

Mr. Langston began by saying that he deemed himself fortunate in appearing before a New York audience. He was not insensible to the honor of speaking in behalf of the colored and white classes. He spoke for both and felt joy for both classes. He was not insensible to the fact that he stood where great and eloquent men and women had stood. He yielded to them in eloquence, in oratory, but not in his love for freedom. For that he would give himself, his property, and his life, whenever God and his country wanted it. Anterior to the war there was not a single man in this country, in the enjoyment of civil political liberty; nor even the free liberty of speech.

He was not forgetful of the fact that the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States declared that no person should be deprived of his liberty, etc.—but he recollected that South Carolina declared she would interpret the Constitution as she pleased, and as far as American liberty was concerned we had only a pro-slavery rule, which ordered things as they found fit, to keep up the accursed institution.

* * * * *

It was well known that no white man or woman had free speech. Now take Wm. Lloyd Garrison, the largest man—because the true friend of the negro and liberty (cheers). Why, twelve years ago

Mr. Langston began by saying that he deemed himself fortunate in appearing before a New York audience. He was not insensible to the honor of speaking in behalf of the colored and white classes. He spoke for both and felt joy for both classes. He was not insensible to the fact that he stood where great and eloquent men and women had stood. He yielded to them in eloquence, in oratory, but not in his love for freedom. For that he would give himself, his property, and his life, whenever God and his country wanted it. Anterior to the war there was not a single man in this country, in the enjoyment of civil political liberty; nor even the free liberty of speech.

He was not forgetful of the fact that the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States declared that no person should be deprived of his liberty, etc.—but he recollected that South Carolina declared she would interpret the Constitution as she pleased, and as far as American liberty was concerned we had only a pro-slavery rule, which ordered things as they found fit, to keep up the accursed institution.

* * * * *

It was well known that no white man or woman had free speech. Now take Wm. Lloyd Garrison, the largest man—because the true friend of the negro and liberty (cheers). Why, twelve years ago

he dared not have gone to Washington.
That was the condition of white men before the war.

* * * * *

“But when the first gun was thundered from Sumter, God thundered, and we were prepared to say with Wendell Phillips: ‘Is liberty to die in this country?—Has God Almighty scooped out the Mississippi Valley for its grave? Has He lifted up the Rocky Mountains for its monument? Has he set Niagara to hymn its requiem?’ No, liberty is not to die in this country! The Mississippi Valley is to be but the cradle of American liberty! The Rocky Mountains are to be the stony tablets on which are to be written its grand achievements! Niagara is not set to hymn its death dirge, but its triumphant song.

* * * * *

“He had received invitations to Tennessee, and had the impudence to go into the capital, Nashville, without any man molesting him. So thank God for the war! He had the impudence to walk all about, without any one asking him for a pass, and he thanked God and the American people. He had the impudence to go and see where Hood and Thomas had fought, and he saw there 5,000 negroes covered equally with blackness and glory (great cheering). He thanked those

he dared not have gone to Washington.
That was the condition of white men before the war.

* * * * *

“But when the first gun was thundered from Sumter, God thundered, and we were prepared to say with Wendell Phillips: ‘Is liberty to die in this country?—Has God Almighty scooped out the Mississippi Valley for its grave? Has He lifted up the Rocky Mountains for its monument? Has he set Niagara to hymn its requiem?’ No, liberty is not to die in this country! The Mississippi Valley is to be but the cradle of American liberty! The Rocky Mountains are to be the stony tablets on which are to be written its grand achievements! Niagara is not set to hymn its death dirge, but its triumphant song.

* * * * *

“He had received invitations to Tennessee, and had the impudence to go into the capital, Nashville, without any man molesting him. So thank God for the war! He had the impudence to walk all about, without any one asking him for a pass, and he thanked God and the American people. He had the impudence to go and see where Hood and Thomas had fought, and he saw there 5,000 negroes covered equally with blackness and glory (great cheering). He thanked those

black men from his heart. And now let them invite Mr. Garrison a free man, no one will tell him to be careful. How they would fly to hear him! He went down to Louisville, and did not know whether he would have been disturbed, but the ladies invited him to speak, and encouraged him, and he spoke six times—afterwards they told him he must get a pass; but the military commander told him, ‘Sir, I don’t know whether or not you are a colored man.’ But he insisted that he was a colored man, and called on a black man to testify to it (cheers and laughter).

“At St. Louis he wanted a pass—colored men now look up at the stars and walk erect without fear, and the freest city in the Union now is St. Louis. And now white men all over the Union are indeed free; but the colored men are not exactly free, they want one more thing which they must have—which white men must give them. The negro claimed absolute equality. Never a colored man in this country has been tried by *his peers*. The negro demands the right to be tried by his peers, by colored men, and they must have it. For his (Mr. Langston) part he preferred to have it mixed, to have it stirred up, six of black and six of white (laughter). In this country they had nice distinctions, and he had never

black men from his heart. And now let them invite Mr. Garrison a free man, no one will tell him to be careful. How they would fly to hear him! He went down to Louisville, and did not know whether he would have been disturbed, but the ladies invited him to speak, and

encouraged him, and he spoke six times—afterwards they told him he must get a pass; but the military commander told him, ‘Sir, I don’t know whether or not you are a colored man.’ But he insisted that he was a colored man, and called on a black man to testify to it (cheers and laughter).

“At St. Louis he wanted a pass—colored men now look up at the stars and walk erect without fear, and the freest city in the Union now is St. Louis. And now white men all over the Union are indeed free; but the colored men are not exactly free, they want one more thing which they must have—which white men must give them. The negro claimed absolute equality. Never a colored man in this country has been tried by *his peers*. The negro demands the right to be tried by his peers, by colored men, and they must have it. For his (Mr. Langston) part he preferred to have it mixed, to have it stirred up, six of black and six of white (laughter). In this country they had nice distinctions, and he had never

seen but one colored man on a jury, and
believed that occurred by accident.

* * * * *

“Another thing he demanded was the
free use of the ballot. At present the
rule is, ‘you’re black and therefore you
cannot vote.’ There was never a more
fitting time to discuss negro equality.—
The men of color were now introduced as
a race—they had been soldiers and braves,
had shed their blood for white men and
the Union—and America and the world
know it. Let them then have their just
and natural rights, and deserve well of
God and man.

* * * * *

“Another argument against the negro
was his ignorance—all nonsense! The
negro’s vote could not be bought for whis-
key or promises. The question was, ‘Is
a man true and honest? will he discharge
his duties as an American citizen? and
he appealed to the white men on behalf
of the negro if he was not all this.”

* * * * *

“He demanded the franchise because
the colored people were men. They had
been overpowered by brute force; but,
similar to the Roman slave in chains,
they rush out into the arena, and demand
before all the people their rights as na-
tive born inhabitants and men.

“They had not called women to the

seen but one colored man on a jury, and
believed that occurred by accident.

“Another thing he demanded was the
free use of the ballot. At present the
rule is, ‘you’re black and therefore you
cannot vote.’ There was never a more
fitting time to discuss negro equality.—
The men of color were now introduced as
a race—they had been soldiers and braves,
had shed their blood for white men and
the Union—and America and the world
know it. Let them then have their just
and natural rights, and deserve well of
God and man.

“Another argument against the negro
was his ignorance—all nonsense! The

negro’s vote could not be bought for whis-
key or promises. The question was, ‘Is
a man true and honest? will he discharge
his duties as an American citizen? and
he appealed to the white men on behalf
of the negro if he was not all this.”

“He demanded the franchise because
the colored people were men. They had
been overpowered by brute force; but,
similar to the Roman slave in chains,
they rush out into the arena, and demand
before all the people their rights as na-
tive born inhabitants and men.

“They had not called women to the

batt'e field, they had not called boys to the battle field—and the negro had fully proved his manhood there, before God and before the nation (applause). He quoted Attorney General Bates' opinion on the war, and represented that, as taxpayers, the people also forcibly demanded the right to vote.

* * * * *

"The first man who gave his blood to America in the Revolution, on the 5th of March, 1770, was Crispus Attucks, a black man. Bunker's Hill monument lifts up her historic head to the memories of the great, the lofty and good. In the Valley of the Mississippi are the monuments of the heroism of colored men, and may the last man who sheds his blood in this war—may the last man who falls before the walls of Richmond—be, to the honor and glory of America, a black man.

* * * * *

"When the war is over, your necessity for the negro will not have ceased. You will have traitors all over the South. You will need the black man with the ballot-box as you have with the bayonet, and when you want him you know he is ready to cry, 'Here I am.'"

batt'e field, they had not called boys to the battle field—and the negro had fully proved his manhood there, before God and before the nation (applause). He quoted Attorney General Bates' opinion on the war, and represented that, as taxpayers, the people also forcibly demanded the right to vote.

* * * * *

"The first man who gave his blood to America in the Revolution, on the 5th of March, 1770, was Crispus Attucks, a black man. Bunker's Hill monument lifts up her historic head to the memories of the great, the lofty and good. In the Valley of the Mississippi are the monuments of the heroism of colored men, and may the last man who sheds his blood in this war—may the last man who falls before the walls of Richmond—be, to the honor and glory of America, a black man.

* * * * *

"When the war is over, your necessity for the negro will not have ceased. You will have traitors all over the South. You will need the black man with the ballot-box as you have with the bayonet, and when you want him you know he is ready to cry, 'Here I am.'"