LYNCH LAW IN AMERICA.

A meeting was held yesterday, at the Young Men's Christian Association Assembly Room, Needle Alley, to bear addresses upon the treatment of negroes in the Southern States of the American Union. In the absence of Rev. E. S. Webster through a severe cold, Councillor S. Lloyd presided.

Amongst those present were several ministers, members of the Society of Friends, and ladies and gentlemen interested in local philanthropic work. The Rev. E. S. Webster wrote: "I have read with deep sorrow of the flagrant injustice do to the blacks in the Southern States, and trust that public Christian sentiment will be sufficiently aroused to protest against the inhuman practice which prevails." Mr. R. L. Farmer briefly introduced Miss Ada B. Wells, an American negro lady, and expressed sympathy with her efforts in coming to England. Miss Wells, in a quiet but effective address, said it had been asked her why she should come 4,000 miles to tell the people of Birmingham about something that could be dealt with very properly by the local authorities in America. She thought she could answer that question. Many of those in this country who had interested themselves in the anti-slavery agitation seemed to have thought the freeing of the slaves gave to the negroes in America all the liberties which others enjoyed throughout the world and of themselves. Unfortunately that was not true. The resentment of the Southern whites was about the taking away from them of their slaves they had never ceased to demand. After the negroes were freed, the Southern States of the Union a stain that could never be wiped away. Since 1865 the Southern States had been in possession of all their own property, and the privilege had been used to enact laws in every way restrictive and proscribed of the negro race. One of the first of these laws was the negro prison offence for black and white to intermarry. That was on the statute book of every Southern State. In 1865, the black and white to ride in the same railway-carriage. (Shame.) The general tendency of the legislation of these States in regard to the negro race was detrimental to the negro and progressive. Some of these laws were not last year, so that the reductions of the civil war could not be placed as an.

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A negro woman carrying a child would be received in a railway-car with the same recognition as a white woman; but if an educated self-respecting woman, with negro blood in her veins, could get past the sentinel at the door, and entered as a passenger in her own right, she would be dragged out of the car with ignominy. Her presence would be regarded as a contamination; that of the nurse would be very acceptable. It was the same at hotels and in the churches. A coloured man might be employed as a janitor to ring the bells, but he would not dare to walk into the church simply to hear the services. (Shame.) Christian minister would not even aniser the sacrament to a negro side by side with a white communicant. (Shame.) There was a double school system, and the provision for the negroes' children was very inadequate. But for a few institutions supported by northern philanthropists there would be no provision whatever in the Southern States for the higher education of the race, and this provision was woefully insufficient. The doors of the churches, the Young Men's Christian Association, the temperance halls, and every avenue to influence tending to the higher development of men and women were closed against the negro. The administration of the law was entirely in the hands of the white people, so that there was no fear of a negro guilty of a crime being able to escape the penalty. In 1862, this Miss Wells gave prison statistics, showing that for offences of more than a year to ordinary larceny sentences ranging from five to ten, and even to twenty years, were inflicted upon negro offenders. Why, then, was it necessary that a mob of white citizens, with all the machinery of law and government in their hands, should take a black man out of jail and hang him to the nearest lamp-post or bridge in a town, or the nearest tree in the country; and, not satisfied with killing themselves by shooting bullets into the body. No self-respecting mob in the Southern States considered that it had done its duty until every man had bled out through the body. In one case the mob ranged themselves under the body, and photographed, and a copy of the picture was sent to a prominent advocate of the negroes' cause. Among those thus photographed were boys of four years old. Only one paper throughout the length and breadth of the United States had the courage to publish articles denouncing these crimes, and that was the Chicago Inter-Ocean. (Applause.) Since 1882 over a thousand black men, women, and children had been lynched. (Cries of "Abominable.") The vilest charges were made against the victims; often, without any ground whatever, in order to shut off the sympathy of the world, and the papers and the telegraph were in the hands of the whites it was impossible to contradict these statements. One-third of the victims had been charged with assault and murder; the remainder with all sorts of crimes, ranging from murder to that on which a man was hung in Tennessee—namely, that he was "drunk and nasty" to white people. (Shame.) Having given some particulars showing the false evidence on which people who had afterwards been proved to have been innocent were lynched, Miss Wells said that when the woman assaulted was black, and the man who assaulted her was white, the offender was not punished even by due course of law. It was very clear that it was not detection of the crime that caused the mob; it was the class of person assaulted. The white man of the South forgot that it is the war when—thereafter.
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