

Professor ALLEN, who was again received with general applause, said the lecture of that evening was on "The Social and Political Condition of the Free Coloured People of the Northern States of America." He was glad that the topic for that evening presented a distinct point. On the general subject of American Slavery it was exceedingly difficult to speak or to reason before such an intelligent audience as that, but, as he had said, the subject of that evening presented a distinct point. The subject was an interesting one, he did not know one more so, and for this reason, the free coloured people of the Northern States occupied a position which would enable them to influence the destiny of America, and through America, the destinies of the world. This might seem a startling saying, but it might not be the less true for that, for the destinies of nations rested one upon the other; there could be no change in the governmental policy of America without the change affecting the governmental policy of other nations. Look, for instance, at the protection which England afforded to its own coloured subjects. He did not say that this country had not the will to do it, but some how or other it was quite clear that if a British subject who happened to have a coloured skin visited South Carolina, he could not expect or rely upon the same protection from the British Government which a white man received. National laws were but conveniences: the great law of brotherhood existed in spite of these laws, and it was impossible for one nation to have a wrong within itself without injuring other nations, as it was also impossible for one man in a community to commit a wrong without injuring others as well as himself. (Hear, hear.) What, then, was the social and political condition of the free coloured people in America? It was just what the general government of the country had made it. Soon after the formation of the Federal government, the slave holding

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spirit, with commendable sagacity, saw that to allow a virtuous and accomplished free coloured people to grow up in their midst, would be to cherish a viper amongst themselves which would sting them to the death. So they proceeded with true Anglo Saxon sagacity, to make laws to keep this people in a state of degradation. The first law made by the General Government to oppress and degrade the free coloured people was passed twelve years after the formation of the general Government. By this law it was decreed that no man but a white man should be admitted to the rights of American citizenship, or rather that no foreigner but a white foreigner should be admitted to these rights. (Hear, hear.) The gross ingratitude of this law was shown by the fact that the very first martyr in the war which resulted in the reparation of the North American colonies from this country was a man of colour, by name Crispin [Hattox], and the coloured men fought side by side with the white men in that conflict. When Irishmen, Hungarians, Frenchmen, Germans, or Spaniards went to America, they were welcome; let whoever would go, provided he had a white skin, and he would be welcome; but let a man go to the shores of America, in whose veins flowed one drop of African blood, and he was thrust out, and told he could not be introduced to the rights of American citizenship. (Hear, hear.) If such treatment was republicanism, then give him the British or any other monarchy—(hear, hear, and applause);—if this was Christian democracy, then give him Russian or any other despotism. He would rather go to Russia or to Francis Joseph and appeal to them for justice, than go to his own country; for if he had a skin which had been burnt by the gracious smiles of the sun in America, instead of justice he should get injustice, and instead of getting what was his due, he would have execrations and all man-

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ner of outrage heaped upon him. Hundreds and thousands of Irishmen, of Polanders, and of others from the shores of Europe, flocked to America seeking liberty as they said; but they no sooner obtained the liberty they had come for, than they immediately employed all their powers in oppressing and degrading the coloured man. (Hear, hear.) Did they want a mob in America, they might go to the foreigners; did they want insulting in the streets, they might go to the Irishman who had just landed on their shores, and had hardly got the breath out of him. He disliked to say these things, but it was the fact, and it only showed that human nature was under certain circumstances a great beggar. The Professor then proceeded to refer to other laws of the general government, instancing the militia law, which declares that no one but a white man shall be enrolled, whilst the coloured men are called upon to fight in the foreign wars of the country; and the law which prohibits a coloured man from driving the mail. In this country any man, if he had genius, might aspire to the highest offices in the state; but in America a man with a coloured skin could not become even a common constable. In London he had seen a coloured postman delivering letters, but in America a coloured man was liable to a heavy penalty for even driving the mail. The next law of the general government authorised the citizens of Columbia district, which were not responsible to any State Government, but Congress only, to make such laws as they thought proper to control the coloured population. The white people of Columbia availed themselves of the privilege, and enacted one of the most diabolical laws ever recorded in any statute book, namely, that no coloured citizen should be allowed to visit the city of Washington, or any other city of Columbia; and if any coloured man was found there who could

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not prove his freedom, he should be sold into slavery, and the surplus money arising from such sale, after paying the gaol fees, should go into the pocket of the gaoler,—thus offering a direct bribe to the gaoler. Under this law, free coloured men had been seized again and again in Washington, and thrown into gaol; one gaoler, of the name of Ringold, having made a fortune by this traffic. The next law which the general Government passed was the Fugitive Slave Law; a law which transcended in wickedness any law of the most barbarous states of antiquity; a law which was written in blood and executed in blood. (Hear, hear, and applause.) This law virtually made a slave of every coloured man, for any coloured man or woman walking the Northern States might be claimed as a slave, and a man or woman so claimed was not permitted to say a word in his or her defence. Then the Judge had a fee of ten dollars if he sent a man into slavery, but only of five dollars if he kicked him out; and such men as Judge [Guigher] thought more of a ten dollar bill than of the feelings of a slave. Such were the laws of the general Government. But in addition to this, the American people had set themselves systematically to work to depress and degrade the coloured people. In the sixteen States of the Union there were only five in which coloured men were allowed to vote on terms of equality with the white man, namely, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. In one other State (New York) coloured men were allowed to vote, but only on condition that they possessed 250 dollars' worth of real estate. In all the other States the free coloured people were political nonentities; and in two of them their liberties are invaded by the laws of these States. The bad pre-eminence belongs to the State of Illinois, which had

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enacted a law that if any negro or mulatto, bond or free, came into and remained ten days in the State, with the intention of settling there, he should be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and fined 50 dollars; and if the fine were not paid he should be kept in custody and sold as a slave; the money accruing from such sale to be thrown into the charity fund for the benefit of the poor. (Hear, hear.)

That, said the lecturer, caps the climax. (Applause.) Further, the law of this State declared that every one with one-fourth only of African blood should be deemed a mulatto.

Now, a mulatto was a person with one-half African blood in his veins, and those with only one-fourth were quadroons, therefore it was not impossible but this declaration would involve the State in difficulties. A convention of free coloured people had lately been called in Illinois to protest against the law, and they had done so in such a noble and dignified manner, that the people of the State—even the pro-slavery men—had admitted the men who met in convention were as intelligent looking, as fine and manly in appearance, as those of any convention they had ever seen. The State of Indiana had also passed a law against free coloured people coming to reside in that State. Such was the state of things in this State, that the free colored population was fast emigrating out of the State, although they were the most wealthy people in it. This seemed to him to be bad political economy. As he understood the matter, the true greatness of a people rested upon the intelligence, the virtue, and the wealth of the community. (Hear, hear, and applause.) The object of the American people was to get rid of the free coloured people at all hazards; but if they did, it would, in his opinion, be at great hazard—for many of them had a large portion of white blood in their veins. And this was an explanation of

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what was charged against the free coloured people, that they were dwindling away because they are inferior to the whites. But why are they dwindling away? (Hear, hear.) Because they are growing whiter and whiter, and by co[n]forming to the Anglo-Saxon model, they slide into, and are lost amongst the masses. (Hear.) Before they succeed in getting out the coloured people, thousands and thousands will be among them, and they will know it not; indeed it would be impossible to get rid of them, because they were so mixed up together. Notwithstanding all the oppression by which the free-coloured people had been kept down, they were increasing in wealth, in intelligence, and in power, and in spite of all the disadvantages under which they laboured, the wealth of the free-coloured people of the Northern States was recently ascertained to amount to fifteen millions of dollars, or about £3,000,000. The Professor then proceeded to mention instances where coloured people had by their energy and perseverance raised themselves to positions of opulence and respectability, and showed that whilst the respectability and intelligence of such men as Henry Boyd, Robert Purves, Dr. Pennington, and Frederick Douglass, were admitted by all, they were not allowed the social privileges of the most ignorant white man; being debarred from riding in the public omnibuses, or dining at the public table. He again alluded to his own case as an illustration, and said though he could not speak upon it in public, he had published the details of his life and experience in a book, which any one might obtain and read.

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