

[On the evening of Wednesday, Feb. 1st, this talented lady spoke before a large audience, in the Roger Williams Church, Providence. She was introduced by the Rev. G. S. Day, who gave a brief but interesting sketch of her life.]

Mrs. Harper commenced by referring to the early struggle of the colonies. The birth of the republic was heralded by the Declaration, and its cradle was rocked amid the tempests of the revolution.

She paid a tribute to the signers of the Declaration, who knew not what the future would bring forth, success or failure, defeat or victory, but who felt that their quarrel was just. She said that men might be crushed, but that principle would live always; that trampled in the dust, it would rise again, having eternity for its race and the life-time of God for its existence. The speaker alluded to the great mistake of the early founders of the Republic, in permitting slavery to infuse its leprous distilment into the veins of the young nation. She spoke of the fatal permission which was given to the African slave trade, and the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill. And though the reign of these things was now over, yet there was a great deal more to be done, so that the oppressed might have not only bare freedom, but be clothed with all the rights that are necessary to a complete citizenship. She drew a contrast between the old Union of '76 and the new republic of '65. In the former, slavery was the dominant power of the land; in the latter, slavery is at our feet, its death-groans in our ears, and words of triumph are on our lips.

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In speaking of reconstruction, she said that no skillful mariner would be apt to be wrecked twice on the

same rock; and the rock on which the nation had been wrecked was injustice to the colored man. The nation in reconstructing should build, not upon the shifting sands of policy and expediency, but upon the granite of eternal justice.

When the colored man drops the bullet, he must have placed in his hands the ballot. She spoke of the injustice done the colored man, now under military government, for want of the elective franchise. And suppose peace should ensure; would it not be greater under the rule of the returned rebels? Would not the colored man, powerless to remove the despot under whose withering malignity he would be quivering, sink into the lowest depths of despair? What would his freedom be worth, if his feet and hands were tied, and none helped him? Which would make the more effective people to help the general government—a class crushed by a sort of serfdom, or a class educated up to the highest civilization?

In conclusion, she said that the May-Flower, like India's sacred tree, sheltered the principles of justice, peace, and security, while the Dutch Slaver, like the poisonous tree of the eastern isles, protected injustice, oppression and fraud.

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