

in the future, in the great matters of polity and government, which inspire hope, confidence and energy in a people, are to carry the dead weight of the barbaric race of Africa, whose highest pretension to civilization and culture is, that it has been, until a most recent period, the slaves of those to whom it is proposed to force them in as partners and equals.

To an equality before the law, to protection in all civil rights pertaining to person or property reputation or life, the blacks have been admitted. And those who really desire information and deal candidly with the subject, will find in the opinion of the Supreme Court, in the case of the State vs. Manning, in 1838, that at that time, and before, the negro had, in a Court of Justice in North Carolina, all the rights of a white man, (with special statutes to punish with death those who might kidnap, deport or attempt to enslave him) except the privilege of testifying in a case affecting white men, which has been extended since their general liberation, and, I doubt not, will be made universal.

I trust, I need not say here, that I have no animosities or unjust prejudices against the black people. I regard it as better for them, as well as for us, that there shall be regular and stable government, by which all shall be protected in the pursuit of steady labor, in honest employment, in the acquisition of comforts and of wealth, and that each race, in the sphere of its own complexions, shall have all the pleasures and enjoyments of society and social intercourse. Those of them who shall be content to act on this principle, and to rely upon honesty, industry and good behavior, will in the end find themselves far better off than will be such as, intoxicated with the new enjoyment of freedom, aspire to become politicians, and rely upon dispensations of Government or party charities, or the distribution of confiscated estates in expectancy, for their good fortune in the whirlpool of revolution. Party spirit has been described by a great man as "the madness of many for the gain of a few." To them the gain of honest labor will be far greater than will ever accrue from attendance on leagues, banquets, and the agitations of these disjointed times.

The means, gentlemen, of averting this radical change in our institutions is in the hands of the free white men of North Carolina. Congress has not undertaken to impose it upon us, but by means of an election with a majority of more than 32,000 white voters registered already, after the exclusion of 30,000 more who are entitled under our State Constitution to the elective franchise. And if election still means choice, there is no doubt that these voters with an approach to unanimity would give a negative voice. But threats are made to deter freemen voting their own sentiments, to induce them to sustain a wrong policy, under an apprehension that if they do not comply, Congress will visit them with a harsher penalty than the destructive measure proposed. It is difficult to imagine what can be more injurious than either negro domination or their investiture with so much of the power of the State. But a base fear, inspired by those who assume to be the prophets of Congress, is no motive to shape the conduct of white freemen at the polls. By rejecting this measure, our old institutions remain, subject for the present to interruptions by military orders from the commanding general of the district; and I have no apprehension that the distinguished officer who is now in command, or any other who will succeed him, will indulge in wanton cruelty, or visit citizens with any marks of displeasure for exercising their own judgment in casting their suffrages in an election in which they are required to vote. But it is a subject of such infinite importance, that we must do our duty, and leave consequences to that Deity which controls all human events.

It may be asked where are these things to end, and what hope is there of deliverance? It requires a wisdom to look into the seeds of time and tell which grains will grow and which will not, to which I do not lay claim, but to such an inquiry I reply, we are not without grounds of hope, if we but exhibit modesty and without arrogance or defiance, the manliness of freemen and refuse to sign the death warrant of our institutions. The Executive department of the government of the United States, weakened in power, it is true, but with a force of argument in his public utterances which commands the admiration of the world and which cannot be without its effect on the sentiments of our fellow-citizens, who now almost unanimously represent the government of the United States, in cases which are in progress or may yet occur, will declare the policy of Congress to be at variance with the Constitution. The successors and disciples of Marshall now upon that bench will in future history rival his fame, if they but maintain the dignity of the court and the supremacy of the constitution against the woe and shame, the annoyances and threatenings, with which they are encompassed about.

their number of representatives must, by the adoption of the amendment, be kept down, and thereby the sectional majority of the North will rise from sixty-three, its present number, to ninety-three; whereas, unless the change be made, it will fall to forty-three. All other matters provided for in the article are sunk in this "great issue" of sectional power. It had been hoped and predicted, that after the extinction of slavery, and thereby establishing a supposed homogeneity of interests and sentiment between the people of these different sections, we should have heard no more of the North and South, as adverse interests, but that each would embrace the other as a common brotherhood. But far otherwise was the argument and persuasion for passing this amendment through a Congress, in which the South had not a solitary member. Is it to be wondered at, that the Legislature of the Southern States should, as they did reject it; and it may be asked, was it expected that, supported as it was, on such grounds, in the organ of Congress, it would not be rejected? Was there any reasonable confidence manifested in its passage? And if the theory of Congress be true, that all civil government in these States was destroyed by the war, and that the President's provisions for its revival were obligatory, by reason of which there is no lawful Legislature in the State, would even the assent of the Legislature, which rejected it, have rendered it valid? Surely it is not reasonable to impute the rejection of this amendment as an offence, and make the ground of more stringent measures, as is said to have been done by Congress, if according to their own allegations, the Legislature itself was unorganized and could do no binding act. When, therefore, you hear some good man say, in his eager desire for quietude, that we should have adopted the 14th amendment, and been spared the reconstruction, inquire of him, how we could have ratified it, if it be true, as Congress asserts, that we have no valid Legislature?

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