regarded, then, like the perverse nations of old, grand and now beautiful
America will be mingling with their mouldering decay.

After Mr. Hall concluded, Rev. Mr. Moore said:

MR. PRESIDENT:—On rising to address this Convention upon the momentous
subject (political franchise), the first great right of an American citizen,
which we are deprived of in this State by a Constitutional prohibition, I am
aware, sir, that for me to attempt to supercede the able speech of the gentle-
man who has just taken his seat—whose masterly oratory, stirring pathos, and
thundering eloquence, has captured every thought in the house—such an attempt
by me would be the vainest act of my life. Yet, sir, I cannot let this great
question of our right to the political franchise pass, without adding a word
in behalf of our claim to that right.

I wish, sir, to make a few remarks upon the ground of our appeal to the
State Legislature for the concession of our right of suffrage, by an amend-
ment to the State Constitution, so as to secure to us this God given right.
The Chairman of the Committee on Franchise, in his very profound remarks on
presenting the able report, made a brilliant allusion to the unequalled
bravery of the American Negro as a soldier—as tested in the bloody strife of
the rebellion just past, where the nation's existence was staked upon the
battle-field, in a chance at war. From this point he presented a masterly
appeal as a basis of our claim. Now, sir, to this category of argument in
favor of our sacred cause, we wish to contribute. Sir, in the outset we
appeal to the Legislature of a Christian people for our right of suffrage,
upon the broad principle of human justice, as taught by the great rule, "Do
unto others as you would they should do unto you." Ask them, if, in our
stead, they would be willing to consent to such injustice as we suffer by
them. Would they like such treatment at our hands? If honest in their
answer, they will tell us no. Ask them if it was wrong for England to impose
upon their forefathers "taxation without representation?" They must
yes, or condemn their revolutionary fathers. Ask them if taxation without
representation was any greater injustice imposed upon their forefathers, by
England, than as imposed upon us by the law of this State? If candid, they
will answer no. Why, then, will a Christian people commit such a flagrant
wrong, which they so loudly condemn in others? Why will they perpetrate a
knowing wrong upon a people because they know that they have not power to
vindicate by force their just rights?

We appeal to them upon the principle of man's natural equal rights, as
vindicated and set forth in the "Declaration of American Independence"—upon
which rests the foundation of the Republic. That declaration sets forth that
"All men are created equal" in human rights, or have the same natural rights,
which man cannot justly invade or take away; and that to secure these rights
equally to all men, "Governments are established among men, deriving their
just powers from the consent of the governed." This is the doctrine of the
Declaration of Independence; if this sentiment is wrong, why do not the
American people blot it from their political creed? If it is right, then we
appeal for our natural right to "Equality before the Law," as it sets forth.
We appeal to them as friends of their own Republican principles, which they
violate when they refuse us the right of suffrage.

We ask for our rights, upon the principle of our loyalty; we have never
sworn falsely to the Government; we have never taken up arms against it,—we
have never attempted to betray it into the hands of foreign powers. This is
what no other race of men can truthfully assert in America. We have prayed
for it—fought for it—bled for it, and perished by thousands in its defence.

We make our appeal upon the principle of our patriotism. We have conse-
crated every battle-field of the country with our blood, to maintain its
existence, from our love to the country, while it thrusts us with a cold
heart and villainous hand from all its political rights and immunities. We
railed around its only standard of hope and fought in, deadly battle, the
country's worst foes, foreign and domestic. He who doubts this, let him read
the history of the death warrants of the battle grounds from Bunker Hill to
Richmond, where black American warriors now sleep in their bloody winding
sheets, in thousands. No race on American soil, has given such proof of
patriotism as the black race; without boasting, we challenge a refutation of