

CAPE FEAR.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, OCT. 25, 1876

THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

Full Synopsis, Explanation and Comment.

The amendments proposed to the Constitution of North Carolina are worthy of the serious consideration of every voter in the State. If it can be shown, as we believe it can, that the proposed amendments will prove an advantage to the people, and an injury to no one, they should meet with universal approval. But this cannot be expected when we reflect that the negro vote, which is manipulated by the leaders of the Radical party, will be cast according to order in almost a solid mass against them. Such a condition of things is a misfortune to any country. Any movement in the way of reform will be liable to be thwarted unless the honest and intelligent voters act in entire harmony; because a few bad men with eighty thousand ignorant negroes at their back constitute a formidable opposition at any time. For this reason it is all important that the changes proposed in our State Constitution should be thoroughly explained and understood, so that the benefits they will confer may be apparent to every unprejudiced man in the State.

We give below a synopsis of the different amendments, with notes explaining their provisions, to which we call the special attention of our readers. Every tax-payer of the State, no matter to which party he belongs, should read these amendments with care, and should vote for them without regard to party bias, notwithstanding the Radical party for the sake of making political capital has arrayed itself in opposition to their adoption.

AGRICULTURE.

The first amendment is one which was supported by both parties, and requires no argument in its favor. It simply provides that the Legislature shall foster and encourage the farming interest of the country, which is the foundation of all our prosperity. No man will object to this amendment.

SECRET POLITICAL SOCIETIES.

The second amendment provides against secret political societies like the Union League and Klu Klux organizations. After the baneful influence exerted by such secret political combinations, we are sure there is no good citizen who wishes to see them revived in our State. This amendment can do no harm, and may prevent great mischief.

CONCEALED WEAPONS.

The amendment on this subject gives the Legislature power to enact laws against carrying concealed weapons, without interfering, however, with the rights of every freeman to bear arms. The practice of carrying concealed weapons, particularly in the present condition of affairs, should be condemned by every peaceable and law-abiding citizen.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS.

The proposed change is simply intended to regulate the appointment of officers not otherwise provided for, and to prevent the clash and confusion which the ambiguous section in the present constitution has caused. Under the present constitution the Governor arrogated to himself the power to make many appointments which were not plainly provided for. This amendment clears up that difficulty, and gives the Governor power only to fill such offices as the Legislature has not provided for. In other words, it gives to the people's representatives, the members of the Legislature, the privilege of filling appointments, which have been held by the Governor, and interferes with no right that the people now enjoy of electing any of their public officers, but curtails the power of the Governor, and gives it to the people through their representatives. No friend of Republican government can object to this change. The Governor, in good old times, exercised no such power.

JUDICIAL.

The several proposed amendments in the Judiciary department are highly important. The number of Supreme Court Judges, it is proposed, shall be reduced from five to three. This will save to the people every year the salaries of two Judges, which is \$5,000. Before the war we had only three Judges and the reputation of the Supreme Court of North Carolina was above reproach, and all the business was disposed of with ease and satisfaction by the people. Three Judges can do the business of the Court as well as five, and the salaries of the two extra Judges should be saved.

The number of Superior Court Judges will be reduced from twelve to nine, and the salaries of the three Judges, amounting to \$7,500, will be saved every year. This is no small item in the present impoverished condition of our people, and nine Judges can hold the Superior Courts without difficulty.

Provision is made as of old for the Judges to rotate; that is, no Judge will be allowed to hold courts in the same circuits twice in succession. This wise provision established by our fathers worked well, and by changing the Judges every year there will be less danger of corruption and partiality in the administration of justice. Provision is also made for the establishment of courts inferior to the Supreme Court. This amendment is intended to facilitate the ends of justice and save to the tax-payers the large amounts paid every year for boarding criminals so long in our jails awaiting for the regular courts. Special Courts might be established in the larger cities, where the jails are frequently crowded with prisoners guilty of larceny and other crimes, and in the counties provision might be made for the speedy trial and punishment of criminals, and thereby save annually thousands of dollars paid out for guarding and feeding worthless characters, many of whom are well satisfied being in jail at the public expense as they would be leading a pillaging honest people. It is also proposed to give the Supreme Court the same jurisdiction they had before the war over questions of fact, which will be a great advantage in the settlement of estates, &c., and the Legislature may appoint some other place than Raleigh for the sitting of the Supreme Court.

The provision in the present constitution requiring two weeks for each court is to be changed, so that in small counties, where one week is amply sufficient for the transaction of business, there shall be but one week's term; in larger counties longer terms may be held as the business may demand.

There is provision also made for the election of the Supreme and Superior Court Judges by the people for a term of eight years; but after the first election the Legislature may provide for the election of the respective districts, and in case of a vacancy, the Governor shall appoint the Judge, who shall serve until the meeting of the Legislature, when that body shall elect for the unexpired term.

Provision is made for the removal of a Judge for mental or physical inability by a two-thirds vote of the Legislature. By this provision, the people will be enabled to get rid of incompetent Judges without the delay and expense of impeachment, and a Judge may for similar cause remove an incompetent clerk.

It is proposed to enlarge the jurisdiction of magistrate's courts to all civil actions, where the value of the property does not exceed \$50. This will be a great convenience to the people, as now every little case involving the recovery of property has to go to the Superior Court.

These changes in the judicial department

of the State were voted for by Republicans as well as Democrats, and will not only be a great saving in dollars and cents, but will promote the ends of justice and contribute to the good order and peace of society.

There is one provision which we regard highly important, and which should induce every white man in the State to support the amendments.

It is a notorious fact that the negroes of this and other districts are becoming every year more ambitious for office and more exacting in their aspirations. It is more than probable that a negro will be run by the Republicans in this or the Raleigh district at the next election. O'Hara, who is now a candidate for elector on the Hayes and Wheeler ticket, is an aspirant for Judge. He or some other negro may be elected under the present law, but if the amendments are adopted in November, the Judges will be elected by the voters of the whole State, and there will be no danger of such a curse being visited upon us. Is not this enough to cause every decent white man to vote for the amendments?

COUNTY GOVERNMENTS.

The change proposed in regard to county governments is intended for the relief of those counties which have been afflicted with negro rule. The amendment simply leaves the whole matter in the hands of the Legislature to make such changes as the public welfare may require. For instance, if the amendments are adopted, the Legislature may, if the people demand it, provide for the appointment of magistrates as they were formerly appointed, and may also make provision for the board of county commissioners. Such a change is not needed in counties where the whites have a majority and elect competent and honest magistrates and commissioners. But in some counties the condition of the people is pitiable and deplorable in the extreme.

Look at Edgecombe, Halifax, Granville and other Radical counties. The people who pay the most of the taxes have no voice in selecting the county officers; the public money is squandered and stolen; extravagance and swindling are the order of the day; the credit of the counties is below par, and county bonds are sold at a heavy discount and the tax-payers have to foot the bills. Ignorant negroes hold the justice's courts, which are a disgrace and mockery in the sight of decent men, and the same character sit on the commissioners' bench to arrange and regulate the county finances.

Contrast the condition of these Radical ridden counties with that of Wilson, Nash, Wayne, Duplin and other democratic counties. Here we see white men who manage the county finances managed with prudence and honesty; there is no swindling—everything goes on smoothly, and the county orders are as good as greenbacks. Under such circumstances ought we not, as honest and just men, to be willing to see the same system adopted by the Legislature, as they were in old times, and especially if that would save our brethren under negro despotism from being oppressed and robbed as they now are. We cannot see how any county will be hurt by this amendment and we can all see how some counties would be greatly benefited.

This is the amendment the Radicals are harping upon. They talk lustily about local self-government, and the rights of the people. What they mean though by local self-government is the election of negro magistrates, and what they mean by the rights of the people is the right for the negroes of Edgecombe, Halifax, &c., to rule over the white men and women of these counties with a black iron rod, and to defraud them of their hard earned incomes and property.

CIVIL RIGHTS.

There are two amendments proposed on the subject of civil rights. One prohibits the intermingling of the white and black children in the schools, and the other forbids the intermarriage between the negroes and the whites. These amendments, if adopted, will stop the agitation of these questions so far as our State is concerned. The Republican Convention of 1868 did legalize the marriage of a white man with a negro woman, and the subject will be agitated again unless it is prohibited in the constitution. We are astonished that any white man should oppose this amendment, but, to his everlasting disgrace be it said, there was one white Republican delegate in the Convention who voted against it. His name was Thorn, a carpet-bagger from Warren county.

SUFFRAGE.

On the subject of suffrage there are two important changes proposed. One requires a voter to live 90 days in the county before he can vote, and the other provides that no person, negro or white, convicted of felony or any other crime infamously by the laws of the State, shall not be allowed to vote until restored to citizenship. Both of these changes are intended to protect the purity of the ballot-box. The system of "colonizing" voters—that is, importing them from one county or State into another, to change the result of elections, has been introduced in our State since the advent of Radicalism, and a law requiring 90 days residence in a county, instead of thirty, would have a tendency to check this nefarious practice. This provision would give honest men some protection against fraudulent "squatters," who, under the present law, could be brought into the county 30 days before the election to kill the votes of honest and bona fide citizens.

The other provision prohibiting thieves and other felons from voting, commends itself to every honest man. There should be some difference between a good citizen and a bad one, and we do not see how any party can contend that it is right for 500 petty criminals in the penitentiary to vote 500 good and worthy citizens. This amendment offers a reward for honesty, and a punishment for crime, and it is calculated to check much of the stealing that is going on in the county.

PENITENTIARY.

It is proposed to amend the article on the penitentiary so as to allow the Legislature to put a part of the convicts at work on railroads, &c. This would be a great saving to the State. The penitentiary has already been a heavy expense to the people, and this provision will reduce the expenses and make the convicts a benefit instead of a burden.

FREE SCHOOLS.

Some slight amendments are proposed intended to advance the cause of Education in the State, which were supported by both parties in the Convention.

CONVENTIONS.

On this subject, the only amendment proposed is one providing that no Convention shall be called without first submitting the question to the people. There can be no reasonable objection to this wise provision, which will render it impossible to call any Convention in the future without the consent of the people.

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

The changes proposed in this department are of great advantage. Heretofore the sessions have prolonged the sessions much longer than necessary, and the members have voted themselves such per diem as they chose. The amendment proposed limits the sessions to 60 days, and the pay to \$4 per day and 10 cents mileage. By this change there would be a great reduction in the expense of a Legislature. The cost of a Legislature could not exceed \$60,000, counting everything, whereas the cost has averaged in the last eight years over \$100,000. By this amendment over \$40,000 a session would be saved, more than enough to pay the cost of the late Convention, which the Radical leaders told the people would cost \$50,000.

The other ordinances of the Convention are immaterial, providing for the distribu-

tion of the amendments among the people, and election, &c. We have given as fully as our space would permit an explanation of each amendment. We do not see how any good citizen, who desires the welfare of North Carolina, can vote against them. And even if he did not fully endorse every change proposed, it must be admitted that the whole is of incalculable benefit to the State.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM, ADOPTED AT ST. LOUIS, JUNE 28, 1876.

We, the delegates of the Democratic party of the United States, in national convention assembled, do hereby declare the administration of the Federal Government to be in urgent need of immediate reform; do hereby join upon the nominees of this Convention and of the Democratic party in each State, a zealous effort and cooperation to this end, and do hereby appeal to our fellow-citizens of every former political connection to undertake with us this first and most pressing patriotic duty for the Democracy of the whole country.

We do here reaffirm our faith in the permanency of the Federal Union, our devotion to the constitution of the United States, with its amendments, universally accepted as a final settlement of the controversies that engendered the civil war, and do here record our steadfast confidence in the perpetuity of republican self-government; in an absolute acquiescence in the will of the majority, the vital principle of the Republic; in the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; in the total separation of Church and State, for the sake alike of civil and religious freedom; in the equality of all citizens before just laws of their own enactment; in the liberty of individual conduct untrammelled by arbitrary laws; in the faithful education of the rising generation, that they may preserve, enjoy and transmit these best conditions of human happiness and hope. We behold the noblest products of a hundred years of changeless history; but while upholding the bond of our Union and great charter of these our rights, it behooves a free people to practice also that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty.

THE NEED OF THE HOUR.

Reform is necessary to rebuild and establish in the hearts of the whole people the Union, eleven years ago happily rescued from the danger of a corrupt centralism, which, after inflicting upon ten States the rapacity of carpet-bag tyrannies, has since been the offices of the Federal Government, beset with incapacity, waste and fraud, infected with Nationalism, and fettered by the contagion of misrule, and locked fast the property of an industrious people in the paralysis of hard times. Reform is necessary to establish a sound currency, restore the public credit, and maintain the national honor.

RADICAL FINANCE DENOUNCED.

We denounce the failure for all these eleven years to make good, the promise of the legal tender notes, which are a changing standard of value in the hands of the people, and the non-payment of which is a disregard of the plighted faith of the nation.

We denounce the improvidence which, in eleven years of peace, has taken from the people in Federal taxes thirteen times the whole amount of the legal tender notes, and squandered four times this sum in needless expenses, without accumulating any reserve for their redemption. As such a hindrance we denounce the resumption clause of the act of 1875, and we here demand its repeal.

DEMOCRATIC FINANCE DEMANDED.

We demand a judicious system of preparation by public economy, by official retrenchments and by wise finance, which shall enable the nation to assure the whole world of its perfect ability and perfect readiness to meet any of its promises at once and in full. We demand a system of payment, and we believe such a system well devised, and entrusted to competent hands for execution, creating at no time an artificial scarcity of currency, and at no time alarming the public mind into the withdrawal of that vast machinery of credit by which 95 per cent. of all business transactions are performed—a system open, public and inspiring general confidence. As such a hindrance we denounce the resumption clause of the act of 1875, and we here demand its repeal.

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REFORM IN TAXATION.

Reform is necessary in the sum and mode of Federal taxation so that capital may be set free to invest itself in a highly productive industry. We denounce the labor tariff levied upon nearly five thousand articles as a masterpiece of injustice, inequality and false pretence. It yields a dwindling, not a yearly rising revenue. It has impoverished many industries to subsistence; it prohibits imports that might purchase the products of American labor; it has degraded American commerce from the first to an inferior rank upon the high seas. It has cut down the sales of American manufactures at home and abroad, and depleted the return of American agriculture or industry, followed by half our people. It costs the people five times more than it produces to the treasury, obstructs the processes of production, and wastes the fruits of labor. It promotes fraud and fosters smuggling, enriches dishonest officials and bankrupts honest merchants. We demand that all customhouse taxation shall be only for revenue.

RETRENCHMENT IN EXPENSES.

Reform is necessary in the scale of public expense, Federal, State and municipal. Our aggregate Federal taxation has swollen from \$80,000,000, gold, in 1860, to \$450,000,000, currency, in 1870. Our aggregate taxation was from \$184,000,000, gold, in 1860, to \$730,000,000, currency, in 1870, or an increase of more than \$500,000,000 per head. Since the peace the people have paid to their tax-gatherers more than three times the sum of the national debt, and more than twice that sum for the Federal Government alone. We demand a vigorous retrenchment in every department and from every officer of the government.

WASTE OF THE PUBLIC LANDS.

Reform is necessary to put a stop to the profligate wastes of the public lands and their diversion from settlers by the party in power which has squandered two hundred millions of acres upon railroads alone, and out of more than three that aggregate has disposed of less than a sixth directly to tillers of the soil.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENS' AND HEATHEN CHRISTIANS.

Reform is necessary to correct the mistakes of the Republican Congress and the errors of our treaties, and our diplomatic relations which have stripped our adopted citizens of foreign birth and kindred race recrossing the Atlantic of the shield of American citizenship, and have exposed our brethren of the Pacific coast to the incursions of a race not sprung from the same great parent stock, and in fact, now by law denied citizenship through naturalization, as being neither accustomed to the habits of a progressive civilization, nor exercised in liberty under equal laws. We denounce the policy which thus discards the liberty-loving German and tolerates the revival of the Coole trade in Mongolian women imported for immoral purposes, and Mongolian men hired to perform servile labor for contracts, and demand such modification by Congress within a constitutional limitation, as shall prevent the further importation or immigration of the Mongolian race.

Reform is necessary, and can never be effected but by making it the controlling issue of the election, lifting it above the two false issues with which the office-holding class and the party in power seek to smother it. The false issue with which they would enkindle sectarian strife in respect to the public schools, of which the establishment and support belong exclusively to the several States, and which the Democratic party has cherished from their foundation, and resolved to maintain without partition or preference for any class, sect or creed, and without contributing from the Treasury to any—the false issue by which they seek to light anew the dying embers of sectional hatred between kindred people, once unaturally estranged, but now reunited in one indivisible Republic and a common destiny.

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REFORM IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Reform is necessary in the civil service. Experience proves that the efficient, economical conduct of the governmental business is not possible if its civil service be subject to change at every election—a弊弊 sought for at the ballot-box—a bribe reward of patronage and a post-honor, assigned for proved competency and held for fidelity in the public employment. That the dispensing of patronage should neither be a tax upon the time of all our public men, nor the instrument of their ambition. Here again professional falseness in the performance, attest that the party in power can work out no practical or salutary reform.

REFORM AMONG THE HIGHEST PUBLIC SERVANTS.

Reform is necessary even more in the higher grades of public service—President, Vice-President, Judges, Senators, Representatives, Cabinet officers. These officers, and others in authority, are the people's servants. Their offices are not a private prerogative; they are a public trust. When the annals of this Republic show the disgrace and confusion of a Vice-President; a late Speaker of the House; a Representative marketing his rulings as a political officer; their friends profiting secretly by their votes as law-makers; five chairmen of the leading committees of the late House of Representatives exposed in jobbery; a late Secretary of the Treasury forcing balance in the public accounts; a late Attorney General using public funds for private ends; a Secretary of War enriching his friends by percentages levied off the profits of contractors with his Department; an ambassador to England censured for a dishonest speculation; the President's private secretary guilty of a conspiracy to defraud the revenue; a Secretary of War indicted for high crimes and confessed misdemeanors—the demonstration is so complete that the first step in reform must be by the people, or honest men from another party. The disease of one political organization infects the body politic and thereby making no change of men or party, we can get no change of measures and no reforms.

RADICALS AND RADICALISM MUST BE DRIVEN FROM POWER.

All these abuses, wrongs and crimes—the product of the sixteen years ascendency of the Republican party—create a necessity for reform, confessed by Republicans themselves. But their reformers are voted down in convention and displaced from the Cabinet. The mass of honest voters is powerless to resist the eighty thousand office-holders—their leaders and guides.

Reform can only be had by a peaceful, civic revolution. We demand a change of system; a change of administration; a change of parties, that we may have a change of men.

Platform of the Democratic Party in North Carolina, Adopted by the Democratic State Convention at Raleigh, on 14th June, 1876.

WHEREAS, The Republican party of the United States, for the last sixteen years, had the complete control of the government in all its departments, and by its disregard of Constitutional limitations; by its unequal and oppressive taxation; by its extravagant and wasteful expenditures; by its official corruption pervading all branches of administration—has brought disaster upon our government and unparalleled distress upon our people; therefore

Resolved, 1. That in this centennial year of our existence, we invite all patriots to ignore all dead issues, to disregard all prejudices engendered by past events, and to unite with us in the effort to restore a Constitutional, honest, economical and pure administration of the government, and thus promote the general welfare and happiness of the country.

Resolved, 2. That we earnestly and cordially recommend the adoption, by the people, of the amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Convention of 1875, and thus largely reduce the expenditures of our State and county governments and simplify their administration, so that we may be enabled to establish a thorough and enlarged system of public schools for the benefit of all the citizens of the State.

Resolved, 3. That notwithstanding our repeated disappointments and impoverished condition, we still cherish the North Carolina project so long labored for by Morehead, Saunders, Fisher, Wm. H. Thomas and others, of uniting the harbors of Beaufort and Wilmington with the great west; and for the completion of the Western North Carolina Railroad to Point Rock and Ducktown, and of our other unfinished railroads, we pledge the continued use of the convict labor of the State, and of such other judicious legislative aid as will secure the completion of these great State works at the earliest practicable period.

Resolved, 4. That the people of North Carolina now have it in their power by an earnest, determined and united effort, to relieve our people from the evils of republican misrule, extravagance and corruption and restore the prosperity of our State.

Resolved, 5. That we denounce official corruption wherever found, and we hold honesty to be the first and highest qualification for office.

Major J. C. McRae's Appointments.

Maj. James C. McRae, Democratic candidate for Elector in the Third Congressional District, will address the people at

Beaufort, Carteret county, Tuesday, October 24th, with Col. Waddell.

Clinton, Sampson county, Saturday, October 28th.

Hon. A. M. Waddell's Appointments.

Col. A. M. Waddell will address his constituents of the Third Congressional District at the following times and places

Monday, October 23d, at Newport, Carteret county.

Tuesday, October 24th, at Beaufort, Carteret county.

Wednesday, October 25th, at Cedar Island, Carteret county.

Friday, October 27th, at Sanders Store, Carteret county.

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The new paper will give warm encouragement to the agricultural, mining and manufacturing interests of the State. It will urge immigration. But while it will extend the hand of welcome to the sturdy foreigner or other immigrant, it will seek to impress upon the people already here the necessity for economy, thrift, labor and fidelity to home and State. North Carolinians must build up North Carolina.

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