To the People of North Carolina.

Following the example set by their political opponents, the Republican party have instructed its Executive Committee to address you in relation to the proposed Convention.

It is very much against our wishes that you have been precipitated into a campaign upon this delicate and important subject. The State during the past ten years has been subjected to the experiments of various political doctors, and what seems most needed now is repose and quiet—an opportunity for the operation of nature's soothing and restorative powers, rather than a resort to new pills and potions, however confidently recommended. On the contrary, the conservative party produces in great plenty lancets, blisters, drugs—both emetical and purgative, patent medicines guaranteed by many certificates and a glittering array of surgical instruments—the upshot of which is that North Carolina is once more to be subjected to *active treatment*.

It seems that conventions are to become of ordinary occurrence in this State. Mr. Jefferson has been generally denounced by conservative men for having advised that State conventions should be called once in every twenty years. *Here*, however, in about one-half of that space we have had (including that now pending) no less than five elections upon the subject of conventions, and if the one now proposed shall be called (which Heaven forbid!) from these elections have resulted *four* separate sovereign conventions. It is obvious to ask if the three conventions already encountered have reduced the State so low, what will become of her after she has been submitted to the tender mercies of a fourth?

It has occurred to all men who labor, whether with hands or head, now and then to find themselves unaccountably unfitted for work which ordinarily is easy. At times nothing goes right. The brain and hand seem to have lost their cunning. Blunder follows blunder. Under such circumstances it becomes wisdom to withdraw the attention and go about something else. By so doing we see ourselves in a short time restored to power, and are enabled easily to triumph over the obstacles which just before had overcome us; we even wonder how it was that they had given us trouble. May not this sometimes happen to whole communities of men, as well as to individuals? Has not North Carolina, for the last ten years, been in just such a condition? We ask this question upon the conservative theory. If it be true, as said by them, that nothing but blunders have followed all this ten years of endeavor by North Carolina to amend her fundamental institutions, had she not better lay the task aside and await the coming of a season in which her brain will be clearer, her nerves more steady, her temper less ruffled, and her hand under better control?

Such is the advice which we most respectfully tender to the people. As the State is most clearly *out of sorts* for constitution making, let her for a while lay this business aside.

To the same effect we would add, if the loud adverse clamor upon this subject will permit us to be heard, that the present constitution is by no means the monster which it is represented. In very important respects it is an improvement upon any constitution we have ever had, and in no respect is it one that cannot be borne with until the community has reached a period more propitious for impartial consideration. Conceding that it needs amendment in substantial particulars, is such concession more than a *common place*, applicable to all our constitutions, State and Federal, and indeed to every political constitution that has existed in any age or country.

Before taking the very cursory view of this instrument, which is all that the limits of an address will permit, allow us to remind you that the mighty political violence to which we have been subjected since 1861, resulted in casting North Carolina society, after 1865, upon *an unknown shore*. Everything around is strange. The social machinery of our old forms of life does not suit *here*. What was political wisdom *there*, in many respects, is not so *here*. Perhaps even the wise men of that condition of things are not the wise men of our present, and will not be so in our immediate future. If the character for wisdom in question was founded upon familiarity with the relations and proportions of the structure that has passed away, then *it* has perished along with them; and to call the possessors of such a quality to the conduct of that complicated machinery which now bears our fortunes, were as prudent, as under other circumstances it might be to call upon one heretofore known as a trusty wagon driver, to become at once engineer for a lightning express passenger train. There is, however, a quality more worthy of the sacred name of wisdom, which would, on such occasions, prove to be most valuable. If a citizen had studied and been inspired by the great theme of human liberty, divested of all such circumstances as are merely technical, accidental and transitory, if, whilst jealous for his own peace and freedom, he prized aright the peace and freedom of all other citizens of whatever color or lineage, if the beatings of his heart had been taught to keep time with that famous saying uttered by a dark skinned man in Athens two thousand years ago, which, endued with greater vitality and winged by a loftier eloquence than any other saying that had preceded it upon that renowned spot, has circled the earth and visited both poles, gathering new strength with the lapse of ages and bearing richer fruit with every returning season—to wit, that God *has made of one blood all nations of men*; if, in fine, his lessons had taught him to gaze with unabated delight upon that glorious scene within this Republic, on which the curtain rises higher from day to day, bearing in his heart all parts of the assemblage, and gifted with an eyesight so purged and unscaled as to be engrossed with the brilliance of the object rather than offended by its spots, then of such a one it may be said that there was not so much *room* as *need*.

Was there in all our borders such a man? If not, then, without disparaging the just claims of our more distinguished fellow-citizens, it was not of their assistance that our society had most need. This new wine was not for their old bottles.

Our fundamental institutions required for sure laying workmen who were not trammelled by ideas peculiar to the former state of things in North Carolina. However such men might fail upon certain details, their work would not be affected by the deadly sin of a failure to correspond with the situation; whilst upon the other hand, however skillful might have been *the details* of the work by our own good men, it would have been utterly cursed by being unconformable to, and unsusceptible of union with, our new society. The chances therefore are that the parties stigmatized as *carpet-baggers* and *negroes*, had some qualities for framing a new constitution for North Carolina that were in advance of those possessed by many of the best educated and most distinguished of our own citizens! It is probable that our posterity and history will pronounce that the constitution of 1868 had less unsuitableness to the true condition of the people of North Carolina that any paper that would probably have been drafted by the best of our native citizens. It will be said that it sympathized with the new social life that had sprung up and was to continue—whereas that *sympathy was the very point of disgust and aversion* with those whose theories had taken color and proportion from the former North Carolina.

A consideration and digestion of such questions in the only wise temper—that of *travelers*—will, we are persuaded, entitle the constitution to a favorable judgment, and and render a consideration of its most important details light work.

TOWNSHIPS.

Take, for instance, the new system of county government, including *townships*. It is generally supposed that townships are a Yankee invention, imported into North Carolina as a badge of subjugation and machinery for oppression. The truth is that they are a feature which for more twelve centuries, as all students of English law know, have marked that free society from which we have borrowed the substantial parts of our own. The most philosophic foreigner who has discussed American institutions, one whose decision upon various portions of our system seem, at the end of the forty years which have passed since he wrote, possessed of prophetic glance, (De Tocqueville,) regards the *township* as a very corner stone of social liberty in this country, as well as in that from which it was introduced. It is known that a like subdivision of counties was recommended by Mr. Jefferson; and it is remarkable that in the early settlement of North Carolina the same ideas were carried out. They disappeared before the Revolution, probably under the growing influence of our slave interest. It deserves consideration whether that influence did not naturally substitute *the slave plantation* in place of *the township*. The *township*, according to De Tocqueville, is the germ of, and supplies vital force to the only free societies that have endured for centuries.

Is not *the plantation* its correlative in slave societies? The communion, free speech and local self-control of the one naturally grows, in the society at large, to a free Press, a Parliament, and the other noble institutions which mark the conscious presence and free movement of a self-governing People. The isolation, restraint and combined independence and refinement of a few, with the ignorance and constraint of the many, that distinguished *the plantation*, were, on the other hand, no less seen and felt to the extremities of the other society. What was *peace* in the one, in the other was mere *solitude*.

Merely suggesting then that *the township* of 1871 was the proper substitute in North Carolina, for *the plantation* of 1861, we submit that its introduction here, which in *carpet-baggers* was mere habit or instinct, in a North Carolinian would have been proof of profound reflection and wisdom. For the rest, the Township is a small and natural republic made up of *neighbors*,—of those who have great similarity of interest, and who ought to be, and generally are, friends. It controls matters in which they only are interested. Incidentally, it promotes public spirit, prevents consolidation of county matters at the court house, develops talent in rural communities, brings forward good material for public servants that would otherwise remain unknown, and, what observers of such things will not underrate, it affords, in the *organized* circle of its neighbors, that *machinery* for forcing forward and upward local merit, in the absence of which promotion so much depends upon the reluctant favor of court house cliques.

Pressed by such reflections, which no doubt have often occurred to them, our opponents, whilst specifying this township system as a main objection to the present constitution, admit that it works well in other parts of our country, adding that this is *because they are populous, intelligent and wealthy*, which we are not! How very poor a shift this may be for an argument to countenance unfounded prejudices, appears by recalling the fact that *they were adopted where they now flourish, at times when those countries were thinly settled, grossly ignorant, and very poor! They* have grown to their present prosperity under the influence of this institution. Long centuries ago, when thick darkness covered all people, before printing was invented, when people who could read were as rare as in this country now are men who own their million of dollars, the Township took form. What its splendid story has since been history tells! What, the bright consummate flower that now adorns it in the spot where it sprung up, is seen and known by all men!

It is natural that there should be some yearning after *the plantation*, throughout North Carolina. Many virtuous people no doubt struggle with the forbidden appetite. One step towards its restoration would properly be the abolition of *the township*. We enter our protest against it! Under our constitution the township is very much under the control of the General Assembly. Its powers, until we become more used to the new county machinery, may be clipped very close by the Assembly, and then by degrees new functions may be added, until at last all merely local affairs be entrusted to its control. Such is our proposal, instead of its abolishment by a Convention.

The other county machinery is so obviously an improvement upon former methods, that its consideration need not detain us.—The difference between being taxed by our *representatives*,—those whom we voted for, and who have to come before us again, and *render an account*,—as is the case with county commissioners—is, beyond all measure, an improvement upon the former system of county taxation by an irresponsible and partially distributed bench of magistrates.

CHANGES IN LAWS.

It was to be expected that a number of shrewd lawyers, rendered skilful in such matters by old experience, in the defence of criminals, would be able to say something worthy of their reputation in defence of the old system of Law and Equity,—of Trespass, Case and Detinue, and other caitiffs,—as against the system recently introduced. Let it be remembered that *the Code* is no part of the constitution. *That* may be altered as the General Assembly shall think best. What the constitution provides, is only the abolishment of two sets of courts,—Law and Equity, and of the different forms of action. That it has done so, is a mighty stride in civilization! It is an improvement already adopted in a dozen of the most intelligent, wealthy and populous States of the Union. No one that has tried the change, has gone back to the former condition of things. Even in England, the cradle of the old forms, after mere *amendments*, (although upon an enormous scale,) had been tried with slight effect for forty years; the Lord Chancellor has in charge, with the sanction of the government, bills to effect this very purpose; and, what is more, to adopt the system of pleadings of the New York Code! The change is a very great amelioration, and in the course of a few years, will universally be so regarded. The benifits which the People receive from the constitution of 1868 in this one item, might well *float* that instrument, even if loaded with objections ten-fold greater than any which can be ascribed.

It may be pronounced, with great certainty that this change in the law as well as that of *townships* for *plantations*, are in more danger of being annulled now, than, if they escape this assault, they can ever be again. If unchanged within the next ten years, they will remain permanent tributes, to the instinctive wisdom of the convention of 1868. Meanwhile, no one will wonder if all middle aged and more advanced lawyers, much of whose capital consisted of familiarity with the hooks and crooks of that rusty, musty, dusty labyrinth,—hooks and crooks that concern justice to otherwise that by often serving to plague and defeat it,—are keenly sensible of the mighty loss that has been sustained, or should *indulge* in new Lamentations thereabouts.

GENERAL OBJECTION.

We greatly marvel that the Conservative party should have urged, as a general and most potent objection to the Constitution, that, with regard to many of its provisions—important ones at that—nobody could tell what they signified until they had received judicial construction; when the very same remark is no less true of the Constitution of the United States, and of every other Constitution that has been formed upon the continent. Have they not, each and all, been a theme for debate ever since they were made? Is not this notably true of the Constitution of the United States? Did not the people get together by the ears, and fight for four years, because one or other side (perhaps both) did not understand provisions in that constitution? Were not there passages in it that seemed contradictory, and required judicial construction, before any man could say what was meant upon the whole? Is it not true that the convention which formed it did not understand how it was to work in many important particulars, and indeed did not realize what part of it would be most prominent in the new society which it was to create!

No convention can remedy such defects. A new constitution may abolish errors in the one now existing, but it will be at the expense of creating new ones. It may safely be foretold that a great harvest for the legal profession will follow the work of another convention. Nobody will know where he stands. All the questions now at rest will be renewed. Other fees will be to pay. An *unbloody* revolution (such as we hope the approaching one will be) is necessarily a great feast for lawyers. All of them ought to be in favor of such. Whether the interests of the people in general are the same, is not so clear!

Upon this topic it may be added, that whilst the conservative party are fluent upon the matter of the want of perspicuty, simplicity and logic in the present constitution, and upon the doubt and confusion necessarily resulting therefrom, they have not charged upon the measure of the doubt and confusion to arise from a constitution, however worded, which is the offspring of an irregular assembly, called in a revolutionary manner. In connexion with the manner in which the next convention is to be called, the people have some interest in this view. That a vendor of land has not expressed his ideas in elegant language is certainly a defect in a deed, but, after all, is not one to be compared with the trouble which arises from his having *no title* to convey the land!

TAXATION.

One other topic urged for a call of a convention demands particular consideration. It is that which is most strenuously urged in this connexion: The matter of high and ruinous taxation, which, it is, urged, can only be urged, can be avoided only a convention that shall strike out the obnoxious clause.

The present constitution requires (Art. 5, Sec. 4,) that the General Assembly shall provide for the prompt payment of the interest on the public debt "*by appropriate legislation and adequate taxation*." It is admitted that no one can compel the General Assembly to impose such taxation, but the point is made that, as the constitution requires that members of the Assembly shall swear to support it, they are bound *in conscience* to do so.

It seems that this provision applies only to the *old* State debt, i. e., to that which was in existence when the constitution was adopted. The debt to arise after the adoption of the constitution was provided for in the next section. The method of providing for *its* interest is marked out there.

This rids us of the great bugbear connected with the many millions of the *new*, extravagant and fraudulent debt. The obligation of conscience in question does not extend to that. That there should appear, as upon the face of both the addresses of the conservative party to the people this year, there does, a suggestion that the conscientious obligation extends to both, shows how uncertain a thing the conscience of a politician may be. Probably some *brass* might be digged out of an address which insinuates a threat that if the people do not call a convention, the signers of the address, who are also members of the Legislature, will be constrained by their consciences—whatever under the circumstances this may mean—to levy a tax to pay the interest upon the whole debt—whether Swepson's or Littlefield's or whosoever.

But then, as to the *old* debt. How does that stand? Is there an obligation in conscience, under the oath in question, to lay adequate taxes to meet its interest promptly?

The answer is this: The provision in question is of no force for any purpose! If we were not under the constitution of the United States it might have effect. But it adds no force to the obligation already imposed by the constitution of the United States. Members are sworn to support the constitution of the United States as well as that of the State. The constitution of the United States recognizes the existence of the obligation of a contract, not only by forbidding the States to impair it, but also by enforcing it itself. It enforces it in various ways, according to the character of the person it deals with. As to most people it enforces this obligation through its courts; sometimes by ordinary execution against goods and chattels, and sometimes by *mandamus* against officers who are charged with official duties in levying taxas (say in counties and towns) for such purpose. There are other classes of officers whom it reaches only through their official oaths; i. e., operates only upon their consciences. Such are members of the Legislature. All of such are sworn to support that constitution. That constitution applies itself to the details of all contracts, and imposes an *obligation* of like quality, manner, form and condition. What is the character of its obligation *in conscience* in regard to officers who *cannot be* sued, is evidenced by its operation on those who *can be*. If county coupons are payable semi-annually, a *mandamus* may be had for the identical payment contracted for. If State coupons are payable, the obligation in conscience enforced by the official oath, is the same. There may, in the case of the members of the General Assembly, be some *play of discretion* allowed by the United States Constitution. Such persons may claim that in deference to their condition, as set over the affairs of a *quasi* sovereign, requires that they are to have some discretion as to laying taxes; for instance, in times of great public want, &c., they are to consider the *appropriateness* of the proposed legislation, its appropriateness all around, so to say, i. e., to the wants of the creditors and the exigencies of the State.

We do not know how this may be. We are discussing a question of casuistry, and such questions are proverbially delicate and deceptive. It may be presumed, however, that the conscience of a man who was in fear of his constituents, would be apt to take some such turn. However this may be decided in regard to the constitution of the United States, it is very plain that the State constitution binds nobody's conscience who believes that a tax bill for payment of the interest on the public debt is, under the circumstances of the community, *inappropriate* legislation. He is required to do it only by "appropriate legislation." Let any gentleman who threatens the people with such a law be asked whether he regards such legislation as *appropriate* to the present circumstances of the times. If he says yes, then he is bound, even in the absence of such a provision as this, to levy the tax. If he says no, then the present section is without effect.

Two oaths to the same duty binds no more than one oath. The section in the State constitution is a mere nullity, for it commands a duty already commanded by the constitution of the United States, and this, too, in terms not so comprehensive.

HOMESTEAD.

Indeed, the tactics resorted to upon the point just discussed, by the supporters of the Convention, bring forcibly to mind the celebrated hunting expedition of the lion and the jackass, in which these tactics originated. The jackass was to set up an awful braying, and thereupon the affrighted game would escape from such jaws as he had, and fall into those of the lion lying in ambush. *Here*, this section about taxation is to play the part of the ass, whilst the affrighted people run off and fall into the trap upon the subject of *Homestead*, which has been prettily set for that purpose. This trap is coming to be very well understood, and requires no elaboration: The delegates are to be sworn not to touch the Homestead provision, and all the while, vows have been registered *to clean out the Supreme Court!* This will answer quite as well! The neat result will be that at the next Christmas many a present of homesteads will be made to honest creditors who now sit behind long-suffering judgments waiting to be let slip. The exceeding tenderness of Conservative consciences in regard to the oath upon "adequate taxation" &c., required the compensation of some indulgence. This has probably been allowed upon the Homestead question, where a certain anticipation of sales of that sort of property, coexist with solemn vows not to touch *the words in the Constitution* which guarantee them! If you take the conscience in too tightly in some quarters, you necessarily let it out too far in others!

REVOLUTION.

We have not said anything in regard to the *method* in which it is proposed to call this Convention. The point has been thoroughly discussed recently, as well as formerly, about 1854. We shall not elaborate it here. It is enough to repeat, that the method—i. e., a call under a vote of a majority of the Assembly—has been condemned by the General Assembly in times past as being *revolutionary*; that this doctrine was affirmed by resolutions of State Conventions of the Democratic party in this State before the late war; that it was acted upon in 1861 in reference to the call of the Convention of February, which did not sit; that language so extensively and notoriously discussed and construed, was adopted without change into the present Constituton; and that recently the Governor, and the Supreme Court of the State, have pronounced such a call to be unconstitutional and revolutionary. Those who wish for other authority upon this question than can be had from persons *who hold*, or from others *who seek* offices that are at stake in the call of a Convention, we refer to the late CHIEF JUSTICE RUFFIN, the greatest lawyer we have at any time had in North Carolina. He was so convinced that such methods as the present are revolutionary, that he volunteered, upon a memorable occasion, to come out of retirement, and, in an elaborate paper, so advise his fellow-citizens.

We quote his language:

"Two modes of amending the Constitution are provided: One through the agency of the General Assembly, proposing an amendment for ratification by a vote of the People, which need not be considered here; the other, by a Convention, called in a manner prescribed in the Constitution. It is obvious that in prescribing these two, all other modes are excluded by irresistible inference. In respect to a Convention, the words are, "No Convention of the people shall be called by the General Assembly unless by the concurrence of two thirds of all the Members of each House of the General Assembly." *Letter of July 2d, 1866, to Mr. Conigland.*

Upon all points of law it may well be said of Chief Justice Ruffin, that to consult him, was, "as if one had inquired at the oracle."

Those who disregard such an array of warning voices, appear to be regardless of social duty, and fatally bent upon mischief. We trust that the wisdom of the people at the election now at hand, will dissipate the cloud of apprehension which naturally arises in view of what seems to be, at any rate such recklessness.

If otherwise, it is well for sober men to consider what may be the result. If any of the present officials of the State relying upon Chief Justice Ruffin's opinion, believe their removal under elections held by virtue of the proposed Convention, to be revolutionary and illegal, they may regard themselves bound by their oaths of office to resist the same. In such event the President of the United States is bound by his oath of office, supposing him to be equally deferential to that as well as the other opinions quoted above, to interfere with a strong hand and suppress all the consequences of the contemplated movement. It was done in the case of a Northern State (Rhode Island) by a Southern President, Mr. Tyler; it may be done again in the case of a Southern State, by a Northern President. Does anybody doubt it? Who does not feel that if it occur, it will not only shock, but shake down public confidence in the stability of everything that promotes prosperity in, or that attracts capital to North Carolina?

The very mildest form in which the question can be put, is, can North Carolina justify herself in resorting to doubtful expedients under such circumstances,—will she trace her path upon the very edge of danger,—when all know that another inauguration of violence within her limits will necessarily result in so much confusion, and so irretrievable ruin? She could not so justify herself, even if the purposes proposed were more clearly right than now they seem to be. But when it is added, that there is, at most, no need for the constitutional reform suggested,—that, standing alone, many of these suggestions deserve condemnation rather than endorsement, it is a wanton thing to call such Convention! Improper ends by violent means, is simply preposterous!

The Republican party of North Carolina have the same interest in the general peace and prosperity that their opponents have. They desire to see no public trouble revived; they wish to aid in raising and recovering the exhausted energies of the State. They prefer that all disorder in the State, if possible, shall be put down by the powers of the State, and, in the first instance, inasmuch as an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, they desire that *the people* shall forbid this threatening measure.

It is in this interest, that representatives of the Republican party from every section of the State, at two different meetings in Raleigh unanimously adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Republican party of North Carolina, hereby protesting that the pending call for a Convention is unconstitutional, recognize that it will be most for the peace of the State that the people shall so decide at the ballot-box, and therefore recommend that an appeal be made them for that purpose, and that such appeal be prosecuted in the usual way, by a Campaign, and Candidates.

It is in this interest that we have been directed to address them. We trust that our designs herein may prove to be effectual.

In several important respects the Constitution is a great gain upon all that have preceded it. In the large majority of its provisions it is a good Constitution, in all, it is tolerable.

The State is in an untried condition; in that condition it is not easy to say what constitutional provisions in some respects may be best. An experiment has been set on foot at great expense. Let us give it a fair and full trial—the rather if we were now under compulsion to make a constitution, no considerate man could be sanguine that such as we should adopt would answer even the purposes that we have in view. Let us walk carefully *forward* to our place in the future, avoiding, so far as we can all risks of failing to secure for our posterity a fair chance in the race now being made up for the fortunate men who are to come after us. Above all things, let us tread no step *backward*, upon pain of receiving the maledictions of future generations, as those who, with great opportunities for escape, fell under condemnation meet for such as are not discerners of the times.

With hearty good wishes for this State of ours, *new North Carolina*, and for all our fellow citizens, of every race—in this hour of danger to all, we earnestly ask that every man who wishes to avoid civil confusion, and every man who has not *buried* his energies and affections—who has not vowed to go mourning all his days over a dead past, will lend his aid to defeat this threatened *Convention, and Retrogradation, and Revolution*.

S. F. PHILLIPS,
Chairman, &c.

J. C. L. HARRIS, *Secretary*.

For the Carolina Era.

LETTER FROM ORANGE.

I have noticed closely the discussions upon the present call for a Convention; but I have seen nothing to meet the arguments of the illegality of the measure calling a Convention by a majority vote of the Legislature. Aside from the opinions of our most distinguished jurists in former days, and of those even of to-day, the Constitution itself seems explicit and full; that a Convention of the people shalt not be called unless by a concurrence of two-thirds of all the members of each branch of the General Assembly. Let every one take upon himself to read the Constitution on this point. It is a serious thing and is deserving of serious thought, that an instrument of so high and sacred a character, as our Constitution, is so *stretched* and *tampered* with, that a Convention of the people is called by a majority vote of the legislature. Is it possible that the framers of the Constitution contemplated such a thing? What is not taken from the express terms, or implied in the express language, of a Constitution, is and ought to be forbidden by it. What would be the mode for calling a Convention by a two-thirds vote as is contained in the express terms of the Constitution, differing from that of the present call for Convention by a majority vote of the legislature? The answer comes, *essentially none*. But let the legality or illegality of the present call for Convention be as it may, it can only be decided now by the people in August next or by the proper tribunal; and should it devolve upon the latter to settle, it will be regretted, if the people of North Carolina should again find themselves as at the close of the war, in a state of anarchy and to get in some shape, under a provisional government without a Constitution, and hence without the many great blessings of the special provisions as are now contained in the Constitution under which we are living. The homestead would be swept away; and the *Old Constitution* as it was, would have the preponderance in the administration of justice; and all hoary headed judgments and executions would be revived and entering the doors of every poor-mans homestead.

But says one there is special Legislation thrown around the homestead in the act calling the Convention. Admit that there is, and by men who before declared the homestead unconstitutional; and that the members of the Convention if called, will respect and obey this special Legislation and the *after* judges will maintain it; and that the Convention will be permitted to convene and sit; and in addition to all these, let there be an immense and insurmountable wall thrown around the City of the Homestead, in the face of all these things, there is yet left enough room for the entrance of the Trogan-Horse, with a belly full of Democratic Conservative cunnings, duplicity and deceit, and a poor man's debt cells—one of the most renown and aged of which, is the *Ca. Sa.* law, puting a man in jail for debt. *Capias satisfaciendum*—"take that scoundrel, sheriff, and put him in jail until he pays me." What becomes of the homestead under such direful and distressing circumstances? Why, there is no man under the Sun but what would surrender his homestead; and there is no beloved wife or dear children but what would do likewise to save one most dear to them, from within the walls of the jail, there to stay at the mercy of the favored creditor. What worth is a homestead without the essential protection! The present Constitution provides us with a *homestead* and the *now* Judges have sustained it; it secures to us equal *rights, privileges* and *immunities*; it provides us with a mechanics and laborers, *lien law*; and it richly and in emphatic terms forbids the *Ca. Sa.* No man shall be incarcerated for debt. They are all secured to us now without a Convention, and without special Legislation thrown around some of them for electioneering and party purposes. But take notice, there was *particular pains* taken (judging from the special Legislation thrown around the other favorites of the people) not *to special* any Legislation forbidding the *Ca. Sa.* as it now exist in the Constitution. Read the act of the Legislature passed by a majority vote, calling the Convention, and judge for you self. Liberty in this country would be but an empty name, and the homestead worthless, if man could be jailed for debt.

Ever mindful of *our* welfare and future condition, I sign myself.

A POOR MAN.

For the Carolina Era.

An Address

TO THE COLORED PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:—You will soon be called upon to cast your ballot for or against Convention.

It is a grave question in which your liberties as a free people are involved, your freedom is at stake, and your lives and future prosperity depend upon the fearless exercise of your Constitutional rights.

The scenes of bloodshed, the crisis through which we have just passed, have laid some of our near and dear friends in the tomb; some sleep that sleep that knows no waking, at the bottom of the deep; the blood of some has dyed with its crimson gore, the trees of Alamance; while others have been driven from home leaving their wives and loving offspring to the mercy of their relentless and barbarous foe, to be massacred, scourged or subjected to the lash or tomahawk. This band of prowling marauders has been the curse of a free and civilized Nation, but still it is upheld and abetted, by once men of honor and distinction.

Look at poor Outlaw as he was dangling between heaven and earth a victim of their vile and lawless Confederation! Defying Justice, as he was suspended before its temple.

Puryear, now lies on the pebbly bottom of the Haw. Stephens gone to his Maker. Fellow-citizens, the Conservative Party is your foe, and if you are once in their clutches, the fetters of slavery will be again fastened upon you.

First comes the war speech of Frank Blair, the violent secessionist, then Jefferson Davis who says the "Lost Cause is not lost." The institution of slavery was hostile to freedom; but during that terrible crisis, the Republican Party never faltered, and in the midst of the mighty struggle your party did not forget its mission of Freedom and Justice. The Reublican Party fought for the Union not alone, but with it for the Liberty it was formed to secure, that could not be broken up at the behest of traitors, that should guarantee freedom to every son and daughter of the Republic. During the dark days of Pierce and Buchanan we were under bonds of slavery, but we have at last reached the pinnacle of the Temple of Liberty and on the wreck of shattered system we will build the altar of our freedom.

Beware, fellow-citizens, of the treacherous snares of the Democracy, beware of their unprincipled politicians who come to you radiant with smiles and in sheeps clothing, but within they are ravenous wolves.

They are, as Dr. Jones said last summer, a treacherous organization, and they tack to every gale, embrace every opinion, and betray every cause. This Convention is called in the service of the Conservative Party, which is not only your natural enemy but likewise an inveterate enemy to the integrity of the Union, on which not only your liberties, but the liberties of every person in this country centre.

Dissolve the Union and our liberties will perish; and when our liberties are sacrificed, we are again slaves. To the Republican party you are indebted to-day for your liberty. It was this party that broke the chains of your slavery—that stayed the hand that dealt the lash to your bodies without stint—that put an estopple to your being sold like cattle in the market—that forbid a traffic in you which dissevered without remorse the nearest and dearest ties of kindred and tore the babe from the breast of its mother; sundered the husband and the wife and separated forever parents and their offspring. Touch not the unclean thing; preserve the integrity of the Federal Union and not until then can we live in happiness.

Vote against Convention, and give them a fierce fight on that question and then you can draw aside the veil of futurity, and you can see a people rising in power and dignity among Nations. You can see the country, rich in natural mineral wealth and agricultural resources, speed on in her career of peace and happiness, educating and elevating all classes, "a people free, intelligent, enterprising, rich and powerful, equal rights guaranteed to all, the fabled atlantis realized at last in liberty regulated by law.

H. J. C. CHAMBERS,
PINCKNEY HALL,
JAMES SMITH,
JACKSON HOWERTON.

Salisbury June 27, 1871.

For the Carolina Era.

NO CONVENTION—MEETING IN NASH.

According to public notice, the people of Nash county met at the Court-house, in Nashville, on Thursday, the 29th June. On motion Mr. C. E. Sears was called to the chair, and W. P. Walker and G. W. Robbins, appointed to act as Secretaries.

The object of the meeting having been explained, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That the honest and law abiding people of Nash county deeply deplore and deprecate the call of a Convention at this time, and especially the irregular mode in which it is proposed to be called, and earnestly appeal to the good people of the State to vote against Convention, as being fraught with evil and entailing hardship upon them, and of ruin to the prosperity of the State.

Resolved, That it is the sense of this meeting that the bill providing for the call of a Convention, not having received the requisit two-third vote of the General Assembly, is unconstitutional, contrary to the generally received opinion of the ablest jurist of the State; without precedent; embodying the doctrines of nullification and secession, with all the evils attendant upon revolution, anarchy, strife and confusion.

Resolved, That this Convention question has been sprung upon us by the legal profession and aspirants for place, to change the judicial system, destroy the homestead, and open all the old debts for collection.

Resolved, That the leaders of the Convention scheme have already ruined the prosperity of our country, and if we again follow their advice we can only expect to reap the fruits of their second folly.

Resolved, That a precedent made by calling a Convention by a bare majority vote of the Legislature, destroys the stability, checks and safe guards to the maintenance of equal laws, equal rights, and equal privileges, and is the incipient step to change the present Government into an odious aristocracy, with caste and class Legislation.

Resolved, That this meeting appoint a Township committee to consist of five persons, in each and every Township, throughout the county, to canvass the Townships, and to attend the places of holding polls on the day of election, and to see that every citizen shall have free privilege to vote and to vote as he chooses.

Resolved, That this meeting also appoint three canvassers in the county, to accompany the candidate at the time and places affixed by the county Executive Committee for public meetings, &c.

Resolved, That we approve the administration of Gov. Caldwell, and commend him for his patriotic devotion to constitutional law, and his earnest endeavor to restore peace and prosperity in our State.

That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the *Era, Telegram*, and other papers opposed the to calling of a Convention in the manner proposed.

The delegates were then requested to retire and make their nomination, for candidate against the Convention. On motion of Mr. John R. Sutton, Mr. J. J. Sharp's name was placed in nomination, when he received a unanimous vote of every Township. On reporting this fact to the meeting, the chairman appointed Mr. Willis Eason and W. P. Walker to notify Mr. Sharp of his nomination.

Mr. Sharp came forward and accepted the nomination in an able and cheering speech, thanking the delegation for the honor they had bestowed upon him, and promising to use his uttermost ability to enlighten the people on the danger impending by this call of a Convention. He hoped the good people of Nash county would not look upon him as seeking for place and office. He hoped the Convention would be voted down, as being fraught with evils and destructive to the prosperity of the State and people.

Mr. Dorsey Battle asked permission to make a few remarks in advocacy of the Convention, which was granted him. He was replied to by Mr. David W. Williams, who rebuked his remarks thoroughly, and made it clear to our minds that Mr. Battle truly felt sorry for what he had said.

Cheering speeches were delivered by the chairman and Mr. Willis Eason. After the appointment of the county canvassers, which was as follows, viz: B. C. Strickland, C. E. Sears and John R. Sutton, the meeting adjourned.

C. E. SEARS, *Chairman*.

W. P. WALKER, } Secretaries.
G. W. ROBBINS, }

For the Carolina Era.

NO CONVENTION—MEETING IN WILKES.

In accordance with previous notice the citizens of Wilkes county, who are opposed to a Convention, met at the Court-house in Wilkesboro,' on Saturday the 24th day of June, 1871, to nominate a candidate in opposition to a Convention.

On motion, S. P. Smith, Sr., was called to the Chair, and George H. Brown requested to act as Secretary.

The chairman in a few appropriate remarks explained the object of the meeting.

On motion a committee of three to-wit: J. Q. A. Bryan, John N. Myers and S. P. Smith, Jr., were appointed to draft resolutions for the action of the meeting.

The committee having retired, D. M. Furches, Esq., of Statesville, being present was called upon, who proceeded to address the meeting at length in a very able and instructive manner.

[We will endeavor to find place for a synopsis of Mr. Furches' speech.]

The committee on resolutions returned and reported, through their chairman, John N. Myers, Esq., the following preamble and resolutions, to-wit:

WHEREAS, The Conservative members of the General Assembly of North Carolina at its last session in the year A. D. 1871, being evil disposed, and moved by a desire to create another rebellion as they did in 1861, and that the Conservative party should hold all the offices of trust and profit in the State, did pass an act providing for the call of a Convention of the people of the State; therefore, be it

1. *Resolved*, That in our opinion the manner in which it is proposed by the General Assembly to call a Convention is revolutionary and without a precedent in the history of our country, and if a Convention should assemble as proposed, the result will be that the scenes which followed the Convention of 1861, will be re-enacted in a much worse form, and carried on in degree equal to the communist revolution which recently took place in Paris.

2. That while we declare the proposition to call a Convention revolutionary and void, we think that it is the duty of every good citizen of the State to go to the polls and vote against it. To vote the measure down will in our opinion, to some extent, nip this new treason in the bud, and prevent a repetition of the scenes which followed the Convention of 1861.

3. That we endorse the administration of Gov. Caldwell, and approve his noble efforts to maintain peace and order throughout the State.

Which after being read by the Secretary, were, on motion, unanimously adopted.

The Convention then proceeded to nominate a candidate, when the name of Thomas J. Dula, Esq., was put in nomination, and his nomination was made unanimous by acclamation. Mr. Dula being present, in a very appropriate speech, declined to accept the nomination, for the reason that he had but very recently become a citizen of the county, but pledged himself to canvass the county against a Convention, and to use all honorable means in his power to secure votes against the Convention.

The name of Gen. Q. A. Bryan, was then put in nomination, and ratified by the meeting unanimously, by acclamation.

Gen. Bryan being present, accepted the nomination, and proceeded to address the meeting against a Convention, in a very able manner.

Geo. H. Brown, then offered the following resolutions which were adopted.

Resolved, That we hereby tender our thanks to D. M. Furches, Esq., for the able manner in which he addressed this meeting to-day.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this meeting be sent to the *Carolina Era*, for publication, with a request that all other papers in the State opposed to a Convention copy them.

On motion the Convention adjourned.

S. P. SMITH, SR., Ch'mn.
GEO. H. BROWN, Sec'y.

For the Carolina Era.

LETTER FROM ROBESON—PEOPLE SOLID AGAINST CONVENTION.

EDITOR ERA:—The citizens of Robeson County opposed to a Convention met in this place for the purpose of nominating candidates for said Convention (should the same be called,) on Satnaday, the first inst. Thirteen Townships were represented and the utmost harmony and good feeling characterized all the proceedings of the body. Messrs. Nat McLean, James Sinclair and E. K. Procter were put in nomination, whereupon E. K. Procter declined, owing to the condition of the health of his family to allow his name to go before the Convention. Cols. Nat. McLean and James Sinclair were then nominated by acclamation, and being introduced to the Convention made telling speeches to their fellow-citizens on the unconstitutional and revolutionary character of the present radical movement. Even the Conservatives, so-called, of Robeson, are unprepared to vote for a Convention at this time; and of course the republicans are bound to fight a good fight against it. We have no Moore's here to take ground against us, like the Caliconman, of Beaufort. Robeson County will go solid against a Convention in August next.

NEMO.

LUMBERTON, JULY 3, 1871.

For the Carolina Era.

NO CONVENTION MEETING IN DAVIE.

The meeting was called to order by electing P. R. Martin chairman and Milton Hobbs secretary.

The following committee were appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting:

Jerusalem Township—James McCulloch, W. A. Dedman, Cary Brown.

Fulton—Wm. Baity, J. D. Baity, Cal Oaks.

Farmington—Jas. M. Foster, Lucket Etchison, Abe Dulin.

Chinquepin—J. G. Clifford, Jesse Green, A. M. Blockwelder.

Calahan—M. Heath, L. D. White, Orange Gray.

Mocksville—Henry Baity, Jas. Jordan, Rufus Clement.

The committee reported as follows:

WHEREAS, The demoralizing effects of the Rebellion, fostered by that fell spirit which failed in its attempt upon the life of the Nation, still stimulates the efforts of reckless politicians; and whereas, North Carolina opposed the rebellion in its incipiency, and embraced the earliest opportunity of returning to her allegiance; and whereas, we, the citizens of Davie county, wishing to make a record of our protest against being again dragged into another rebellion, therefore,

Resolved, That nothing but blind party affinities could bind our people to have recourse to the unconstitutional means adopted for calling a Convention to amend and alter our State Constitution.

Resolved, That as patriots, and loving our country, and wishing to set the example of a law-abiding people, we earnestly call upon our fellow-citizens, not as Republicans, not as Democrats, but