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Editors Foreward

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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

All recitations, lectures and other exercises of the Law Department of Howard University, except the Sunday morning lectures, were held during 1872 in the evening after 5 o'clock in the Main Building on the campus. At the Sunday morning lectures, which were delivered from 9 to 10 o'clock A. M., John M. Langston, the Dean, usually addressed the student body and their friends who were present. Not infrequently this Sunday lecture was given by some visitor. It was on Sunday morning, January 7, 1872, that Ralph Waldo Emerson was present. "His lecture," Mr. Langston says in his autobiography, *From the Virginia Plantation to the National Capitol (1894)*, "carried the school in name and influence around the world."

* * * * *

In 1887, after moving first into a building on Seventh Street, Northwest, occupied then by the Second National Bank, and then to Lincoln Hall at Ninth and D Streets, Northwest, the Law Department finally selected as its permanent home the present Law Building on Fifth Street opposite the District Court House.

* * * * *

Upon the resignation of President O. O. Howard in 1873, Mr. Langston, the first Dean of the Law Department, was elected acting President of the University. He resigned from both positions—the deanship and the acting presidency—in 1875 and finally entered actively into the political life of Virginia.

* * * * *

On November 6, 1888, he was elected United States Representative from the Fourth Congressional District. Petersburg was the principal urban center of that section, which was known as the "Black Belt of Virginia." The population of this district was in 1880, 166,965*—60,342 whites and 106,623 blacks. He served during the Fifty-first Congress, being the only Negro before or since to represent that state in the National Legislature. Born December 14, 1829, he was graduated by Oberlin College in 1849; was granted the Master of Arts degree by Oberlin in 1852; was graduated from the Oberlin Theological Department in 1853; was admitted to practice law before the bar of Ohio in 1854; was at Howard University from 1868 to 1876; was a member of the Board of Health of Washington, D. C., from 1871 to 1877; was United States Minister to Haiti from 1877 to 1885; was president of Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute from 1885 to 1887; was Representative in Congress from Virginia from 1888 to 1890; died November 15, 1897.

* * * * *

The population of the Fourth Congressional District of Virginia was in 1890, 167,863*—62,837 whites and 105,026 blacks; in 1900, 175,048*—69,192 whites and 105,856 blacks; in 1910, 186,210*—79,418 whites and 106,792 blacks; in 1920, 209,782*—99,122 whites and 110,660 blacks. During the last 40 years, from 1888-1928, three Republicans and six Democrats have represented this district in Congress—all white except Mr. Langston.

* Indians, Japanese and Chinese are excluded.