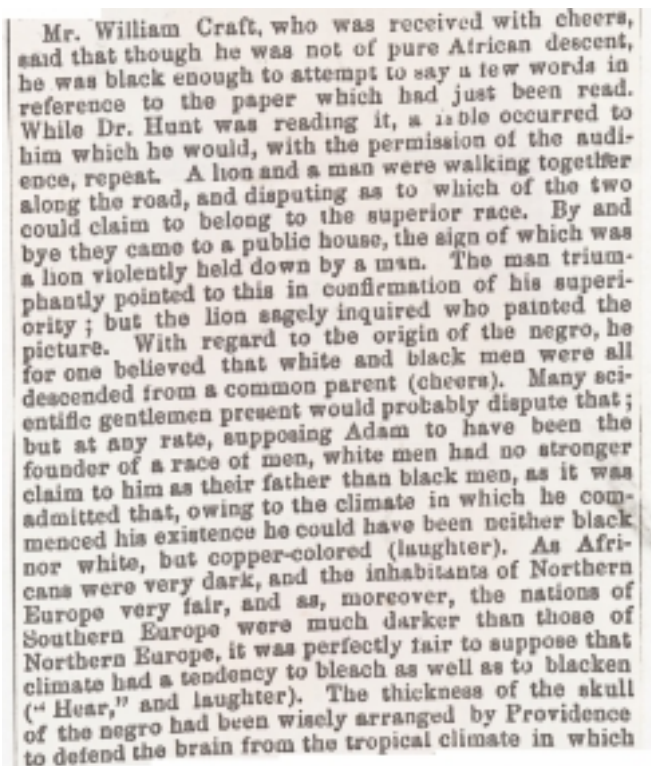


Mr. William Craft, who was received with cheers, said that though he was not of pure African descent, he was black enough to attempt to say a few words in reference to the paper\* which had just been read. While Dr. Hunt was reading it, a fable occurred to him which he would, with the permission of the audience, repeat. A lion and a man were walking together along the road, and disputing as to which of the two could claim to belong to the superior race. By and bye they came to a public house, the sign of which was a lion violently held down by a man. The man triumphantly pointed to this in confirmation of his superiority; but the lion sagely inquired who painted the picture. With regard to the origin of the negro, he for one believed that white and black men were all descended from a common parent (cheers). Many scientific gentlemen present would probably dispute that; but at any rate, supposing Adam to have been the founder of a race of men, white men had no stronger claim to him as their father than black men, as it was admitted that, owing to the climate in which he commenced his existence he could have been neither black nor white, but copper-colored (laughter). As Africans were very black, and the inhabitants of Northern Europe very fair, and as, moreover, the nations of Southern Europe were much darker than those of Northern Europe, it was perfectly fair to suppose that climate had a tendency to bleach as well as to blacken ("hear," and laughter). The thickness of the skull of the negro had been wisely arranged by Providence to defend the brain from the tropical climate in which



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\* Transcribers note: The paper referred to is titled "On the Physical and Mental Characteristics of the Negro," by Dr. James Hunt.

he lived. If God had not given them thick skulls, their brains would probably have become very much like those of many scientific gentlemen of the present day ("Hear," and laughter). The woolly hair was not considered by Africans as a mark of inferiority, though some of them shaved it off, but it also answered the purpose of defending the head from the sun. With regard to his not being a true African, his grandmother and grandfather were both of pure negro blood. His grandfather was a chief of the West Coast; but through the treachery of some white men, who doubtless thought themselves greatly his superiors, he was kidnapped and taken to America, where he (Mr. Craft) was born. He had recently been to Africa on a visit to the King of Dahomey. He found there considerable diversities even among the Africans themselves. Those of Sierra Leone had prominent, almost Jewish features. Their heels were quite as short, on the whole, as those of any other race, and upon the whole they were well formed. Persons who had any knowledge of Africans knew that, when they enjoyed advantages, they were capable of making good use of them. He might refer to the instance of the little girl brought to this country by Capt. Forbes. This child was presented to the Queen, who had her carefully educated. When she grew up, she mingled in good society, and interested every one by her proficiency in music, and recently she had been married to a commercial gentleman of color at Lagos. Another case was mentioned by Mr. Chambers in one of his works, and another case was that of Mr. Crowther, who was well-known to many gentlemen in this country. One word with reference to the ancient Britons. When Julius Caesar

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came to this country, he said of the natives that they were such stupid people that they were not fit to make slaves of in Rome (laughter). It had taken a long time to make Englishmen what they now were, and, therefore, it was not wonderful if the negroes make slow progress in intellectual development. It was, however, proved that they made very rapid progress when placed in advantageous circumstances. As to the negro not being erect, the same thing might be said of agricultural laborers in this country (hear, hear). He pointed to Hayti as furnishing an instance of independence of character and intellectual power on the part of the negro, and contended that in America the degraded position which he was forced to occupy gave him no chance of proving what he really was capable of doing. He was sorry that scientific and learned men should waste their time in discussing a subject that could prove of no benefit to mankind. He spoke with great deference to their opinions, but, for his own part, firmly agreed with Cowper that

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(Loud and prolonged applause.)

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