

ous and responsible position. Had they been unfaithful, or given way before the enemy, all would have been lost. *Three times in succession* were they attacked, with most desperate valor and fury, by well disciplined and veteran troops, and *three times* did they successfully repel the assault, and thus preserve our army from capture. They fought through the war. They were brave, hardy troops. They helped to gain our liberty and independence.

“Now, the war is over, our freedom is gained — what is to be done with these colored soldiers, who have shed their best blood in its defence? Must they be sent off out of the country, because they are black? or must they be sent back into slavery, now they have risked their lives and shed their blood to secure the freedom of their masters? I ask, what became of these noble colored soldiers? Many of them, I fear, were taken back to the South, and doomed to the fetter and the chain.

“And why is it, that the colored inhabitants of our nation, born in this country, and entitled to all the rights of freemen, are held in slavery? Why, but because they are *black*? I have often thought that, should God see fit, by a miracle, to change their color, straighten their hair, and give their features and complexion the appearance of the whites, slavery would not continue a year. No, you would then go and abolish it with the *sword*, if it were not speedily done without. But is it a suitable cause for making men slaves, because God has given them such a color, such hair and such features, as he saw fit?”

Dr. Clarke, in the Convention which revised the Constitution of New York, in 1821, speaking of the colored inhabitants of the State, said:—

“My honorable colleague has told us, that, as the colored people are not required to contribute to the protection or defence of the State, they are not entitled to an equal participation in the privileges of its citizens. But, Sir, whose fault is this? Have they ever refused to do military duty when called upon? It is haughtily asked, Who will stand in the ranks shoulder to shoulder with a negro? I answer, No one, in time of peace; no one, when your musters and trainings