

THE NEGRO QUESTION.

[On Thursday Sir Roderick Murchison, in the Geographical and ethnological section, took review of the geographical discoveries of the year. The most numerous attendance was in the geographical section, the large assembly room where it was held being crowded all day. "The inevitable negro question" turned up in this section during the afternoon, and was discussed with some degree of rancour. Mr. Crawford sent a paper on the commixture of the races of man as affecting the progress of the civilization of the new world; and he laid down the bold doctrine that children the offspring of white and coloured persons, or rather, as he termed them, children the result of the union of the superior with the inferior race, were sickly and feeble, and liable to die young; and he maintained if there was a commixture of the races man would perish from the face of the earth. This launched the section into the controversy of "North and South." A speaker asserted that negroes were better treated in the South than in the North, and he attempted to prove that they were incapable of a high civilisation. He was replied to very ably by Dr. Wilson; and Mr. William Craft, who has just returned from Africa, rose and spoke.] He said that he had experienced in his own person the treatment a coloured man receives both in the North and in the South. He admitted that in one sense a coloured man was sometimes better treated in the South than in the North; but that was when he was a chattel. A negro as a man—a free man—was treated with greater contempt in the South than in the North. In the former he was denied his rights of citizenship; in the latter they were conceded to him. He was within the mark in saying that nearly two-thirds of the negroes in the Northern States of America had more or

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less of European blood in them, and had it not been for that amalgamation, instead of there being 4,000,000 of slaves in those States, there probably would not have been more than 1,000,000. Whenever the African race had had equal opportunities with the whites, they had shown that they possessed considerable intellectual ability, and many of them had risen to very high position in society. He mentioned that in order that persons who were not acquainted with Africans might understand that there was just as much difference between individual Africans as between individual Englishmen. He did not admit that Kaffirs were fair specimens of the negro race. Dr. Hunt agreed with Mr. Crawford in the general conclusions at which he had arrived, but he thought he had not dwelt sufficiently on the great physiological law which was admitted by most observers, that where the intermixture was kept up through succeeding generations the offspring gradually died out, and the race became extinct. He thought that the laws in the Southern States of America against the intermarriage of the negroes and the whites were wise laws. The discussion was continued by Mr. C. Blake, Mr. Hedgeley, and Mr. Craft, and ultimately was adjourned until a future day.

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