism' can be extended to more people than just the Madison Washingtons.

This thought is complicated further by the presence of other 'heroes' that Ward seems to gloss over. For one, there is a heroic white ferryman in one of the stories who is portrayed to follow his moral conviction rather than the merciless doctrine of the slave owner. He has already taken the fugitive on board and is ready to take off with him when the owner appears, riding up to the river "upon a foaming steed," threatening to shoot the ferryman if he were not to stop, pressing the fugitive to menace the man himself, with a handspike (178). Contemplating his incumbent lot, Ward has the ferryman decide in favor of the fugitive, because "'I can't die but once; and if I die, I guess I would rather die doing right'" (178). His

decision leaves the former master "transfixed" and the boat reaches the other side (179). Another silent hero in Ward's stories is an anonymous wife who sacrifices the freedom of herself and her child so that her husband can get away. The couple plan their escape together and set out—"the wife was especially determined" (185)—but are let down by their party. Upon the return to their quarters, a dramatic scene ensues in which the wife tries to convince her husband to escape. She only succeeds to convince her husband "with a tenacity peculiar to the sex" (187). Eventually, her husband gives in, while she dramatically "sank upon the bed in the solitude of disconsolate sorrow," never to see him again (188). The wife as the tragic heroine makes an ultimate sacrifice, only to be left in her bed by Ward, without any more "tidings" or further acknowledgment of her deed (188). In this way, Ward's genealogy of heroes remains decidedly male. Despite the fact that she might well count as a heroine in this case, her reward of freedom is put off by Ward to the afterlife: "they shall be one again when they, and all those who oppressed them, shall stand before a common judgment-seat!" (188).

Finally, Ward renders an elaborate illustration of these unsung heroes who have undergone the final transformative phase in his theory from slave to freeman by inserting his travel report as the agent of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada to present to English readers the condition and the achievements of black people "*resident* in Canada *as freemen*" (189; added emphasis). It marks his final instance of spelling out the image of the black community in Canada West as one of value for the province's "industrial wealth" (192). Reflecting Ward's travels "in the settlements of the blacks, in Canada" in 1852 (193), this report speaks to other such examples which have become core sources for nineteenth-century Black Canadian life, notably Benjamin Lundy's "Diary" (1832), Benjamin Drew's *The Refugee* (1856), William Wells Brown's "The Colored People of Canada" (1861), and Samuel Gridley Howe's *The Refugees from Slavery in Canada West* (1864).[31] While Drew, Howe, and Lundy were white reformers and abolitionists, Wells Brown and Ward offered a black perspective on the various settlements that existed in Canada West. While scholars have discussed the motivation behind

31 Ward's travel report through Canada West first appeared as a report entitled "A Recent Tour" in the *Provincial Freeman* (March 24, 1853) and gave readers an overview of a "six-week, 565-mile tour through southwestern Canada West for the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada" during the winter of 1853 (rprt. in *BAP* 256-64). The account in the *Autobiography*, however, represents a different version altogether: it is much longer and gives different emphasis to the settlements than the report in the *Provincial Freeman*. The report in the *Autobiography* also allows Ward to elaborate on his stances on segregated settlement and worship.

these reports and the possible setbacks of such sources, they offer fascinating glimpses into black life in Canada West.[32]

In the *Autobiography*, Ward addresses a total of six settlements, although some only in passing. Moreover, he seems to have made a careful choice, spending much time to elaborate on Dawn, Chatham, and Buxton as highly successful, model settlements, while mentioning Hamilton and London only in passing. St. Catharines is left out completely, despite its importance as "a distribution center" for incoming fugitives as well as its discriminatory practices toward its "sizeable back community" (Simpson 195; 391-95). Similar to earlier descriptions by Lundy, for example, Ward's report draws a mainly positive and optimistic picture of black settlers in Canada West, despite some comments on the difficulties black settlements were facing in the province's predominantly white settler society.[33] He re-evokes their successes and efficiency as "labourers," "yeomen," "mechanics and artisans" (191-92), and demands that readers judge them equally to white settlers, because "the Canadian Negro […] bears himself equal to English, Irish, Scotch, Dutch, or French Canadians, although he has and they have not been slaves" (190).

Despite Ward's attempts to shape the settlements at Dawn, Chatham, and Buxton as examples that illustrate the success of free black settlers, they remain difficult to integrate in the idealistic vision of black progress in Canada. The Dawn settlement in Kent county, for example, had become well-known for its most famous inhabitant, "the honest, the venerable, the beloved Josiah Henson—'Father Henson,'" but even more so for the fierce conflict that erupted around allegations of mismanagement and a struggle to regain control (194). Ward undertakes great efforts to separate the conflict around Dawn's Manual Labour School from a more successful history seeing the change from the "unbroken, undisturbed forest" of the Canadian wild to "about 150 families in the neighbourhood" who boast of energy (194). In line with his vision for the possibilities for black people in Canada, Ward focuses on the potential of the geographical location of Dawn in the 'fluid frontier' "within water communication of Detroit" through the Sydenham River, predicting Dawn and its inhabitants to "flourish[…in] not many years hence" (196).

32 Sandrine Ferré-Rode, for example, discusses Drew's precarious distance to his interviewees as part of her article "'They have tried the bitter and the sweet'" (2009).

33 Fred Landon has described Lundy's travel report to have been written "with a definite purpose, namely, that of presenting to the colored people of the United States a statement of the conditions of life in the British provinces" ("Diary" 110). For Ward's discussion of the Edwin Larwill attacks directed at the Buxton settlement, see below.

Ward's descriptions of the black community in Chatham are similarly fraught. He praises local community life and how the "cottages" reflect the nature of their inhabitants as good citizens in their "neatness, and more general (sic) good morals" (200). However, Ward observes that these good citizens live in what "might not unjustly be called a coloured village" within Chatham, and he admits that racism is nowhere more visibly powerful than in this town (199; 201). Finally, however, Chatham too is saved by Ward by emphasizing its crucial importance as a harbor of fugitive slaves and its proximity to the United States (see 203). Whether white Chathamites like it or not, Ward is aware that the presence of fugitives have shaped a history of the community there that "would form a most enchanting romance" (204).

In his assessment of the black settlements, the importance of class is obvious. What Ward laments about Dawn as a serious "defect[…]," for example, strikes a chord with Thomas Smallwood's narrative (196).[34] Ward, too, observes that Dawn's youth lack "energy and enterprise" as a feature of second-generation stupor and refusal to embrace the phrase he employs from Susanna "Moody (sic)"—"'Roughing it in the Bush'" (196-97).[35] Perhaps to ease his criticism in the eyes of his readers, Ward declares that in his function as a "black man" and author, he is taking very seriously his "right to complain," especially about those who he feels are "throw[ing] discredit upon our people" (197). Praising the Buxton settlement in Raleigh township as his favorite and most successful one also hinges on strict moral concepts Ward has for black settlers. Founded by the Presbyterian Minister William King, who went from slaveholder to liberator of his slaves (see 210), Ward subscribes to the narrative (later supported by historiography) that much of the settlement's success is based on King's leadership and his careful choice of settlers, who were obliged to possess "[c]ertain moral qualifications" in order to be allowed to buy land (211). While later historians such as Cooper, for example, have criticized King's "rule" and "paternalism" at Buxton ("Doing Battle" 252; 298), for Ward, this method poses no problem but is instead a "wise rule" (211). More so than in Dawn, Buxton boasts of no "immoral person[s]" and the settlers' attitude of "genial cheerfulness" and embrace of the joys of the yeoman life in "the fruits of their own toil" promise, for Ward, a most prosperous future (211-12).

34 Ward's chidings recall Smallwood's tirade that "[t]he coloured men of the present generation are of no service to themselves, in the general, nor will they be to their posterity." Smallwood accuses his fellow Blacks to "lack energy" and the courage to stop seeing the white man as an example to emulate (55).

35 Ward makes an open connection to the famous Canadian pioneer author (1803-1885), whereas Austin Steward did not, although he uses the same phrase.

Therefore, Buxton becomes the pinnacle of the "model" settlement of black people in Canada West, not only in refuting "all that is said against [black people]" but also in offering a factual and adequate space for Ward's concept of "the modern Negro, the Negro of the nineteenth century" (214). Both in terms of organization and intellectual and religious life, Buxton is representative of what Blacks can achieve, in Ward's opinion, and it is all the more significant that he observes this accomplishment on Canadian soil, which positions the province uniquely in the North American struggle for black freedom. The fierce, racist opposition that King and Buxton were facing as it was being devised by such men as Edwin Larwill,[36] instead of being fleshed out as yet another reminder of the Canadian affiliation with discrimination, is turned into the positive development that has sprung from it: the change in race relations, which forced the presence of black settlers into a white-dominated space, as a powerful positive "moral influence" which created an opportunity for whites to familiarize themselves with their black neighbors (216). "These blacks are spoken of as good customers, good neighbours, good farmers, &c.," Ward explains, and summarizes that the black Buxtonites have come to represent "honour upon the liberty, the equality, the institutions, of Canada" like "no [other] subjects of the British Crown" (217).

Following this model of excellence, Ward calls on fellow Blacks to assume a self-confident understanding of themselves as the "other of Her Majesty's subjects" (205).[37] As a part of the "we of Canada", using the rights that are self-evidently provided by the province, Blacks should hasten for progress in order to "fit ourselves and our children for the responsibilities of free British citizens—responsibilities which are already ours, whether we be fit for them or not" (207). The final phase of his theory of heroic fugitives then foresees a strong black

36 Edwin Larwill settled in Chatham from England in 1841. He led the public opposition to King's planned settlement in 1849. Openly racist, he "antagonized the Conservative black voters of Kent County, who turned against him in [an election in] 1857" (*BAP* 231n1).

37 The transition to both this self-confidence and self-understanding is not easy, as becomes obvious to Ward when he returns to the attacks from Larwill on the establishment of the Buxton settlement. In view of Larwill's racist attacks, Ward states that "some of the black men of Chatham…are wanting in manliness. They do not bravely, manfully, stand up for themselves and their people as they should" (208). Making out Larwill as the representative of an originally white underclass "of low origin but aspiring tendencies" (208), Ward calls to oppose such "demagogue[s]" (208) through self-assertive confidence in "the self-respect of every black man" (209). It seems that confidence as a sign of manhood is the one missing link to make Chatham as successful for "our cause [of anti-slavery]" (209) as Buxton.

Canadian citizenry, which would do best to continue to show their "great loyalty" to Canada and the Crown, along with all the other indispensable characteristics that will make them not only indispensable but endow them with a "most important future" in the province (218-19).[38] The epitome of Ward's theory is therefore "the onward progress of the Canadian Negro" (221). In Ward's terms, the advancement of black people *as* Canadians will contribute to expose the horrors of American slavery (and, consequently, British freedom). This puts black Canadians at the center of anti-slavery work at the same time that it positions Canada as the *terra nova* that holds the possibilities for this progress to unfold.

4.4 GREAT BRITAIN: ALLEGIANCES OF THE MODERN BLACK GENTLEMAN AND ALTERNATIVE HISTORIOGRAPHY

Ward's theory of heroic fugitives in Canada culminated in his call to identify not simply as black Canadian citizens but black British subjects. Due to his overt allegiances as a black leader to Great Britain, Ward has been criticized as an empire apologist and as "bow[ing] to those he regarded as his British superiors" (Winks, "Ward"). The last part of his *Autobiography* actually sees him travel to Europe and tour the United Kingdom after one and a half years of work for the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, in order to "plead on their behalf" on the other side of the Atlantic (Ward 227). As much as his work in England is centered on his relationships to nobility and elite anti-slavery circles, and as much as he emphasizes his loyalty and admiration for Great Britain, Ward's experience is still more complex. In fact, he outlines a long British history of slavery and anti-abolitionism which stands in contrast to the mighty empire that provides freedom to those who seek it. In order to uphold Britain's status as ally for aspiring free Blacks, therefore, Ward is compelled to redeem it rhetorically. This he achieves mostly through romanticized portraits of representative, worthy abolitionists, as well as through establishing modernity as a common feature that he sees unite both the nation and the black man of the nineteenth century. Ward's survey of black history and scholarship enforces their presence among the modern nations and

38 In this way, Ward predicts black loyalty as the debates on "annexation or conquest" of Canada through U.S. troops run high (220). Ward predicts a willingness to show black allegiance through arms, which eventually would also be a direct fight to maintain freedom.

calls for an alternative historiography that acknowledges the presence of minority histories within the larger frameworks of the nation.

Ward first travels to Liverpool, and this transatlantic voyage proves significant on several levels. For one, this marine border crossing has a profound personal impact on him. His "first voyage across the Atlantic" is at the same time his "first departure from [his] native *continent*" (227; added emphasis), marking both the United States and Canada as places of orientation, familiarity, and possibly home. At the beginning of this voyage, England lies ahead as a "strange land," causing Ward quite some "mental [dis]comfort" (227-28). Additionally, before embarking on the voyage, Ward is made to understand that on Captain Edward Cunard's ship, the "prevalent feelings in this country [i.e., the United States] in respect to coloured people" are brought to bear (229).[39] Ward identifies Cunard as a representative of the "Yankeefied Englishman" who submits to such attitudes by perverting what Ward had apparently assumed to be truly English virtues (230). Clearly, the "Yankeefied Englishman" and the "British Negro" are linked by opposition: the former representing a form of moral corruption, and the other, moral virtue and individual freedom at its best.

However, Cunard's behavior makes Ward reconsider the basis for and consequences of discrimination. First, he links Cunard's behavior to economic thinking: in the end, Cunard not merely gives in to a prevalent attitude of discrimination amongst his passengers but to financial considerations which reinterpret U.S.-American passengers as "frequent customers" and thus, as part of a market economy (233). Cunard as a stand-in businessman denies this status to black people, so Ward argues. Ward's logical consequence, therefore, is to call for his fellow Blacks to become businessmen themselves: "[t]hen I saw, that the chief, almost the only business of the Negro, is to be a man of business," he declares and adds more directly that "black men must seek wealth" (233-34). By inserting themselves in the structures of the market economy, black men will enhance their value as customers. According to Ward, this would entail enhancing the reputation of black businessmen to the same level as that of James McCune Smith, Henry Highland Garnet, "Frederic (sic)" Douglass and others, all of whom are already self-made men who "have, under God, produced themselves" (234-35). Ironically then, Ward indirectly proposes to subscribe to this widely accepted, ur-American, topos to counter discrimination and prejudice where it abounds so strongly.

Equally powerful is Ward's observation that discrimination as a business interest is opposed to "a British subject's rights, in [his] case," although "Her Majesty's Government retained so much control over that [ship] line" (232). He

39 For example, Ward was not allowed to eat with the white passengers on the grounds that they would complain (see 228-29).

reasons that his status as a subject does not end when he boards the ship in the Canadian port, but that on the contrary, "that what were my rights on British soil were my rights in a British ship" (232). Ward not only single-handedly establishes the same rights for black and white British subjects, which are "sacred," after all, but also claims indisputable protection by the British government (232).

Nevertheless, when the ship finally arrives in Liverpool, Ward's feelings are mixed. On the one hand, he feels the excitement of finally being in the—so-far only imagined— 'motherland', "the England of my former reading, and my ardent admiration" (236). At the same time, Ward points out that he is in a place of anti-emancipation agitation dating back a mere one or two generations when "Liverpool['s …] merchants, but sixty years before, had mobbed Clarkson for prying into and exposing the secret inhumanities of their slave trade" (236). Significantly, Ward is distancing himself from the experiences of the fugitive slaves and their emotional arrival on free soil. While the climax for the fugitive is the transformation into a free/man, Ward's waterway passage does not need to accomplish that. In fact, he admits that "[…] I always felt that; however wronged, maltreated, outraged—[I was] still, a man" (236). Ward's transformation is therefore that into a transatlantic traveler who is about to experience what of the things he feels he knows about Britain, particularly England, can actually be confirmed. Therefore, Ward's quest is not one for identity but one to find the familiar away from 'home'.

Ward's notes contain ruminations that link geography, an impression of familiarity, and a type of behavior to create a sense of belonging that harks back to his arrival in Canada. In fact, when Ward experiences "the beautiful twilight of this latitude" in England and, later, in Scotland, recognizes "this pleasing feature" as one "of a northern residence" we might draw a connection to his "northern residence" in Canada, which also possessed unique geographical features Ward had praised upon his arrival (240). Moreover, Ward does not feel quite so estranged in Britain, despite the "vast distance [he] had come, and the mighty space between [him] and those loved ones [at home]" (240). On the contrary, wandering through Liverpool, he is reminded of "some resemblance to Boston and the Bostonians" (241). After arriving in London, Ward is overwhelmed by the city's "innumerable things to show" in what appears an innumerable, illogical array of streets (243). After a while, however, he adapts and "[becomes], in this respect, a Londoner" (244). Most importantly, he recognizes English legacies in his home Toronto, which still bears similarities to the motherland: "in Canada, especially in Toronto, we are English in habits, manners, &c." (241).

Ward's first impressions of his work as anti-slavery lecturer at various meetings seem to demonstrate that there are many possibilities in England to

establish the necessary cooperation, both interracial and transatlantic, in anti-slavery activism. Finding reassurance in the fact that English audiences at anti-slavery meetings react in ways "to which [he] was not an entire stranger," Ward is introduced to many well-known figures (244). Ward shows his ability to connect quickly with important anti-slavery figures and supporters among English nobility, networking and establishing personal contacts that further his cause. Rev. James Sherman becomes especially important for Ward, who elevates him almost to a new father figure (247).[40] Ward's work in England sees a peak in June, 1853, at a meeting at Radley's Hotel, where Ward gives a speech in the presence of Lord Shaftesbury (249). Ward's humility at the surprising success of his mission in the name of the Canadian Anti-Slavery Society is connected to an idealized image of Britain, British anti-slavery, and Lord Shaftesbury as one of its most well-known philanthropists. Shaftesbury becomes a transatlantic figure of veneration in Ward's description, known even "in every cabin in Canada" (251).[41] To reinforce the links between such admirable figures of English abolitionism and the *dépendance* in Canada West, Ward casts his successful anti-slavery campaign, which has Ward travel from one society's committee meeting to the next, as a direct outcome of his residence in the British North American province: "Never, as an equal *brother man*, was I welcomed to the national platforms of any of them, until I became a resident of Canada" (253; added emphasis).

Most important for his project of transatlantic cooperation, however, is Ward's meeting with Charles Beecher (1815-1900) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) on their European tour. For Ward, the publication of Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) equals an "ordination of Divine Providence" and has a major impact—as Ward himself now witnesses—on his own target group, "the anti-slavery people of the aristocratic classes" (248-49). Ward contextualizes the novel also as a trigger for "An Affectionate and Christian Address of Many Thousands of Women of Great Britain and Ireland to Their Sisters the Women of the United States of America" , or the Stafford House Address (1852), a petition which stands as a powerful document to the implication of women in the British anti-slavery

40 Probably James Sherman (1796–1862), Congregational minister. According to his biographer, Sherman was known for his "ardent evangelistic preaching" and high number of successful conversions, which might have formed a common ground also with Ward (see Kaye).

41 Ward also paints two similarly romantic portraits of George Douglas Campbell, eighth Duke of Argyll (1823-1900), and James Bruce, eighth earl of Elgin and twelfth earl of Kincardine (1811–1863). Lord Elgin was governor-in-chief of British North America and viceroy of India, and agreed to lend his name to William King's Elgin settlement (see Checkland; Matthew).

cause. Significantly, Ward recognizes these events in terms of a transatlantic anti-slavery cooperation with "[t]he book from the one side of the Atlantic, the address from the other side," united in one cause (249).[42] Ward reminds his readers that this coincidence is responsible for fueling anti-slavery feeling and discussion in England on par only with "the agitation of the emancipation question in 1832" (250).

At the same time, however, Ward also awakens to a critical effect of being a black anti-slavery lecturer for white audiences. Much like his position as a black preacher to a white congregation in South Butler, he is aware that he represents to many the most direct link imaginable to the situation of slaves in the United States: "as my appearance anywhere, as I understood the matter, brought the slave to mind, I hope that, in that service, I did not mar the great chief object of my coming hither" (251). Ward exemplifies what scholars like Larry Gara (1965) have addressed as the consumption of "Professional Fugitives" by the audience. Ward realizes that many of the organizing charities and audiences "seemed to regard me as public property" (252). Yet, Ward does not let go of an idealized vision of Great Britain. Although his position as a representative quickly has him associated with the "begging issue," which occupied the black community in Canada, Ward does not elaborate on the dangerous reputation of being "a respectable successful beggar" for black fugitives in Canada (252). Instead, he glosses over this (certainly hurtful) epithet to underline his sense of fulfilling an important position in England, the sense of being cast "into a sphere of *active usefulness* which I had before never dared to covet" (252; added emphasis). It is, perhaps, part of his work to glorify England as the "summit" of civilization and "historic recollection," and as a part, thus, of a *Grand Tour* for Americans and Canadians (253). Just like Canada seems the perfect (geographical) location where black prospective settlers may put their aspirations into practice, England is appealing for being the compound of "a book, ancient, mediæval, and modern, in itself" (252).

Nevertheless, it is obvious that the present of British abolitionism and the past of British slavery are inextricably intertwined, resulting in the fact that Great Britain remains an ambiguous and complex model for Ward. Dedicating a substantial amount of his last part of the *Autobiography* to the discussion of the

42 Ward's grasp of the momentum created by the 1852 Address is in line with later scholarship. Evelyn L. Pugh, for example, offers a detailed account of the transatlantic discussions on slavery around the Address that involved Beecher Stowe, the Duchess of Sutherland, and the U.S. President's wife Julia Gardiner Tyler (1820-1889). Pugh calls the Address "the most massive antislavery petition ever assembled" and, at the same time, "one of the most spectacular manifestations of English admiration for Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*" (186).

empire's past involvement in slavery and the difficult beginnings for British abolitionism, Ward sets out to counter the opinions that after the official abolition of 1834, slavery no longer deserves a place on Britain's agenda and that it was relegated as an issue of "other nations" (290).[43] After all, Ward defines his anti-slavery work in the country through the refutation of these views (see 290). He reminds readers that the institution of slavery had long enjoyed success in the Empire, and evokes "horrible plantation scenes […], the barbarisms […], the atrocities […], the darkest, most guilty pages of British history" (291). He does not shy away from addressing the complexities of Britain in the eyes of black people before the reader by detailing its involvement in the institution at home and abroad. "[T]he whole weight of British influence was given to the furtherance of slavery in other countries," Ward explains, while at the same time, slavery became a socially accepted phenomenon in British society (292). "[A] great West India planter" in the periphery amused the center, and could be assured of "honour…, distin[ction…], position, patronage, and senatorial place" (292).[44]

A turning point in this last part of the *Autobiography*, however, sets in with Ward's astute analysis of the origin of much of this observable anti-black sentiment. This is precisely when Ward turns to the longstanding genealogy of

43 Additionally, Ward offers a taxonomy of pro-slavery sentiment in contemporary England. Here, he distinguishes between the attitudes of "native" Englishmen and "exotics" pro-slavery supporters, i.e. non-natives, visitors, immigrants, travelers, etc. (256). Ward warns that this group "is certainly the most dangerous, and perhaps the most numerous, class of exotic pro-slavery men," because they try to appear to be of an anti-slavery disposition while in England, yet are known to be pro-slavery at home (257). Ward defines these representatives as "such colonists as are always seeking to make it appear that prejudice against Negroes is quite natural and unavoidable"—a mindset that allows Ward to write them out of the community of rational, enlightened individuals on the grounds of their contradiction to, one is tempted to say 'universally acknowledged', "historical truth" (259). Ironically, the example he discusses in detail is Thomas Chandler Haliburton (1796-1865), a Nova Scotian judge and author. Clarke has discussed racism in Haliburton in, for example, "White Niggers, Black Slaves" (1994).

44 Interestingly, the same observations have later been made by Trudel for the time of slavery in New France, where slavery continued and flourished after the British take-over in 1760. In fact, it was only then that the enslavement of black women and men became significant (see Trudel 69). Therefore, Ward's chastisement that "British people have contracted no small share of blame for encouraging the slavery of other peoples, by their evil example," inadvertently applies to the British North American provinces (Ward 292).

black intellectual history that has been ignored and that is in need of public acknowledgment. Harking back to the same argument he made in his part on the United States (see Ward 88), he blames a general lack of familiarity with the history of black people and a reductive association with "one word and its cognate—slavery, slave trade" for the hostility towards Blacks (269). Ward points out that "[t]here is the history of the Negro, at least for the last seven centuries, while what is said of him before that time is interspersed among the annals of other peoples"—and with that, makes a powerful case for the recognition of minority history within larger national frameworks (269). The willful ignorance of this long history must be ended so that knowledge about the achievements of "the ancient Negro" can lead to the recognition of the potential of "modern" black people (269). Ward establishes the possibility of being proud of ancient black history and strengthens the link between antiquity and modern times for black people through the lens of future-orientation and progress. As a result, black people are cast as one of the "most progressive of the human race" (277).

With this history of black people largely ignored by whites, the scarcity of written source material, and the dominance of the narrative of slavery, Ward finally establishes the necessity to write a different kind of history of black people. In calling for this alternative historiography, Ward acknowledges the difference between a (white, Western) demand for "historical data" and an alternative archive of black people, consisting of "[s]craps, patches, anecdotes, these are all that bear record of us" (269-70). Being able to produce and exhibit the written record of one's people's history also means reaping its "benefit," as Ward suggests (270). It signifies being able to rely on the "creditable facts" that underline the long tradition of "honourable mentions […] of our fathers," and to be aware of a genealogy of self-made men (270). The list of contemporary examples for self-made, aspiring black men comprise such figures as James McCune Smith, Martin Delany, or Alexander Crummell, who stand as examples for Ward to counter racist prejudice (see 282). As the contemporary end of a genealogy that spans black scholars and intellectuals from antiquity onwards, Ward also sees these men as an "embodie[d…] history of struggles of all the learned and useful black men we have in the United States" (283). In this respect, Ward's conscious call that "if we do not vindicate ourselves, who will do it for us?" harks back soundly to David Walker's and even Thomas Smallwood's assertion of the importance of future black historians to undertake this task, to create a reliable genealogy from black people for black people (270). Of course, Ward himself is contributing to this kind of historiography, directly and symbolically, through his *Autobiography,* as did Walker in his *Appeal*, and Smallwood in his narrative.

Finally, it remains Ward's task to close the chasm between his description of black people as aspiring and progressive, whose potentials he envisions to be realized in Great Britain and British North America, and Great Britain's history of anti-black racism and slavery. In order to maintain the allegiance to the imperial center, Ward must rationalize Britain's position in this web of relations. Therefore, he discursively redeems the Empire as the moral convert from slavery, casting the victory of abolitionism as a sign that "the Englishmen […are the] friend [of the black man]" because they recognized that they "have sinned, and they have repented" (300). Through the Abolition Act of 1833, Great Britain has gained the function as "good example" (300). Rhetorically, this entails the lowering of the "modern" black man to "the poor and needy Negro" who receives mercy at the hands of the Samaritan-abolitionist (301). This unexpected move by Ward, contradictory to his self-confident vision of the progressive black man, can only be understood in the context of his religious rehabilitation of Britain to the status of a repentant great nation. Ward's image climaxes in the assertion that "English abolitionists are among the most devotedly pious of the laymen," underlining the fact that they have recognized the "holy" character of the anti-slavery crusade (302-03). This recognition ultimately restores them to their place as morally upright, religiously apt fighters for freedom. Additionally, Ward needs to cast this conversion to anti-slavery as a sign of modernity and progressivism for his allegiances of the black man to Great Britain to maintain validity. Therefore, progress and the quest for improvement are not only intrinsic qualities of black people, in Ward's view, but must be the imperative and prime motivation for "[us] of the British dominions" (286), remembering England's own "modern[ity]" (252).

As a mediator between black and white people, abolitionists, leaders, and not least Old and New World, Ward's parting remarks constitute a last powerful call to accept Great Britain's position as worthy of black allegiance. As he tours Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, he admits that his upbringing and socialization in "a new country" does not make him so appreciative of "relics of antiquity" that he encounters in Britain (398). The tales of Westminster Abbey and other monuments from bygone times remain for Ward what they are: instructive of "English history, with its dates and figures," yet distant from his own experiences (398). Still, he is able "to convey back to [his] people [certain] impression[s] [he] felt" when visiting the monument of the English abolitionist icons of "Pitt, Wilberforce, Buxton, and Clarkson" (398-99). Ward here creates signifiers of historical importance, although fairly recent ones, yet imbued with meaning for a black readership at home.

In only a few sentences, Ward weaves together the threads of his *Autobiography*, invoking his allegiance to Great Britain and transatlantic anti-slavery, the importance of interracial cooperation in abolitionism, and the direct address of his multifaceted readership, which is black and white, anti-slavery, Canadian, U.S.-American, and British. Ward has opened the genre of *Autobiography* to incorporate more than the story of one life, but has subjected it to various purposes and border crossings. With a new phase of his life in Jamaica on the horizon, the *Autobiography* is yet only a preliminary conclusion and, therefore, does not offer simple closure. Whether one considers Ward an empire apologist who submits himself willingly to white gentility or not, whether one deems his projects of interracial cooperation and fraternity realistic or naïve, his *Autobiography* stands as a complex manifesto for Blacks at mid-nineteenth century to (re-)claim control over their fate by exploring possibilities outside of the United States. In this traveling life narrative, this includes the testing of genre boundaries, too, as Ward attempts to fit a complex, cross-border life onto the pages of his narrative. Ward moved to Jamaica in 1855 to work as a minister and, as of 1860, as a farmer like his father. He died in about 1866.