

***On the Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of North Carolina: Speech of Hon. J.C. Pritchard of North Carolina, in the Senate of the United States, January 22, 1900. (Washington: G.P. O., 1900): pgs 18-29, 34.***

**[Editor's Note: Pritchard's discussion of the "Mississippi case" on pg. 18 refers to the infamous federal court case, [Williams v. Mississippi, 170 U.S. 213 \(1898\)](#). This U.S. Supreme Court case upheld the constitutionality of Mississippi's 1892 laws that allowed county authorities significant discretion in choosing electors and denying voting rights.]**

[pg 18] ...Here is an explicit statement by Justice Matthews which declares that although a law may be fair on its face and impartial in appearance, yet if it is capable of being administered "with an evil eye or an unequal hand," so as to discriminate between person similarly situated, that the denial of guaranteed rights is violative of the spirit and letter of the Constitution. Will any one deny that the proposed amendment is capable of being administered "with an evil eye and unequal hand?"

In commenting on the foregoing statement Justice McKenna said, page 225:

This comment is not applicable to the constitution of Mississippi and its statutes. They don on their face discriminate between the races, and it has not been shown that their actual administration was evil, only that evil was possible under them.

According to the quotations which I make, it is apparent that the decision in the Mississippi case can not be taken as having the slightest bearing on the proposed amendment for two reasons: First, there is nothing in the constitution of Mississippi which proposes to classify the citizens of that State, or which can be construed, in a spirit of fairness so as to exclude any race from the operations of its provisions. Secondly, it was not shown in that case that there had been an improper administration of its provisions which had resulted in an injury to any particular race of people in that State.

However, I am of the opinion that if the amendment to the constitution of Mississippi is enforced with a view to disfranchising the colored people of that State, and if it should be made to appear to the court that its provisions are administered with "an evil eye and unequal hand," in that event it would be in conflict with the Constitution of the United States.

There is much in the proposed amendment which is calculated to create apprehension and alarm on the part of the illiterate and poor white people of North Carolina, as well as the colored race. It is a carefully prepared and well-devised scheme by which it is sought to forever prevent the common people of North Carolina from participating in the management and control of her affairs. While it is pretended by those who advocate the proposed amendment that its object is to secure white supremacy, at the same time there lurks beneath the surface a purpose to disfranchise thousands of our citizens, both white and colored, and thereby enable a certain class in our State to hold the offices and enjoy the emoluments of the same.

The proposition which they propose to submit is an attempt to confer the right of suffrage by inheritance, a plan which is repugnant to every principle of the organic law of the land, and one which ignores all that is sacred and dear to a free and independent

people. If it were possible to enforce this unwise provision, it would sooner or later result in the complete overthrow of that republican form of government to which we are entitled under the Constitution of the United States.

There are perils attending the submission of this amendment which, in my judgment, can not be escaped by the poor and illiterate white people of North Carolina, and in order that I may be [pg. 19] fully understood when I make this declaration I call attention to the fact that in the event the Supreme Court of the United State should decide that the ancestor and grandfather clause of the proposed amendment is unconstitutional, there is danger that they may go a step further and decide that the educational and poll-tax qualifications can properly be segregated from the other provisions, and thereby permitted to become a part of the organic law of our State, and as such apply to all classes and races of people alike, and as a result thousands of white farmers and laboring men would be disfranchised and denied the rights for which their ancestors fought at Kings Mountain and Guilford Court-House.

My distinguished friend from Alabama, in attempting to defend the action of the Democracy of North Carolina, failed to consider this important phase of the question. The fact that he did not undertake to show that there was no danger of section 5 being declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court and at the same time section 4 permitted to become part of our organic law is conclusive to my mind that he realizes that there is grave doubt about the result, to say the least of it, and his silence on this subject is enough within itself to alarm every illiterate white man in that State.

Mr. TILLMAN. Will the Senator allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Certainly.

Mr. TILLMAN. If I understood the Senator in the remark he has just made, he is afraid of some possible decision of the Supreme Court on this question when it reaches it.

Mr. PRITCHARD. If we should ever get one I fear that it will disfranchise both races.

Mr. TILLMAN. If you succeed in defeating the amendment before the people next summer, of course it will never get there; but if you do not, will it not be time enough for us to consider this proposition when it reaches us in the regular order of our affairs, when some Senator appears here elected under it, or when the other end of the Capitol shall have taken it up in the election of a Representative?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Are you through?

Mr. TILLMAN. That is question enough. If you will answer that it will satisfy us all, I think.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President, among other things it is our duty to uphold and maintain the Constitution of the United States, and I know of no better employment that we can engage in than to do that which will prevent the violation of the plain language of the Constitution of the United States. I do not think that the proposed amendment to our Constitution will be adopted by the people of my State if we get a fair election, but I want to say to the Senator now that if the election methods are applied in my State that have been applied in other Southern States, we shall have no opportunity whatever to be heard at the ballot box, and it is for that reason that I want to call the attention of the country at large to this proposed attempt to disfranchise not only the colored men of my State, but the poor white men as well.

However, Mr. President, it is contended by some of the Democratic leaders that sections 4 and 5 of the proposed amendment will either stand or fall together, and that the Supreme Court does not have the power in dealing with this question to segregate the objectionable or unconstitutional part from that which is not in conflict with the Constitution. This is an erroneous idea, and in [pg 20] order that there may be no doubt about the question I call attention to the following statement of Chief Justice Fuller in the income-tax cases recently decided by the Supreme Court of the United States:

It is elementary that the same statute may be in a part constitutional and in part unconstitutional, and if the parts are wholly independent of each other, that which is constitutional may stand while that which is unconstitutional will be rejected. This case will be found in 158 U.S. Reports, page 635.

I also call attention to the case of Riggsbee vs. Town of Durham, 94 N.C., page 800; Johnson vs. Winslow, 63 N.C., page 553.

The question then arises, Does section 4 depend upon section 5 in any respect for its validity? In other words, is it not complete within itself, and does it not give full expression to the legislative will without referring to section 5? I shall assume that the advocates of the proposed amendment, if they should ever reach the courts, will take the position that there is no discrimination in the proposed amendment, and that therefore it does not conflict with the fifteenth amendment.

They will be compelled to take this position in order to obtain standing in any court, and when they once admit that it was not the intention of the legislature to discriminate against any race of people the court will have no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that section 4 is complete within itself, because it certainly provides for that which the advocates of the proposed amendment say was the object of those who framed it. What was the object of the legislature if there was no discrimination meant? Was it not to restrict and qualify suffrage? Such being the case, does not the fourth section restrict and qualify suffrage by requiring all the citizens of North Carolina to be able to read and write the Constitution in the English language and pay a poll tax as a condition precedent to the right to vote? Can there be any doubt as to the construction that the court will place upon the proposed amendment?

Mr. President, in addition to the dangers already pointed out, there is another to which I desire to call attention. It will be observed by reading section 5 that the last proviso therein contained reads as follows:

Provided such person shall have paid their poll tax as required by law.

That is to say, the grandfather clause will not avail those citizens who, in consequence of poverty and misfortune, are unable to pay their poll tax on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of March in the year in which they propose to vote, as provided in section 4 of the proposed amendment. This clause, if adopted, will disfranchise many of the best people of our State. There are hundreds of good citizens to be found in every county of North Carolina who do not pay their poll tax promptly on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March, owing to some misfortune over which they have no control. It is only the rich class of people, and those who are engaged in business in the towns and cities, who can promptly pay their poll tax on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March of each election year.

I am informed that the framers of the amendment, after they had inserted the educational qualification, became alarmed lest our poor people should all learn to read and write, and in order to render it more difficult for that class of people to exercise the

right of suffrage it was provided that they should not only be able to read [pg 21] and write any section of the Constitution in the English language, but it was also provided that they must pay their poll tax on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March. Why fix the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March? And why was it that they failed to fix the day of election as the time on or before which citizens should be required to pay their poll tax? Can it be possible that it occurred to them that if more time was given our people that it might enable them to realize on their crops, or by hard labor earn enough money and pay their poll tax and thereby qualify themselves to exercise the right of franchise?

In order that you may fully understand and appreciate the result of the proposed amendment, it is necessary for each citizen of North Carolina to answer this question: How many men in your voting precinct, if called upon to-morrow to write any section of the Constitution in the English language, from dictation, would be able to correctly write the same, and if they should succeed in doing so, how many are able to pay their tax promptly on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March in each election year?

During the late civil war there were no property or educational qualifications required of those who were called upon to fight for the Confederacy, neither were there any educational or property qualifications required of the brave and patriotic North Carolina boys who responded so nobly to the call of their country during the war with Spain. Many of the brave boys who faced the shot and shell during the war with Spain were unable to read and write, and I am informed that an examination of the muster rolls discloses the fact that not a member of the legislature which submitted the proposed amendment participated in that struggle. It is not the first time in history that an attempt has been made by the rich and educated to cast reflection upon the illiterate class.

After the battle of Cowpens the British officer, Tarleton, in conversation with Mrs. Wiley Jones, of North Carolina, observed: "You appear to think very highly of Colonel Washington; and yet I have been told that he is so ignorant a fellow that he can hardly write his own name." "It may be the case," she readily replied, "but no man better than yourself, Colonel, can testify that he knows how to make his mark." It was in the battle of Cowpens that Colonel Washington had wounded Tarleton in the hand, and which caused Mrs. Jones to make the pointed retort.

Some of the best people in my State, owing to circumstances over which they had no control, are unable to read and write, but they know how to make their marks, and many of them have acquired what might be termed large fortunes; and in almost every instance they are people of high character and standing, with sufficient intelligence to vote on any of the great questions that may be submitted to the American people for their consideration. I want to suggest to those gentlemen who, like Tarleton, would cast reflection upon them and deprive them of their liberty as Tarleton proposed, that they must not forget the fact that although they may not be able to read and write they can make their marks when it comes to the question of depriving them of their liberties, for which their ancestors fought at Cowpens. It is the poor and illiterate classes of our people who perform the greater proportion of the public duties required by the State.

In time of peace they are required to pay poll tax and work the roads, and in time of war they sacrifice their health and risk their lives in defense of our people. The State of North Carolina has not afforded her citizens proper educational facilities in the past, [pg 22] and as a result we have a large per cent of illiteracy; and the Democratic party, having been in control of the State for a greater portion of the time since the war, is

responsible for this deplorable condition of affairs, and it is cruel and inhuman in the leaders of that party to attempt to punish our people for that which they can not help.

In this connection I call attention to the following letter written by Prof. H. Mebane, superintendent of public instruction of the State of North Carolina. Among other things it discloses the fact that 23 per cent of the white population are unable to read and write.

Mr. TELLER. Is that a recent letter?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Yes, sir; it was dated just the other day. I have not the date of it, but it is quite a recent letter.

We can not hope to reduce the percentage of illiteracy of that State in any appreciable degree with our present school facilities between now and December, 1908, the period at which time it is provided the proposed amendment shall apply to white as well as colored people

Mr. Mebane, in his letter, says:

In reply to your letter, will say as to illiteracy I can only give you the figures taken from the Census Reports of 1890, which are as follows:

Illiteracy of the whole population of North Carolina, 36 per cent.

Illiteracy of white population, 23 per cent. Illiteracy of colored population, 60 per cent. Percentage of school children in North Carolina according to Educational Report of this Department, enrolled in schools was in 1898, 62  $\frac{9}{10}$  white and 64  $\frac{7}{10}$  colored. [sic] Percentage of school population in average attendance on school was in 1898, white, 34  $\frac{7}{10}$ ; colored, 32  $\frac{3}{10}$  per cent. Average length of school terms in weeks or days was in 1898, whites, 14  $\frac{1}{5}$  weeks, or 71 days; for colored, 12  $\frac{4}{5}$  weeks, or 64 days. Total expenditure for schools for the school year ending June 30, 1899, was \$936, 801. Number of insolvent white polls was 20,076. Number of insolvent colored polls was 18,233.

Massachusetts has about nine and one-half months of public school. Their term for the entire State will average this. In North Carolina the term will only average about three and one-half months.

We spend \$836,000 for three and one-half months school, and this pays only a salary to teachers of an average of about \$25 per month.

Even at the low prices paid teachers, in order to make our term equal to that of Massachusetts, we would have to spend more than three times as much as we do now.

It has been boldly proclaimed by Chairman Simmons and other leaders of the Democratic party that the proposed amendment will not, if adopted, disfranchise a single white voter in the State of North Carolina. May I ask those gentlemen what is to become of that unfortunate class of our white people who are unable to pay their poll tax and in consequence thereof have been placed on the insolvent list? The fact that they are unable, by sickness, poverty, or otherwise, to pay their poll tax should not be taken advantage of by the lawmakers of our State for the purpose of degrading them in the estimation of the public in consequence of their poverty.

I know of many citizens whose names are on the insolvent list whose character and standing is as good in every respect as that of the gentlemen who have submitted the proposed amendment to the constitution of our State, and I, for one, will never give my

consent to a proposition which has for its object the humiliation and degradation of those unfortunate people.

This does not include the many hundreds and thousands who by neglect or oversight fail to pay their poll tax so far in advance as the 1<sup>st</sup> of March.

[pg 23]

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina will suspend one moment, while the Chair lays before the Senate the unfinished business, which will be stated.

The SECRETARY. A bill (H.R. 1) to define and fix the standard of value, to maintain the parity of all forms of money issued or coined by the United States, and for other purposes.

Mr. SPOONER. I ask that the regular order be laid aside temporarily, in order that the Senator from North Carolina may conclude his speech.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President, the Democrats of North Carolina attempt to justify their actions in regard to the proposed amendment by asserting that they fear negro domination. According to the census of 1890 our population was 1,617,947, and of that population only 562,000 were negroes; and I am sure that if a census could be taken at this time it would disclose the fact that the white people outnumber the negro in a greater proportion than they did in 1890. According to the census of 1890 the whites outnumbered the negroes more than two to one, and no intelligent citizen can be induced to believe that two white North Carolinians are in danger of being dominated by one negro.

It is absurd to contend that there is any danger of negro domination in North Carolina. In the very nature of things it can not be. From the earliest dawn of civilization to this good hour the great white race has given to the world its history, its philosophy, its laws, its government, and its Christianity, and it will continue to do so. The colored people of my State in the main are conservative and well behaved. They have never acted offensively, nor have they shown a disposition to interfere with the white people in the management of the State's affairs. It is true that there are some exceptions, but in no instance has the conduct of the negro been of such a nature as to challenge the serious consideration of the white people. I take it that no one will seriously contend that there is or ever was the slightest danger of the State government of North Carolina being dominated or controlled by the colored people.

It has often been contended by the Democrats that there are not more than 30,000 white Republicans in North Carolina. I have made a careful poll of the white Republicans in the State, and I am prepared to show by documentary evidence that can not be contradicted that there are over 60,000 white Republican voters in that State. I do not believe that there are to-day more than 100,000 colored voters in the State, and I am sure that at the last election not more than 80,000 colored people voted for the cooperative ticket. I do not undertake to say that the remainder of the colored people voted the Democratic ticket, but I do say that hundreds of them were compelled to vote the Democratic ticket by intimidation and violence, their votes in many cases being counted for the Democrats when actually cast for the Republican candidates, and quite a number were prevented from voting at all.

The Democratic party in North Carolina is inconsistent in criticising [sic] the Republicans for having recognized the colored people [pg 24] by giving them office, in

view of the fact that it has in many instances preferred colored people to white men when they thought that such a policy would enable them to control the election. The first coalition movement that was arranged in North Carolina was entered into between the negroes of Craven County on the one part and the Democratic party of that county on the other part.

There are 97 counties in North Carolina, of which number there are 12 counties according to the census of 1890, wherein the colored people are in the majority, and not one of them has been dominated or controlled by the colored people.

In most of the twelve counties in North Carolina in which the negroes are in the majority the Democrats elected their legislative and county tickets at the last election. Take, for instance, the county of Halifax, wherein there is a majority of 1,420 negroes over the combined white vote; the Democratic party secured a majority in that county for the legislative and county candidates. Now, one of two things is certain—they either failed to count the votes that were cast for the Republican ticket in that county or the negroes voted the Democratic ticket. I do not care which horn of the dilemma my Democratic friends may choose to take, but I will assume that they acted honestly and will say that the majority of the negroes in that county voted the Democratic ticket. Such being the case, it does seem to me that the cry of negro domination is ludicrous in the extreme.

There are about 50,000 negroes in North Carolina who can read and write, and will be entitled to vote in the event the proposed amendment is adopted, provided they can pay their poll tax on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March in each election year.

Mr. President, the old-fashioned cornfield hand belongs to the class of colored people that will be disfranchised under the proposed amendment. It was he who remained at home during the late civil war and cared for the white women and children while his master was in the army fighting to forge the chains of slavery closer about his limbs. His devotion to the white women and children of the South during that terrible ordeal is without a precedent in the history of the world.

There is not a single instance, in so far as I am informed, wherein the slave betrayed the trust that was reposed in him by his master, who had practically left him in charge of his affairs during his absence. It was the faithful old colored servant who followed his master on the bloody field of battle and who was ever ready and willing to sacrifice his life for his master's ease and comfort. It is that class of people who are now deserted by the very men who received such splendid service at their hands.

In speaking of this class of colored people the late lamented Grady, in his famous speech in Boston, said:

What of the negro? This of him: I want no better friend than the black boy who was raised by my side and who is now trudging patiently, with downcast eyes and shambling figure, through his lonely way of life. I want no sweeter music than the crooning of my old "mammy," now dead and gone to rest, as I heard it as she held me in her loving arms, and bending her old black face above me stole the cares from my brain and led me smiling into sleep. I want no truer soul than that which moved the trusty slave, who for four years, while my father fought with the armies that barred his freedom, slept every night at my mother's chamber door, holding her and her children as safe as if her husband stood guard, and

ready to lay down his humble life on her threshold. History has no parallel to the faith kept by the negro in the South during the war.

Often 500 negroes to a single white man, and yet through those dusky throngs women and children walked in safety, and the unprotected homes [pg 25] rested in peace. Unmarshaled the black battalion marched patiently to the fields in the morning, to feed armies their idleness would have starved, and gathered anxiously at the big house to "hear the news from marster," though conscious that his victories made their chains enduring. Everywhere humble and kindly; the rough companion of the little ones; the observant friend; the silent sentry in his lowly cabin; the shrewd counselor; and when the dead came home, a mourner at the open grave. A thousand torches would have disbanded every Southern army, but not one was lighted.

When the master, going to a war in which slavery was involved, said to his slave, "I leave my home and loved ones in your charge," the tenderness between man and master stood disclosed. And when the slave held that charge sacred through storm and temptation, he gave new meaning to faith and loyalty.

I rejoice that when freedom came to him, after years of waiting, it was all the sweeter because the black hands from which the shackles fell were stainless of a single crime against the helpless ones confided to his care.

Mr. President, some of our Democratic friends justify their conduct by the assertion that the negro is inferior to the white man, and that therefore he is not entitled to the enjoyment of the rights guaranteed by the fifteenth amendment; and in the next breath they are compelled to admit that on and after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of December 1908, it is the purpose of the proposed amendment to place the unfortunate white man in the same category that they now propose to place the illiterate and poor colored man. In other words, on and after December, 1908, all white men who are unable to read and write are to be placed upon a level with the colored man, who, they contend, is a degraded being. The proposed amendment will not in the slightest degree affect the race question. The Democrats will always contend that there is a race question so long as any number of negroes vote against the Democratic party.

While I contend that it is the duty of every white and colored voter in the State who is in favor of a republican form of government to vote against the proposed amendment, at the same time I am of the opinion that in the event the white Republicans and the Democrats of that State will show their magnanimity and patriotism by defeating the proposed amendment, and it is highly probable it will result in a division of the colored vote, and thereby preclude the possibility of racial prejudice interfering with the fair consideration of public questions in that section. As I have already stated, the proposed amendment will not exclude all the colored race, and so long as the Democrats can have a pretense for the contention that the colored race casts a solid vote for the cause of Republicanism,



so long will the demagogue take advantage of that fact in order to make political capital for his party.

In the face of the fact that many colored people have voted the Democratic ticket in the past and that thousands of their votes have been counted for that party by unscrupulous election officials, it is loudly proclaimed by Chairman Simmons that the Democratic party is a white man's party. I am informed that quite a number of colored voters are ready and willing to openly espouse the cause of Democracy, and once they adopt such a policy the mask under which the Democracy has been parading heretofore will be withdrawn, and when it is, it will disclose the fact that the Democrats are not now and have never been entitled to the distinction of being the white man's party.

Mr. President, the Senator from Alabama undertakes to convey the idea that the Democratic party of the South is the white man's party. In this connection I call attention to the following statement, which I take from a speech of the Senator from Nebraska [Mr. ALLEN], delivered on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of February, 1896, in this [pg 26] body. In referring to the black counties and the election methods in Alabama, among other things, he said:

There, Mr. President, is the seat of the fraud. It is capable of proof beyond all question and beyond all doubt that in many of these counties, where from three to five thousand, and in many instances 6,000, votes were returned in favor of the Democratic candidate, Mr. Oates, there were not registered 1,000 voters. In some instances but very few; in many instances the vote returned exceeding the vote for the county by 200 per cent or relatively so. So by this system of manipulation and fraud in what is known as the black belt, the Populists, Jeffersonian Democrats, and Republicans have carried, I think, almost two-thirds of the white counties; by controlling the election machinery in the black belt, counties where the colored people stayed away from the registration board, and where they stayed away from the polls to a very great extent, the entire result of the honest vote cast in that State in the white counties was overcome by this system of political rapine and fraud.

Mr. President, what effect does this have? It overturns the republican form of government and makes it a hiss and a byword, a snare, and a delusion.

This statement was deliberately made by the distinguished Senator from Nebraska after having carefully investigated the sworn testimony of leading citizens of that State, and is, I presume, a fair statement of the conditions that then existed in Alabama. I am informed that at the last Congressional election in the State of Alabama, in some of the Congressional districts the Democrats, according to the election returns, were defeated in the white counties and had to rely on the black counties in those districts for the majorities on which their certificates of election are based. As a notable instance, I call attention to the Fourth district of Alabama.

In that district it will be found from an examination of the records that, taking the white counties in the district, Mr. Aldrich, the contestant, had a clear

majority of 816 votes, and that in the county of Dallas, wherein there is a negro majority over the combined white vote of 6,385, the contestee received 2,046 majority. According to the logic of the Senator from Alabama, and assuming that there were no frauds perpetrated in the county of Dallas, we are irresistibly forced to the conclusion that the Democratic party in that district in the negro party.

Mr. PETTUS. Will the Senator allow me?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Certainly.

Mr. PETTUS. Will he also include in his information the fact that the man who ran for Congress on the Republican ticket gave orders that the negroes should not vote, and that they did not vote?

Mr. PRITCHARD. I am not advised as to that.

Mr. PETTUS. Well, that is the fact.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President, I am not advised as to that particular matter, but it is a peculiar fact that in all these colored counties in Alabama and elsewhere our Democratic friends succeed in getting a majority every time. I do not know how they do it, but they work it out some how or other by some kind of rule.

Mr. PETTUS. Will the Senator allow a further interruption?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Certainly.

Mr. PETTUS. Does the Senator know that in Dallas County, which he speaks of, there are 7,000 colored voters and only about 2,500 white men, and as the order was given to the colored men by the Republican candidate not to vote in that election, the man who was elected did not get 3,000 votes altogether?

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President, I am not advised as to that matter, but I understand a number of white people there voted for Mr. Aldrich. However, I am not prepared to contest that question.

Mr. PETTUS. I should be very much obliged to the Senator if he would speak of what he knows and not of these vulgar reports.

[pg 27] Mr. PRITCHARD. I have been speaking from the records taken from the sworn testimony of as good citizens as live in Alabama.

If the Democratic party of the South is sincere in its professions that it only desires to perpetuate white supremacy, why is it that these unlawful and unconstitutional methods are invoked in the black belt for the purpose of overcoming the result of the vote in the white counties? Take the State of North Carolina, for instance, and in almost every instance where there are but few colored men you will find an overwhelming majority for the Republican Party. In the county of Mitchell, where there are only 45 colored votes, the Republican majority is 1,300.

Take the county of Madison, in which I reside, where there are only about 62 colored voters in the entire county, and you will find a majority of over 800 for the Republican ticket – a county in which the Democrats have not been able to elect a county officer for about twenty-two years, with the exception of a few constables and justices of the peace. The cry of negro domination has not only been used against those of us who have advocated the principles of Republicanism, but it has been used with as much energy and more intensity against the Democrats who have joined what is known as the Populist party. In

the campaign of 1894 the Populists of North Carolina were denounced with more bitterness by the Democratic orators than had ever been used by them in denouncing the Republicans previous to that date. They were accused of being negro lovers and a black-and-tan crowd, just as the Democrats had abused the Republicans theretofore.

Mr. President, the wave of prosperity and the general revival of business that is now pervading every nook and corner of the United States, and which is as much in evidence in our beautiful Southland as in any other section of this country, together with the fact that the Spanish war has once more reunited our country and fired the Southern heart with renewed ardor and patriotism, and prompted them with a desire to sustain President McKinley in his efforts to bring to speedy termination the war that is now being waged in the Philippines, has alarmed the leaders of the Democracy and caused them to resort to the agitation of the race question, in order, as they think, to blind the Southern people to such an extent as to prevent them from considering the splendid results that have followed in the wake of Republican legislation.

I make this statement after mature deliberation, and I am prepared to demonstrate to the satisfaction of anyone that such is the case. There are some people in North Carolina who are honestly of the opinion that the proposed amendment will only affect the colored people, and that its adoption will settle the race question. These gentlemen are honest in their opinions, but they are sadly mistaken in believing that the Democrats will ever cease to yell "Nigger," and to ostracize those who advocate Republicanism, if by doing so they can induce one citizen to vote for the Democratic party.

Take many of the Southern States as illustration. The negro has no voice in the control or management of the affairs of state; but in the face of that fact the South Carolina Republicans are still denounced as belonging to the "nigger party," and will be denounced as such as long as they tamely submit to the inhuman treatment which is accorded them by the leaders of the Democracy.

Mr. TILLMAN. Will the Senator from North Carolina allow me right there?

[pg28] The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Does the Senator from North Carolina yield?

Mr. PRITCAHRD. Yes, sir.

Mr. TILLMAN. When in a Southern State negro postmasters are forced on the people, and in the North there are no negro postmasters, how can we separate the negro from the Republican party when the Republican Administration will not let us forget that they are doing those things?

Mr. PRITCHARD. There it is again, Mr. President. You might read the Ten Commandments to my distinguished friend from South Carolina and he would yell "negro" back at you. [Laughter.]

Mr. TILLMAN. If you read the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments at me I certainly should yell "nigger" back at you because they are chock-full of "nigger," and nothing else.

Mr. PRITCHARD. That is exactly right. I am accustomed to that kind of talk. When we say that a protective tariff is the proper thing to have and

undertake to show to the people that the Democratic party is opposed to it, they only answer by yelling "negro" at us. When we say we ought to hold the Philippines, they will answer by saying "negro," and when we say the people ought to rule and control their own affairs, they yell "negro" back at us; and that is the only answer we are able to get. [Laughter.]

Mr. TILLMAN. We do not say "negro," but we say "nigger."

Mr. PRITCHARD. The Senator may adopt that pronunciation if he desires. It is purely a matter of taste. [Laughter.]

Mr. TILLMAN. I am merely speaking of the facts and you are drawing on your imagination.

Mr. PRITCHARD. I am speaking of facts, and that is what hurts some people. They do not like to hear the facts.

It is a well-known fact that many Southern States have, by indirection, completely ignored the fifteenth amendment. The motive which has prompted this policy was a determination to perpetuate Democratic rule in the South at all hazards. Not only has there been a well-defined policy on the part of the Democratic party of the South to deprive the colored man of his vote, but the leaders of the party have been equally determined in their efforts to restore the rule of the classes, and thereby prevent the great common people from participating in the control and management of public affairs. This policy has caused that class of people to lose interest in public questions to a great extent, and as a result, the farming and laboring classes are ignored and all of the political power is being centered in the cities and towns.

There has been a gradual encroachment of the rights of Southern Republicans since the election of 1876, and while the methods that have been used in those States have not heretofore been invoked in North Carolina, I am sorry to say that we are at last called upon to face the same propositions which have been presented to the Republicans of the Southern States to which I have heretofore referred.

Mr. MONEY. Will the Senator excuse me if I interrupt him for a moment? I was not paying close attention and did not catch what he was reading from the proofs there. Did the Senator name the States?

Mr. PRITCHARD. No, sir; I did not, but I am going to refer to some States in a few moments in which the Senator will probably be interested.

[pg 29] In the beginning, in those States, the Democrats claimed that their policy was only to rid the States of negro domination, and they solemnly declared that they did not propose to disfranchise any white man; but in the light of the recent election returns we are irresistibly forced to the conclusion that the real intent and effect of the Democratic methods in those States, as well as in North Carolina, is to restore the rule of the classes and to ignore the masses.

I find by an examination of the public records that in the State of Louisiana there were in 1898 149,975 white people who were 21 years of age and upward and entitled to vote, and by an examination of the Congressional election returns of that year I find that the entire Democratic vote of that State was 27,453 and the total opposition vote was 5,429, which makes the total vote cast for that year 32,882. Admitting that none but white people voted, we are confronted with

the astounding fact that there were 117,000 white voters in that State who, for some cause or other, did not exercise the right of suffrage. In South Carolina there were in 1898 about 117,000 white voters and 154,000 colored voters.

The Congressional election returns for that State in 1898, as taken from the World Almanac, show that there were 29,027 cast for the Democratic candidates and 2,804 for the opposing candidates, and assuming that all those who voted were white men, we find that over 86,000 white men, for some cause or other, were prevented from exercising the right of suffrage.

Mr. TILLMAN. Will the Senator allow me to explain that?

Mr. PRITCHARD. With pleasure.

Mr. TILLMAN. I will do it with a great deal of pleasure, and without a particle of doubt on your part or that of anybody else as to my explanation being true. Under our new State constitution (which is patterned after that of Massachusetts, requiring an educational qualification and enlarging the suffrage by giving the ballot to an illiterate who pays on \$300, and which had the Mississippi clause in it, but which no longer has, because we limited its operation to three years) we have about 14,000 registered negro voters and about 98,000 or 100,000 white registered voters. Our fight is in the Democratic primaries for the nominations, and in those primaries we usually cast about 80 to 90 per cent of our vote. There is no opposition, no Republican party in South Carolina, except a little machine which sends delegates to the national convention of the Republican party and controls the patronage; and those delegates, when there is any struggle for the nomination between Republican candidates, live on the money which they get for their votes.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President ---

Mr. TILLMAN. Let me get through.

Mr. PRITCHARD. I did not yield for a speech.

Mr. TILLMAN. I am merely explaining why it is that the white vote, the regular vote, in November substantially registers the action of the Democratic primaries in July. Therefore, when he says we suppress the white vote the Senator does not know what he is talking about, or else he misstates the facts.

Mr. PRITCHARD. I am quoting from the record, and the record shows that in South Carolina there were 86,000 white men who, for some cause or other, did not vote at the last election. That is what the record says about it.....

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Mr. ALLEN. Would not such a restriction [on the right to vote] be in violation of the Constitution of the United States?

Mr. PRITCHARD. It certainly would be, if I am correct in the views I entertain in reference to the question.

Mr. ALLEN. It seems to me that to adopt such an amendment to a State constitution would be a violation of the Federal Constitution;

Mr. PRITCHARD. In reply to the Senator's question, I desire to say that I do not think it is the purpose of a majority of the people of the State of North Carolina so to do, but the Democratic party of that State has submitted an amendment of that kind.

Mr. ALLEN. Such an amendment would be declared by the courts to be in violation of the spirit or the letter of the Federal Constitution.

Mr. PRITCHARD. Mr. President, I have great confidence in the patriotism of the people of North Carolina, and I do not believe that they will ever permit such an unjust proposition to become a part of the constitution of our State.

The Republican party can not afford to fold its hands and permit the Democratic party to again secure political ascendancy in the nation by resorting to such unrepugnant and unconstitutional methods. No public question is every properly settled until it is settled in accordance with the principles of justice, and while the Democracy of the South has apparently been having its own way since 1876, it has at last reached that point where every move which it may make in the future looking to the deprivation of the voters of the South of those rights to which they are entitled will be promptly met. Some of the Democratic newspapers in my State are attempting to construe my action in this respect to mean an attack upon the State which I have the honor, in part, to represent. The statement is false and without foundation and is made for the purpose of preventing the people from giving to this subject that careful consideration to which it is entitled.

I am indebted to the people of North Carolina for all that I am. I stand ready and willing on any and all occasions to defend her good name when assailed. If the people of North Carolina had been consulted in regard to the proposed amendment, it would not have been submitted to them for their consideration. A more loyal, devoted, and patriotic people are not to be found in any State of this Union. The resolution was introduced for the purpose of calling the attention of the country at large to the iniquitous scheme which had been proposed by the leaders of the Democracy of that State for the purpose of enabling that party to retain control of our affairs regardless of the will of the majority of our people.

North Carolinians have always done their duty in every great emergency in which they have been called upon to act, and if the people in that State are given an opportunity to express themselves freely at the ballot box at the next election, they will consign to oblivion those who now seek to do that which can only result in great injury to the welfare of our people, and which will impede the rapid strides we are now making in our industrial development.