

From **The Caucasian** February 15, 1900, pg. 3

From one of the People: The proposed Amendment is Unconstitutional and the plain people will not vote for or submit to it.

I have been reading some of the opinions of some of our best lawyers on the proposed Constitutional amendment, and am thoroughly disgusted with the feeble arguments advanced by the Democratic lawyers. I am no lawyer, but if I was a back woods school committeeman I would be ashamed to confess my ignorance or dishonesty and say that section 5 of the proposed amendment was Constitutional. When a lawyer of education and ability declares section 5 of the proposed amendment to be in accord with the 15th amendment of the Federal Constitution which declares that the right of citizens of the United States shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. I say that lawyer makes a fool of himself and tramples under foot what little honor he pretended to have. Now, you can see at a glance that section 5 discriminates against the negro. To allow the illiterate whites to vote and eliminate the negro is as plain as the noon-day sun that section 5 is clearly unconstitutional. It does not require a lawyer to determine this fact, as any man with ordinary common sense can readily see the inconsistency. This clause is where the Simmons machine thinks it will succeed in fooling enough illiterate white voters to ratify the amendment at the polls. But here they will realize that the people have not forgotten the fair promises made during the campaign of 1898, when they said they would not attempt to disfranchise any one, white or black. The Democratic press and speakers denounced it as a Populist lie, and secret circular Simmons issued another circular in which he declared it to be a lie, so old and rotten that no one would believe it. Dr. Kingsbury L.L. D. and X.Y.Z., of the *Wilmington Messenger*, arose to remark that it was lie, "a bald face lie," "a Populist lie." With all these facts staring them in the face, can Simmons and his red shirt gang fool the people again? They will never get the rank and file of the Democratic party to support the amendment. The people know there is no danger of negro domination in North Carolina unless they are appointed to office by Democratic politicians. In as much as the proposed amendment does not eliminate the negro from politics it will not stop the Democratic machine from squalling negro. Indeed it would have something to hollow negro about. It would be awful to see some of the best white men in North Carolina refused the right of suffrage, while the educated town negro walks up to the polls and casts his vote, while he puffs the smoke of his cigar in the face of those rejected white men from whose property taxes was collected to educate the negro. Will the *News and Observer* be kind enough to give us a cartoon of the above. What a picture, what a shame, what a crime. In the war of the revolution, and at the battle of Fort Maultree the flag of the fort was shot away fell outside of the walls, Sergeant Jasper, of the South Carolina forces, at once sprang over the walls, and amidst a heavy fire, secured the flag and tied it to a pole and set it up again on the rampart. This done he rejoined his comrades at the guns. Governor Rutledge presented Jasper with his own sword and offered him a lieutenant's commission. Jasper accepted the sword, but

declined the commission, on the ground that he could neither read nor write. This is the kind of men that fought for our liberties. This is the kind of men that South Carolina has disfranchised. This is the kind that Simmons and his gang are trying to disfranchise. When my mind wonders over the battlefields of Kings Mountain, Guilford Court House and Moores Creek, and when I think of the North Carolina heroes who fell and poured out their life's blood on those hard-fought fields it is enough to cry out from the earth to the heroes of to-day: "Save North Carolina, we love her to this day" I have confidence in the common people of North Carolina, they are an honest patriotic and liberty-loving people who can always be relied upon, and when the test comes, they will respond to the tune of one hundred thousand majority against the amendment, in spite of all that Simmons and his red shirt brigade can do.

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